

EES Advisory Group comes together for their first meeting

The newly formed Entry-Exit System Advisory Group (EES AG), part of eu-LISA's governance structure, will hold its first working meeting on 25 June in Tallinn. The Advisory Group convenes at a time when the Agency, having received the legal mandate for the establishment of an Entry-Exit System, has made all the preparations for the new system and will start regular working meetings with the new system's governing body.

The role of the EES AG is to provide, during the designing and development phase of EES, technical expertise to support the tasks of the EES Programme Management Board, follow-up and coordinate all related activities both centrally and at national level, as well as provide support with various technical issues related to developing the system. The EES AG will also follow-up and coordinate all activities related to adapting VIS and BMS for EES purposes and will provide the Agency's Management Board with expert technical advice.

The EES Advisory Group will be composed of national EES project managers, Europol's included, and chaired by eu-LISA.

The first meeting will bring together all relevant project teams to go through various topics, amongst which the current state of play and a plan for the next steps.

The Executive Director of eu-LISA, Krum Garkov, explained the importance of the Advisory Group:

"The Entry-Exit System Advisory Group has been setup by eu-LISA and it is an important step towards the implementation of EES. The group will be instrumental in supporting the tasks of the EES Programme Management Board. Its primary tasks will be to coordinate the work of the Agency and the Members States in their efforts to implement EES in the EU and to serve as a focal point to address technical and operational matters related to the implementation and use of EES. In short, the EES advisory Group gathers expert parties around the same table in order to support successful implementation of the latest EU information system, entrusted to eu-LISA by our legislators."



Theofanis Syrigos, the Chairman of EES Advisory Group, added: *"The Schengen Area allows people to travel without internal border controls; the increasing numbers of people travelling to the Union requires efficient management of the Union's common external borders to ensure strong protection. EES is a new central register that will address the effective access management to the EU and will be essential to efficient cross-border movement. eu-LISA, in close cooperation with Member States, will build up the new system and will extend*

the existing Visa Information System and the Biometric Matching System in line with the legal provisions, for the benefit of all EU citizens. Therefore the coordination amongst all involved stakeholders is extremely important."

The Entry Exit System, the development of which is entrusted to eu-LISA, addresses an important gap in the landscape of existing EU information systems and will replace, amongst others, the current practice of manual stamping of passports. It will do this by electronically registering, in a central database, biographic and biometric information, the date and place of entry and exit of the third country nationals, visiting the Schengen area for a short stay. The system will modernise and increase automation at border-controls as well as improve reliable identification of over-stayers, whilst strengthening internal security and fighting terrorism and organised crime.