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From: Presidency
To: Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum
Subject: Artificial Intelligence in Migration, Asylum and Border Management
- Discussion paper

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming many sectors, including public administration. In the area of migration, asylum and border management, AI technologies have the potential to significantly enhance the ability of authorities to manage growing operational demands, improve situational awareness, and strengthen efficiency and consistency of administrative processes. This may ultimately contribute to swifter and more effective migration and asylum processes and better protection of our borders.

The European Union has already recognised the importance of digitalisation and technological innovation in these areas. AI-enabled tools may support authorities in areas such as risk assessment and screening, document and identity verification and case management.

The European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy¹ highlights the potential of digitalisation and AI to provide Member States with modern, secure and efficient tools to improve the quality, consistency and timeliness of decision-making, while enhancing security and improving services for people.

¹ ST 5848/26

At the same time, the deployment of AI in this domain raises important strategic considerations. Ensuring that AI systems are reliable, trustworthy and compliant with applicable legal frameworks requires appropriate governance structures, access to high-quality datasets, technical expertise, and a sustained investment in the development of suitable tools and capabilities and training for operational personnel.

Against this background, the discussion at SCIFA provides an opportunity to reflect on the **strategic role of AI in migration and border management**. It also serves to take stock of how Member States are approaching this topic and to identify where further **cooperation or support at EU level could help accelerate the development and uptake of AI-based solutions in compliance with fundamental rights**.

Artificial Intelligence and the digitalisation of migration and border management

Some Member States are already pursuing broader efforts to **modernise and digitalise migration and border management processes**. These initiatives include, among others, the use of AI to analyse large and complex datasets in order to better understand migration trends and support evidence-based policy planning. In some cases, authorities are testing AI-supported tools to assist in the verification of identity and travel documents submitted during migration or asylum procedures, helping officials detect potential irregularities or fraudulent documentation more efficiently. Other pilot projects are exploring the use of AI-enabled analytics to identify patterns and risk indicators within migration-related data, with a view to strengthening forecasting and planning capacities. In addition, some administrations are experimenting with AI-supported decision-case handling tools that can assist case officers by analysing information contained in case files presenting information in an ordered manner. AI technologies are also being explored to automate certain repetitive administrative tasks, such as sorting or extracting information from documents, with the aim of reducing administrative burden and allowing officials to focus on more complex aspects of case management.

While these initiatives remain at different stages of maturity, they illustrate the growing interest among Member States in exploring how AI could support more efficient and effective migration and border management.

The use of trustworthy and rights-compliant AI systems needs to be prioritised, both at Union and national levels to anticipate developments and reinforce preparedness and resilience of the EU's external borders. The EU Strategy on Asylum and Migration Management foresees the development of a number of AI systems to assist with counter-smuggling activities or search and rescue; to fight identity theft; to enhance and make border controls more streamlined and secure and to support risk analysis and situational awareness at the external borders. It also offers opportunities in terms of asylum case handling: in the area of interpretation, translation and transcription, or the collection and analysis of country-of-origin information, and in case management and workflow optimisation. It is important, therefore, to consider the types of **operational AI tools** that may deliver the greatest added value in the area of migration and border management.

Moreover, continued EU funding is crucial for applied research and innovation in this space to develop cutting edge systems that may be taken up, tailored and mainstreamed by the Member States' competent authorities.

Implementation of the EU Artificial Intelligence Act

The clear benefits and potential for efficiency gains must however be reconciled with legal obligations and the mitigation of risks. In the context of the asylum procedure, for example, this means ensuring that all decisions are always made by humans², full respect of data protection, and any AI support needs to be clearly defined. Individual, unbiased decisions require legal interpretation, contextual assessment and human judgement that only a trained case officer can provide. At the same time, if implemented correctly and within transparently defined operational and legal limits, AI tools can accelerate procedures, reduce backlog, improve administrative workflows and consequently also the consistency and quality of the outcomes.

² A requirement which also follows from Article 22 of the General Data Protection Regulation.

To provide an overarching legal framework on the deployment of AI, the EU adopted the **EU Regulation on Artificial Intelligence (AI Act)**³, which entered into force in August 2024. The Regulation establishes a **risk-based approach** where AI systems are subject to different obligations depending on the level of risk they pose to health and safety and fundamental rights of citizens. The **AI Act** prohibits certain harmful AI practices, sets strict requirements for **high-risk AI systems** used in different areas, including migration and border management, and introduces transparency obligations for other AI applications that pose lower risk levels. At the same time, it aims to **support innovation and the development of trustworthy AI in Europe**, providing legal certainty while ensuring that AI systems are safe, accountable, and respectful of fundamental rights.

The effective implementation of the Regulation will require close engagement with Member States, including where AI systems may be developed or deployed by public authorities in areas relevant to migration management, asylum procedures and border control.

Efforts are underway, led by the Commission's AI Office to support the **practical implementation of the AI Act and compliance**, including through the development of a suite of guidance pieces aimed at facilitating a common understanding of key provisions of the Regulation. Guidance documents have already been published on the AI system definition⁴, as well as on prohibited AI practices⁵. The Commission publishes such guidance documents after consultation, in particular, of Member States through the AI Board and its various subgroups.

Of key importance to the Home Affairs community are the guidelines **on the classification of high-risk AI systems**, including the application of Article 6 of the AI Act as well as the use cases already listed in Annex III to the AI Act as carrying a high risk. One section of Annex III covers a number of uses directly linked to migration and border management. These guidelines are at the stage of final processing and will be shared with EU Member States through the relevant groups of the AI Board for feedback shortly.

³ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 on artificial intelligence. *OJ L*, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024, *ELI*: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>

⁴ [Guidelines on the definition of an artificial intelligence system established by Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1689 \(AI Act\)](#)

⁵ [Guidelines on prohibited artificial intelligence practices established by Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1689 \(AI Act\)](#)

In this context, it will be important that **Member States' operational experience and perspectives are taken into account** to ensure that the final guidelines are feasible and actionable and do not result in any unintended burdens on practitioners. This is an opportunity to reach clarity on possible questions in relation to AI Act compliance.

In view of the above, delegations are invited to share their views on the following questions:

1. What are the main challenges that Member States are facing in developing or deploying AI systems in migration and border management processes?
2. Which areas of migration and border management should be prioritised for the development and uptake of AI-based tools that add value to migration and border management processes? Are there any areas or processes that should be exempted from the use of AI?
3. How could we better encourage cooperation between Member States and at EU-level to support the development and operational deployment of trustworthy and compliant AI-based tools in migration and border management?
