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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	JHA Counsellors/Mixed Committee (EU-Iceland/Liechtenstein/Norway/Switzerland)
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Subject:	Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 as regards the reinforcement of checks against relevant databases at external borders

This proposal, which is part of the Borders legislative package, was submitted by the Commission on 15 December 2015. The Working Party on Frontiers examined it thoroughly at its meetings of 8, 19 and 29 January 2016, (the third time on the basis of Presidency compromise suggestions as set out in doc. 5466/16). In the light of the results of the discussions during these Working Party meetings, a significant progress was achieved in reaching common ground among delegations regarding their concerns. The Presidency submits to the JHA Counsellors this new compromise, which it believes could accommodate most of the remaining concerns of the delegations and could constitute a basis for a compromise at Council level on this proposal. It is noted that the changes vis-à-vis the previous compromise suggestions (including the deleted parts) are depicted in bold (and underline).

The Presidency believes that the only essential outstanding issue is whether the air borders (along with the land and sea borders) should be included in the scope of possible cases of targeted checks of persons enjoying the right of free movement under Union law, in order to address a disproportionate impact on the traffic flow emanating from the systematic consultation of data bases for these persons. The Presidency is of the opinion that this issue should also be resolved in the prism of the need to find a balance between security priorities and the economic impact of the new measures on border controls that this draft Regulation is expected to bring about.

Recitals

- (1) Control at external borders remains one of the main safeguards of the area without controls at internal borders. It is carried out in the interest of all Member States. One of the purposes of such controls is to prevent any threat to the Member States' internal security and public policy, irrespectively of the origin of such threat.
- (2) The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, many of whom are Union citizens, demonstrates the necessity to strengthen the checks at external borders with regard to Union citizens.
- (2a) Member States are obliged to check systematically third country nationals against all databases on entry. It should be ensured that such checks are also carried out systematically on exit. (it is former Recital 8)**
- (3) The documents of persons enjoying the right of free movement under Union law should therefore be checked systematically against relevant databases related to stolen, misappropriated, lost and invalidated travel documents in order to avoid that persons hide their real identity.
- (4) Border guards should for the same reason also systematically check persons enjoying the right of free movement under Union law against relevant national and European databases in order to ensure that they do not represent a threat to internal security or public policy.
- (5) Technological developments allow in principle to consult relevant databases without delaying the process of crossing the border, as the controls on documents and persons can be carried out in parallel. **Automatic border control gates are particularly relevant in that context. The use of passenger information received in accordance with Council Directive 2004/82/EC, or in accordance with other Union or national legislation, may also contribute to speeding up the process of required controls during the border crossing process.** It is therefore possible without disproportionate negative effect on persons travelling in good faith to strengthen checks at external borders to better identify those persons who intend to hide their real identity or who are subject to relevant alerts for security reasons or for arrest. Systematic checks should be carried out at all external borders.

- (5a)** However, if systematic checks at land and sea borders were to have a disproportionate impact on the flow of traffic at the border, Member States should be allowed not to carry out systematic checks against databases but only if based on a risk analysis assessing that such a relaxation would not lead to a security risk. Such risk assessment should be transmitted to the Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union established by Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004¹ and be the subject of regular reporting both to the Commission and to the Agency
- (6) With Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004², the Union introduced the facial image and fingerprints as security elements in the passport of Union citizens. These security features have been introduced in order to render the passports more secure and establish a reliable link between the holder and the passport. Member States should therefore verify **at least one of** these biometric identifiers, in case of doubts on the authenticity of the **travel document** or on the identity of its holder. **The same approach should apply to the checks on the third-country nationals, where this is possible.**
- (7) This Regulation is without prejudice to the application of Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council³.
- (8) *(moved up in the Preamble and becomes Recital 2a).*
- (9) Since the objective of this Regulation, namely reinforcing the checks against databases at external borders in reply in particular to the increase of the terrorist threat concerns one of the safeguards of the area without internal border control and as such concerns the proper functioning of the Schengen area, it cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States **individually**, but can rather be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives.

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 of 26 October 2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (OJ L 349, 25.11.2004, p.1).

² Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004 of 13 December 2004 on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States (OJ L 385, 29.12.2004, p.1).

³ Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States (OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77).

- (10) In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of the Protocol No 22 on the position of Denmark, as annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Denmark is not taking part in the adoption of this Regulation and is not bound by it or subject to its application. Given that this Regulation builds upon the Schengen *acquis*, Denmark shall, in accordance with Article 4 of that Protocol, decide within a period of six months after the Council has decided on this Regulation whether it will implement it in its national law.
- (11) This Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis*, in which the United Kingdom does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2000/365/EC¹; the United Kingdom is therefore not taking part in the adoption of this Regulation and is not bound by it or subject to its application.
- (12) This Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis*, in which Ireland does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2002/192/EC²; Ireland is therefore not taking part in the adoption of this Regulation and is not bound by it or subject to its application.
- (13) As regards Iceland and Norway, this Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* within the meaning of the Agreement concluded by the Council of the European Union and the Republic of Iceland and the Kingdom of Norway concerning the latters' association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis*³, which fall within the area referred to in point A of Article 1 of Council Decision 1999/437/EC⁴.
- (14) As regards Switzerland, this Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* within the meaning of the Agreement between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Swiss Confederation's association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis*⁵ which fall within the area referred to in Article 1, point A of Decision 1999/437/EC read in conjunction with Article 3 of Council Decision 2008/146/EC⁶.

¹ Council Decision 2000/365/EC of 29 May 2000 concerning the request of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to take part in some of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* (OJ L 131, 1.6.2000, p. 43).

² Council Decision 2002/192/EC of 28 February 2002 concerning Ireland's request to take part in some of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* (OJ L 64, 7.3.2002, p. 20).

³ OJ L 176, 10.07.1999, p.36.

⁴ Council Decision 1999/437/EC of 17 May 1999 on certain arrangements for the application of the Agreement concluded by the Council of the European Union and the Republic of Iceland and the Kingdom of Norway concerning the association of those two States with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis* (OJ L 176, 10.07.1999, p.31).

⁵ OJ L 53, 27.2.2008, p. 52.

⁶ Council Decision 2008/146/EC of 28 January 2008 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Community, of the Agreement between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Swiss Confederation's association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis* (OJ L 53, 27.2.2008, p. 1).

- (15) As regards Liechtenstein, this Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* within the meaning of the Protocol between the European Union, the European Community, the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein on the accession of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the Agreement between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Swiss Confederation's association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis*¹ which fall within the area referred to in Article 1, point A of Decision 1999/437/EC read in conjunction with Article 3 of Council Decision 2011/350/EU².
- (16) As far as the use of Schengen Information System is concerned this Regulation constitutes an act building upon, or otherwise relating to, the Schengen *acquis* within, respectively, the meaning of Article 3(2) of the 2003 Act of Accession and Article 4(2) of the 2011 Act of Accession.
- (17) This Regulation respects fundamental rights and observes the principles recognised in particular by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
- (18) Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council³ should therefore be amended accordingly,

¹ OJ L 160, 18.6.2011, p. 21.

² Council Decision 2011/350/EU of 7 March 2011 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol between the European Union, the European Community, the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein on the accession of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the Agreement between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Swiss Confederation's association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis*, relating to the abolition of checks at internal borders and movement of persons (OJ L 160, 18.6.2011, p. 19).

³ Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) (OJ L 105, 13.4.2006, p.1).

Article 1

Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 is amended as follows:

Article 7 is amended as follows:

(a) Paragraph 2 is replaced by the following:

"(2) On entry and on exit, persons enjoying the right of free movement under Union law shall be subject to the following checks:

(a) verification of the identity and the nationality of the person and the validity and authenticity of the travel document, including by consulting the relevant databases, in particular:

- (1) the Schengen Information System;
- (2) the Interpol database on stolen and lost travel documents;
- (3) national databases containing information on stolen, misappropriated, lost and invalidated travel documents

For passports and travel documents containing a storage medium as referred to in Article 1(2) of Council Regulation 2252/2004, the authenticity of the chip data shall be checked.

(b) verification that a person enjoying the right of free movement under Union law is not considered to be a threat to the internal security, public policy, international relations of any of the Member States or to public health, including by consulting the relevant Union and national databases, in particular the Schengen Information System.

Where there is doubt on the authenticity of the travel document or on the identity of its holder, the checks shall include the verification of at least one of the biometric identifiers integrated in the passports and travel documents issued in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004*. Where possible, such verification shall also be carried out regarding travel documents not covered by that Regulation [...].

Where, at external land and sea borders, the **[...] consultation of the data bases** referred to in points a) and b) of the first subparagraph would have a disproportionate impact on the flow of traffic, Member States may decide to carry out those checks on a targeted basis at specified border crossing-points based on an assessment of the risks related to internal security, public policy, international relations of any of the Member States or a threat to public health.

The scope and duration of the temporary reduction to targeted checks shall be defined in accordance with a risk assessment, which shall be updated regularly.

The risk assessment established by the Member State concerned shall explain the reasons for the temporary reduction to targeted checks and shall take into account, inter alia, the disproportionate impact on the flow of traffic and assess the possible risks and shall provide for statistics on passengers and incidents related to cross border crime.

Each Member State shall transmit its risk assessment to the Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union established by Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 and report every six months to the Commission and to that Agency on the application of the checks carried out on a targeted basis. **Member States shall notify other Member States and the Commission about their decision to temporarily carry out targeted checks.**

(2a) The consultation of the databases referred to in paragraph (2)(a), and the consultation of the relevant Union and national databases referred to in paragraphs (2)(b) may be carried out in advance based on passenger information received in accordance with Council Directive 2004/82(EC) or in accordance with other Union or national legislation.

In case this consultation is carried out in advance based on such passenger information, a verification shall take place at the border crossing point. **This process shall consist of a verification of the received advanced data against the data in the travel document and the verification of the identity and the nationality of the person concerned.[...].**"

* Council Regulation (EC) No 2252/2004 of 13 December 2004 on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States (OJ L 385, 29.12.2004, p.1)."

(aa) Paragraph (3)(a)(i) and (ii) are replaced by the following:

"(i) Verification of the identity and the nationality of the third country national and the validity and authenticity of the travel document, including by consulting the relevant databases, in particular:

(1) the Schengen Information System;

(2) the Interpol database on stolen and lost travel documents;

(3) national databases containing information on stolen, misappropriated, lost and invalidated travel documents

[...]

For passport and travel documents containing a storage medium, the authenticity of the chip data shall be checked, subject to the availability of valid certificates.

(ii) verification that the travel document is accompanied, where applicable, by the requisite visa or residence permit."

(b) Paragraph 3(b)(iii) is replaced by the following:

"(iii) verification that the third-country national concerned is not considered to be a threat to public policy, internal security or international relations of any of the Member States, including by consulting the relevant Union and national databases, in particular the Schengen Information System;"

(c) Paragraph (3)(c)(iii) is deleted.

(d) In paragraph 3, the following points are added:

"(x)The consultation of the databases referred to in paragraph (3)(i), and the consultation of the relevant Union and national databases referred to in paragraphs (3)(a)(vi) may be carried out in advance based on passenger information received in accordance with Council Directive 2004/82(EC) or with other Union or national legislation.

In case this consultation is carried out in advance based on such passenger information, a verification shall take place at the border crossing point. [...] **This process shall consist of a verification of the received advanced data against the data in the travel document and the verification of the identity and the nationality of the person concerned.** "

(y) Where there is doubt on the authenticity of the travel document or on the identity of the third country national, the checks, **where possible**, shall include the verification of the biometric identifiers integrated in the [...] travel documents. [...]"