Panel Meeting on Integrated Border Management

13-14 June 2019
Minsk, Belarus

Contents

CZECH REPUBLIC	
1. Please describe the system of the "green" border surveillance in your country. What specific technologies are used in your country to ensure effective protection of "green" borders?	Due to the CZ geographic position as an inland country surrounded by other Schengen states, border control is carried out only at international airports (flights to/from non-Schengen countries).
2. Please describe your country's experience in establishing common contact points (CCPs) or police and customs cooperation centers with other states. Please describe their structure and main tasks. How can you assess the effectiveness of data exchange within the operation of CCPs?	The Czech Republic has established altogether 6 police and customs cooperation centres (PCCC) with all neighbouring countries – 2 with Germany, 2 with Poland, 1 with Slovakia and 1 with Austria and their establishment and activities are based on bilateral agreements. PCCCs are managed by the coordinator of the PCCC and they are integrated in the International Police Cooperation Division of the Regional Police Headquarters. From the central level, International Police Cooperation Division of the Police Presidium of the Czech Republic methodically coordinates all PCCCs. PCCCs ensure continuous and direct contact with the competent authorities of both contracting countries in the PCCC and their tasks are following: • Information exchange • Support in execution of cross-border operations • Investigation support • Readmission support • Support in execution of transits, transfers and admission of persons and objects • Support in performing checks during temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders (information support) • Elimination of threats and reporting in cases of disasters and emergency situations • Support to cross-border meetings. Information exchange is focused on prevention and investigation of crimes and protection of public order and safety (especially in border area) and is done via secure communication channel. Information exchange done via PCCCs is considered as effective and quick both at national (positive feedback on PCCCs activities by Czech police units) and European level (positive feedback on PCCCs activities by the European Commission and national experts during Schengen evaluation of the Czech Republic in the field of Police cooperation).
3. Does your country have an IBM strategy? If yes, do you plan to revise the existing one and align it with the Technical and Operational Strategy for	In terms of strategic planning in the field of integrated border management, CZ has a long-term functioning tool called the National Schengen Plan, which is currently being aligned with the Frontex Technical and operational strategy for European IBM.

European IBM that was developed by Frontex?	
4. What are the main challenges for your country in the process of IBM strategy development? What kind of expertise do you need to facilitate the process?	There are no major challenges in the context of IBM strategy development.
5. What are the priority areas of development in the field of IBM for your country? In which specific areas of this field would you like to develop further cross-border cooperation and receive EU support?	The priority areas of development in the field of IBM in CZ are: • Human resources, including training • Implementation of new IT systems • Effective return of third country nationals who are staying illegally. Regarding further development of cross-border cooperation at internal borders, the Police of the Czech Republic are currently participating in several internationally oriented ongoing projects as well as projects in the initial phase of realization. The actually running projects primarily contain the international ISF funded content (staff training, study visits, blended language courses) while using the European Commission financial instruments; the PCCCs are scheduled for further support and structural enhancement of the European law enforcement network in terms of mutual international cooperation. The CBSC project (Cross Border Security Cooperation project), which is currently at the very beginning of the European Commission evaluation, is being developed to focus on enhancing Cross border security on the internal Schengen border, basically aimed to monitor the constantly changing migratory routes in order to secure the border areas and mitigate some specific cross border criminal phenomena. The Police of the Czech Republic and the German Federal Police have been working very closely on the project preparations, awaiting many positive prospective outputs during the anticipated project implementation. The Police of the Czech Republic of course continue to develop and promote various kinds of cooperation that may be beneficial to secure the internal Schengen border, support all neighbouring countries, deepen international cooperation and therefore contribute to safer European society.

GEORGIA	
1. Please describe the system of the "green" border surveillance in your country. What specific technologies are used in your country to ensure effective protection of "green" borders?	The Ministry of Internal Affair's State Subordinated Entity – Border Police of Georgia (GBP) is responsible for ensuring inviolability of the State Border of Georgia. In that regard, GBP is tasked to control the border regime on the state land border ("green border"[1]) and maritime space ("blue border") of Georgia. One of the key pillars of effective border control is performing border surveillance[2] activities. In that regard, GBP deploys Border Surveillance Systems (BSS) to provide comprehensive situational awareness along the "green border" for border security and to detect and interdict individuals illegally entering Georgia between Border Crossing Points (BCPs). BSS are a combination of modern technologies designed to assist GBP in its daily activities. BSS are located across the "green border" of Georgia and includes but not limited to technologies such as fixed and mobile video surveillance systems, thermal imaging devices, radars and photo-traps. GBP deploys various types of surveillance technologies depending on the risk assessment and surrounding environment (terrain, vegetation, populated areas and etc). At the current stage GBP's top priority is to cover all high risk border sectors by modern technologies and to carry on consistent work towards applying those technologies in all border sectors in order to fill in the gaps of uncovered area. Meanwhile, all relevant directions of the state border of Georgia is covered with photo-traps installed in areas where there is generally no persistent presence of GBP's personnel (Border Guards). Photo-traps are motion activated, than nearby command center receives a notification of alarm via MMS and relevant personnel prioritize their response. In the process of border surveillance GBP is supported by the State Security Service Operative Technical Agency (OTA). OTA has designed the project titled "Border Operations Monitoring System (BOMS)", which was installed at the Areas of Responsibility (AOR) of a number of Land Border Sectors at Georgia-Armenia and Georgia-Turkey State Border. OTA is also responsible for the technical support and maintenance of BOMS, while GBP is the operator and end-user of the foregoing system.
2. Please describe your country's experience in establishing common contact points (CCPs) or police and customs cooperation centers with other states. Please describe their structure and main tasks. How can you assess the effectiveness of data exchange within the operation of CCPs?	In order to improve communication with the neighboring states about border related issues, it is envisaged to assign border representatives (border commissioners similar to CCPs) for Armenian, Azerbaijan and Turkish border lines. The border commissioners are responsible for the development of bilateral annual joint action plans with their foreign counterparts and also for taking preventive measures and exchange information on border violations during scheduled and extraordinary meetings for mutual benefit. That kind of approach ensures that second tier (Cooperation with neighboring countries) of four-tier IBM model is achieved and further strengthened. Bilateral Agreement on Border Commissioners was signed with Armenia in 2016 and with Azerbaijan in 2018. As regards Turkey, border commissioner institute is included in bilateral agreement on Cross-Border Cooperation, which has been signed in 1997. Those agreements create an internal legal background for proper functioning of the border commissioner's institute. Respectively, the new draft of Border Representatives statute has been elaborated and is waiting for approval during 2019.

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[1] Total length of the "green border" of Georgia amounts to 1 839 km. Length of the area with Republic of Turkey is 275 km, Republic of Armenia – Approx. 224 km, Republic of Azerbaijan – Approx. 446 km and Russian Federation – Approx. 894 km.

[2] Border surveillance - Surveillance of borders between border crossing points

3. Does your country have an IBM strategy? If yes, do you plan to revise the existing one and align it with the Technical and Operational Strategy for European IBM that was developed by Frontex?	General model of European Integrated Border management (IBM) aims at managing State Border more efficiently, addressing migratory challenges, tackling cross-border crime, respecting fundamental rights, developing credible Human Resource Management (HR) system, ensuring high level of cooperation between relevant authorities. An adequate IBM strategy works towards achieving of efficient and cost-effective management of the state border. At the same time it will contribute to increase detection capabilities and prevent illegal cross-border activities. The cornerstone of European IBM - four-tier access model (Measures in third countries; Cooperation with neighboring countries; Border Control and Control measures within area of free movement) is the guided principal of Georgian IBM strategy. In that spirit, on 13 March, 2014 Government of Georgia (GoG) adopted "State Border Management Strategy for the years 2014-2018" and its action plan, which guided out Georgia's state border management for those years. Also, significant part of GBP's strategic structural development was based on the national IBM strategy. The mandate of "State Border Management Strategy for the years 2014-2018" has expired at the end of 2018, therefore a special governmental body (interagency council) was created, which is chaired by Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia and includes high officials from different ministries. GBP is responsible for the secretary functions of the interagency council. Interagency council has tasked its working groups to develop a new IBM strategy. That kind of approach ensures to maximize the involvement of all relevant agencies in the working process. Currently, elaboration process of the new IBM strategy and its action plan is ongoing, and both will be endorsed in Autumn, 2019. The aim of the new IBM strategy is not to alter any existing successful practices, but to enhance European IBM strategy's core principles and tailor them to the national needs. Besides, sharing past experiences and identify possible gaps distilled from previous strategy, is crucially important. With that in mind, Georgia aims to have a new national IBM strategy, which fosters cooperation and coordination (Intra-service cooperation; Inter-agency Cooperation and International Cooperation), develops transparent and merit-based HR system; ensures swift information exchange at interagency, interagency as well as international levels; further modernizes border protection infrastructure and equipment.
4. What are the main challenges for your country in the process of IBM strategy development? What kind of expertise do you need to facilitate the process?	Taking into account, that IBM strategy and its action plan is important tool for managing the state border effectively, budgeting process is equally important as it is a forecast of all expenses and helps to identify means for achieving strategic objectives. Without securing budgetary means (national and external funds) implementation process faces some delays. With that in mind, one of the main focus of the new IBM strategy will be budgetary part which is a completely new challenge as in the previous strategy budget was not included. So it is of primary importance to develop realistic plans to ensure that every goal will be accomplished with a set timetable.
5. What are the priority areas of development in the field of IBM for your country? In which specific areas of this field would you like to develop further cross-border cooperation and receive EU support?	Top priorities in the field of IBM are: • Development of HRM system Development of HRM system is one of the top priority for GBP. Having a qualified personnel is essential for secured borders. Adequate job descriptions and merit based system is a corner stone to build strong HRM system, which will have impact on the quality of border protection and overall performance of GBP personnel.

	In 2017, under the umbrella of central administration of GBP, professional development unit was created. The unit is tasked to promote high professional standards within GBP. This is achieved by offering coast effective training products for border guards, as well as other personnel. • Creation of the Unified System of Risk Analysis Unified system of risk analysis at the State Border of Georgia (hereafter – Unified System) is one of the components of effective border management. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia initiated the creation of a Unified System encompassing all the relevant actors within the Ministry having a role in border and migration management. The goal of the Unified System is to ensure identification of existing risks in the field of border and migration management at the state border of Georgia and to develop effective mechanisms for the implementation of responsive and preventive measures. As a result of risk analysis, analytical products are to be elaborated, which will support optimal decision making aimed at risk reduction with consideration of available resources and capabilities. In June 13, 2016 MIA adopted the "Unified concept of Operations of Analysis (ConOps) and the Catalogue of Analytical Products". Moreover, a new methodology of risk analysis has been drafted, which needs to be approved by the Minister's decree. • Enchantment of International and Inter-agency Cooperation Georgian law enforcement officers (from Patrol Police Department and from Georgian Border Police) are actively involved in FRONTEX led Joint Operations (Land, Sea as well as Air operations), which includes familiarization with both border checks and border surveillance activities as an observer. Since 2016, due to modern security and safety challenges the legal status of FRONTEX has been revised that has resulted in expanding its mandate. In that regard, the new draft of working arrangement between MIA and FRONTEX has been elaborated, which includes establishing precise information sharing policy between parties. Georgia has concluded bilateral cooperation agreements on border issues with Republic of Armenia, Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of Turkey. On the basis of these agreements regular bilateral meetings and joint trainings are organized, which contributes information exchange and development of the capacities of Georgian border agencies. Besides the neighboring states, Georgia has concluded bilateral cooperation agreements on border issues with Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine. Based on these agreements the annual Plans of Cooperation are signed and implemented with the Border and other relevant Agencies of Turkey, Latvia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Moldova. Apart from that, enhancement of inter-agency cooperation is important, as it is a corner stone for effective border management. It refers to the cooperation and coordination between relevant agencies involved in border management thus could be an effective tool for smooth information exchange. A vivid demonstration of good inter-agency cooperation is Joint Maritime Operation Centre (JMOC). The concept of the JMOC integrates interagency approach for preventing, revealing and eliminating all kind of illegal activities, maritime incidents and grave

violations of maritime space régime of Georgia that pose threats to the security of Georgia. JMOC produces daily briefs and disseminates it to the relevant agencies, at the same time analyses data and produces specific reports upon the request. On October 25, 2018, the Government of Georgia approved a new Statute of JMOC, which also incorporates the rules and procedures of information exchange (Prime Minister's Decree). The foregoing document will guarantee that there are no legislative loopholes left which hampers information sharing process. The new Decree integrates amendments to the initial statute of JMOC, which will further boost its operational capabilities. It is planned the JMOC to become not only the national hub of the

Maritime domain awareness, but also to be instrumental to enhance international cooperation.

• Developing Infrastructure and Equipment

It is important to assess regularly the existing infrastructure and equipment in order to identify new needs and address existing new challenges. In that regard, there are two main directions on which GBP is focused: Further upgrading of border guard's basic equipment (included specialist equipment) and infrastructure.

In that context, Ministry of Internal Affairs adopted 5 year Modernization, Standardization and Unification Program in June 8, 2015. The program implementation period covers 20152019 years and incorporates all aspects of green and blue border management - land border, coast guard and aviation in the following directions: Command, Control, Communication (C3) and Surveillance; Human Resource Management; Infrastructure and Transport; Personal Equipment; Canine and Hippology; Coast Guard and Aviation Fleet Modernization.

Based on the new IBM strategy, GBP will perceive existing successful practices of infrastructural modernization (Construction of Land Border Sectors; Upgrading surveillance and detection capabilities; development of canine service; acquiring of modern equipment including boosting CBRN detection capabilities; modernization of coast guard and aviation fleet).

Apart from that, the new IBM strategy takes into consideration that border management as such will depend heavily on modern technologies and innovative surveillance solutions to improve interoperability and cost effectiveness. In that regard, a new chapter is dedicated to the development of IT Systems.

LITHUANIA	
1. Please describe the system of the "green" border surveillance in your country. What specific technologies are used in your country to ensure effective protection of "green" borders?	The State Border Guard Service under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania (SBGS) is responsible for land border surveillance Lithuania. The organization, coordination and execution of border surveillance tasks are carried out at three levels: central, regional and local (24/7). At the central level, the organization of border surveillance is coordinated by the SBGS Central Headquarters. The SBGS has been designated as the National Coordination Centre for coordination of the activities and for cooperation with all authorities of the EU Member States responsible for the surveillance of the external borders and with Frontex, and for exchange of information with these authorities via the EU surveillance system. The National Coordination Centre processes the information received from the local and regional coordination centres and enters it the Eurosur system.

	According to the internal management of SBGS, the SBGS regional units are responsible for the organization of the border control within the respective sections of the state border, and at the local level, the responsibility falls on the SBGS Frontier Stations that are located at the state border and are responsible for border surveillance within the territory of their operation.

Border surveillance is based on border patrols, use of technical border surveillance systems (mobile, stationary), border management and communication and inter-institutional and cross-border cooperation.

Border guards that carry or border surveillance are equipped with a variety of vehicles designed to patrol and to respond to possible violations, both on land and in the frontier waters; the patrols are equipped with mobile border surveillance equipment for border surveillance at all times (night vision devices, binoculars, portable thermal image cameras, etc. are used during the hours of darkness). In addition, aircraft are used to prevent violations and to promptly respond to potential violations. In order to strengthen the reaction capability of the SBGS forces and taking into account natural conditions and specificity of terrain, a border patrol path, a control footprint strip and a security fence have been built at certain sections of the state border.

The priority is given to the introduction of new technologies for border surveillance. The purpose of the deployment of border surveillance systems is to raise situational awareness (24/7) at the EU's external sea and land border, and to take prompt decisions that are required for management of border guard forces. In border sections where fixed border surveillance systems are in place, there are practically no latent border violations (the systems act as a preventive measure), all activities that take place at the state border are visible and under control, and therefore an efficient use of border guard forces is ensured.

The main elements of the installed technical border surveillance systems that are synergetic and inseparable from one another are as follows:

- detection of a border violation (alarm activation, video detection at all times and in all seasons);
- (2) transfer of data from the scene of the violation (video or other data to identify the location of the violation and the offenders) to operators of the control centre (24/7, failure of one system element may not affect the operation and functionality of the entire system);
- (3) Decision-making and response (necessity of having the necessary staff (including dog handlers) and vehicles for response);
- archiving and analysing information about violations detected.

Inter-institutional (inter-departmental) cooperation. |

	The main inter-departmental cooperation in the field of border protection is conducted between institutions under the Ministry of the Interior: the Police and the Public Security Service, as well as with the Customs, which is subordinate to the Ministry of Finance. The SBGS inter-departmental cooperation is based on signed cooperation agreements and inter-agency annual cooperation plans. The basis for the assistance provided by institutions under the ministry of the Interior the fulfilment of the border guarding functions is regulated by the procedure approved by the Order of the Minister of the Interior. The main forms of cooperation are as follows: meetings of national, regional and local leadership; access to the databases of the agreement Parties concerned; exchange of information; joint trainings; joint (targeted) operations; joint patrolling. Cooperation between the SBGS and Lithuanian Air Forces (LAF) in controlling the Lithuanian airspace can be distinguished as a separate area of cooperation. The SBGS and LAF have signed the Cooperation Rules of Procedure on surveillance of the airspace of the Republic of Lithuania. The responsibility of the SBGS is to monitor uncontrolled airspace by means visual surveillance carried out by border patrols and to report to the LAF on aircrafts that have been sighted. In individual cases, upon introduction of the enhanced border control regime and in case of need, the SBGS can obtain assistance from the units of the Lithuanian Armed Forces. International cooperation in border surveillance. International cooperation in border surveillance is based on the signed inter-governmental international agreements with the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus, and by bilateral agreements between border agencies, on the basis of which information on the situation on the border between the two countries is exchanged and joint investigation of border incidents are carried out. In accordance with the provisions of the inter-governmental agreements, institutions of the State Border Representatives have been established with the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. The practical cooperation between the State Border Representatives is organized and implemented annually at various levels, and joint meetings of the Parties are being organized.
2. Please describe your country's experience in establishing common contact points (CCPs) or police and customs cooperation centers with other states. Please describe their structure and main tasks. How can you assess the	Upon joining the Schengen Agreement, gradual abolition of internal borders was accompanied by an increase in cooperation between law enforcement authorities of the Member States. In accordance with Article 39 of the Schengen Convention and in accordance with the best practices of other members of the Community in the establishment and activities of cooperation centres as well as in the framework of inter-governmental agreements on the fight against organized crime and other crimes in border areas (with Poland and Latvia), Lithuania has established cooperation centres /contact points with the Republic of Polandand with the Republic of Latvia.

effectiveness of data exchange within the operation of CCPs?	Cooperation Centre with the Republic of Poland (Budzisko), established on the basis of the three co-operating institutions of the two countries, namely Police, Border Guard and Customs (Agreement between LTU and POL co-operating institutions signed in 2016). The cooperation centre operates 24/7. Each Agreement Party develops its own work schedule to ensure uninterrupted operation of the centre. The main tasks: • Exchange of information necessary to ensure public order and security and to detect crimes in border areas by using the existing databases, information systems and registers; • Developing, submitting and transferring requests or inquiries to the Agreement Parties in the field of the fight and prevention of crime; • Provide assistance in coordination of actions of border guard agencies regarding events that threaten security and public order or pursue activities in the border area; • Develop analytical and statistical reports on the implementation of the Centre's tasks; • Participate in the joint prevention programs; Cooperation Centre with the Republic of Latvia (Kalviai - Meitene), established on the basis of the agreement between Lithuanian and Latvian border guard services. The principles of work organization and the main tasks of the Centre are similar to those of the Budzisko Centre in Poland. The activities of the cooperation centres and the swift exchange of information with the partners ensure a harmonious and efficient cooperation between the border guard authorities and is beneficial for the Agreement Parties when ensuring public order and security and detecting crimes in border areas.
3. Does your country have an IBM strategy? If yes, do you plan to revise the existing one and align it with the Technical and Operational Strategy for European IBM that was developed by Frontex?	Lithuania had the Program for the Development of the State Border Guard System for 2017-2025, which was approved in 2017 and encompasses all 11 Components of IBM as well as the Plan Implementation and Evaluation Criteria. This program only partially affected the activities of other national authorities involved in the implementation of IBM, as it was approved by the order of the Chief of the State Border Guard Service. Based on this program, a national IBM strategy is currently being developed and most of the provisions of this program are transferred into national IBM strategy. The work started in 2018, when an interdepartmental working group was set up by the order of the Minister of the Interior. It is envisaged that this working group have to prepare the draft of the Integrated Border Management Strategy and its implementing action plan within six months after approval of the Technical and Operational Strategy for European Integrated Border Management (on 27 of March 2019). The working group has been chaired by the Vice-Minister of Home Affairs, and includes representatives of all national authorities involved in the process of Integrated Border Management, including the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Customs Department under the Ministry of Finance, the Police

	Department under the Ministry of the Interior, Representatives of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior and the State Border Guard Service under the Ministry of the Interior. It should be said that the working group started its work last year, but it did a little pause, as it was waiting for the technical and operational strategy to be adopted. It should also be noted that the working group has been actively involved in the process of development European technical and operational strategy, so its members need less time to look into it and we think that this will serve for quality of the national IBM strategy. Currently the process of preparing a national IBM strategy continues and we plan to have a draft of the national IBM strategy within two - three months.
4. What are the main challenges for your country in the process of IBM strategy development? What kind of expertise do you need to facilitate the process?	It is expected that the national IBM strategy will prepared by aligning our existing Program for the Development of the State Border Guard System to the Technical and Operational Strategy for European Integrated Border Management, and we plan that it will be approved by a Lithuanian government (governmental decree) instead of the commander's of the State Border Guard Service order, therefore, it will takes time for all formalities. It is also very important to ensure that the necessary funding is made available to implement this strategy. Funding from the national budget should be supported by funding from the European funds, but the legislative process for a new European financial perspective is not yet complete, so it is very important to ensure that it is not late.
5. What are the priority areas of development in the field of IBM for your country? In which specific areas of this field would you like to develop further cross-border cooperation and receive EU support?	In the national IBM strategy, strategic goals were set for each component of the IBM, but the priorities of the components themselves were not set. With regard to cooperation with third countries, Lithuania intends to develop trust-based cooperation with third countries or their competent authorities, with a particular focus on the development of cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries, and the creation of a network of liaison officers in third countries.

SWEDEN	
1. Please describe the system of the "green" border surveillance in your country. What specific technologies are used in your country to ensure effective protection of "green" borders?	Sweden do not have any land "green" borders to third countries.
2. Please describe your country's experience in establishing common contact points (CCPs) or police and customs cooperation centers with other states. Please describe their structure and	Sweden does not have any PCCC (Police and Customs Cooperation Centers). One of the regions of the Swedish Police Authority is looking into the possibility to establish a cooperation-office with Norway, but that is based on the regional and Nordic cooperation. The Commission held an expert meeting on 3 July regarding PCCC to exchange experiences and best practice. The Finnish Presidency has also raised the question about whether common EU legislation for PCCC would be necessary to formalize that cooperation and the issue was discussed at the informal meeting on 9 July and in the Law Enforcement Working Party (LEWP) on 11 July and our perception is that most MS did not see the necessity of EU-legislation in the area but that this kind of cooperation

main tasks. How can you assess the effectiveness of data exchange within the operation of CCPs?	rather should be based on regional agreements. The Swedish position is that we do not see a need for common EU-legislation in the area but that this should be a regional cooperation. However, if there were to be EU-legislation in the area, it is important that such legislation would not hinder the existing regional cooperation
3. Does your country have an IBM strategy? If yes, do you plan to revise the existing one and align it with the Technical and Operational Strategy for European IBM that was developed by Frontex?	Sweden has since March 2018 a national strategy for Integrated Border Management. A revision of the strategy, including alignment to the Technical and Operational Strategy for European IBM, is to be carried out during autumn 2019.
4. What are the main challenges for your country in the process of IBM strategy development? What kind of expertise do you need to facilitate the process?	This far, the main challenges in the process of national IBM strategy development have been to establish an effective national governance mechanism for IBM, involving the relevant strategic, policy and operational levels. This issue is one of the main areas to address upon the revision of the national IBM strategy.
5. What are the priority areas of development in the field of IBM for your country? In which specific areas of this field would you like to develop further cross-border cooperation and receive EU support?	The Swedish Police Authority has extensive cross border cooperation with its Nordic neighbors. However, the focus is primarily law enforcement rather than border management and therefore is not considered of relevance in this specific context.