

Report of the Panel Meeting on Integrated Border Management

27-28 September 2018

Odessa, Ukraine



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 27-28 September 2018, the Panel Meeting on Integrated Border Management was held in Odessa. The event was hosted by Ukraine (State Border Guard Service) with the support of the European Commission (DG HOME), European External Action Service and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mission in Ukraine under the framework of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Migration, Mobility and Integrated Border Management.

The Panel Meeting gathered representatives from the European Commission (EC), European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM), Frontex, EU Support Group for Ukraine, EU Member States, Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine), international organizations (IOM and ICMPD) and the EaP Civil Society Forum.

The Panel Meeting provided an occasion to discuss the recent developments in the field of Integrated Border Management (IBM) both in the EU and the EaP states; to consider cooperation in the framework of the European Border Surveillance system (EUROSUR) and cooperation in the field of customs, notably, the support currently being provided to the EU Member States through the Customs Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border Expert Team (CELBET) initiative and the possible modalities of cooperation between the CELBET and EaP countries; to discuss the IBM concept, as it is understood by the EU, the importance of the strategic approach to IBM and the current challenges in the process of developing and implementing the IBM in partner countries; to exchange best practices of cooperation in the field of border security and to reflect on the modalities of continued EU support in the area of IBM.

The importance of cooperation at different levels (intra-agency, interagency and international) for efficient Integrated Border Management became the key message of the meeting, having in mind that cooperation is not only about smooth and fast exchange of the information, experience, documents etc., but, first of all, it is about building the trust between the partners.

On the second day of the meeting, a field visit to Kuchurgan-Pervomaisk border crossing point was organized for insight into the practical organization of effective interagency and international cooperation and coordination between the border guard and customs authorities of Ukraine and Moldova while conducting the joint border control.



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27 September 2018 – Day 1

Welcome and opening

Mr. Radoslaw Darski, EEAS, on behalf of the EU chaired the meeting, welcomed all the participants to the Panel meeting and thanked the Ukrainian side for organizing it together with the EU in Odessa. He stressed that it is not the first time when Ukraine become a host for IBM Panel and the very first meeting took place also in Odessa back in 2009 simultaneously with the launching of the EaP framework itself. This highlights the level of commitment of Ukrainian authorities to the topic which is highly appreciated by the EU side. Mr. Darski also noted the significant progress that the Ukrainian Border Agency has achieved in its development and approaching the best European practices and confirmed that the EU plans to further support the European integration intentions in Ukraine and provide both advisory and technical assistance in the area of IBM. Mr. Darski also touched upon general developments of Eastern Partnership, in particular, the EaP Summit conducted in November 2017 and the ambitious agenda adopted by the EU and EaP states as the EaP Deliverables 2020. The creation of the EaP Panel on Migration, Mobility and IBM by merging the previous Panels on IBM and on Migration and Asylum should contribute to achieving the targets related to further development of mobility and people-to-people contacts. He also stressed the importance of bilateral cooperation between the EU and each of EaP countries. Finally, Mr. Darski briefly outlined the agenda of the Panel meeting and thanked the countries who submitted the answers to the meeting questionnaire and IOM Ukraine for compiling these answers and preparing the documents for discussion. He also invited the EaP countries to express their interest in hosting the next IBM meeting in 2019.

Mr. Vasyl Servatiuk, SBGSU, greeted the meeting participants on behalf of the leadership of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine. He noted that Ukrainian border authority pays considerable attention to the implementation of advanced border security enhancement approaches and the introduction of best European practices for IBM. In particular, he mentioned successfully implemented project "Support of the State Border Guard Service in further introduction of the principles of integrated border management" which provided an opportunity to learn the experience of European colleagues and to receive valuable tactical and strategic recommendations for the further development of the IBM Strategy and its Implementation Plan beyond 2020. He also informed that the High-level intergovernmental working group on IBM chaired by the Vice-Prime Minister of Ukraine and comprising the representatives of all IBM subjects in Ukraine has been recently established. According to Mr. Servatiuk, the SBGSU is being systemically reformed, modern approaches to border management are being implemented and the joint measures are taken to counter cross-border crime. In addition, given the current threats, maritime security is being reformed and a fundamentally new, effective system of intellectual border protection is in the process of



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creation. At the end of his welcoming, Mr. Servatiuk invited all Panel meeting participants to share their best practices and experiences in IBM field during the discussions.

Session I – Cooperation in the field of customs: the Customs Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border Expert Team (CELBET) initiative

Mr. Jyrki Linna, CELBET, presented to the participants an overview of CELBET – initiative funded by the EU’s Customs 2020 programme that pools expertise from 11 Eastern and South-Eastern land border Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Finland) for strengthening and improving their operational co-operation at the external borders of the EU, ensuring high quality of customs control and intensive cooperation and networking. Mr. Linna provided an overview of the six areas of activity of the expert teams under second phase of the initiative (2018-2020), namely, border-crossing point management and evaluation (performance measurement), risk management (risk-based selection for controls/facilitation), operational controls, equipment and procurement, training, cooperation and coordination between customs administrations and border guard/border police and cooperation with neighbouring third countries’ services operating at the border crossing points (BCPs) at the EU Eastern and South-Eastern land border.

See [the presentation “CELBET – crossing borders”](#).

Mr. Bartosz Gruszecki, CELBET, explored further the main initiatives of the team in the area of cooperation between EU agencies and countries. CELBET sees its potential in this sphere in the implementation of the particular products worked out by CELBET teams, provision of solutions suitable for third countries, facilitation of bilateral relations and cooperation with EU agencies, namely, with Frontex. Mr. Gruszecki highlighted the CELBET’s role in developing and implementing the synchronized checks approach (“One stop control” and “One authority control”), facilitating the implementation of joint management procedures for border guards and customs authorities by developing the check-list for shift leaders, supporting the enhancement of border strips cooperation and balanced BCP development. He also stressed the added value of the training course “Enhanced Customs and Border Guard cooperation at the external land borders” developed by CELBET in cooperation with Frontex and which potentially could be also offered to the third countries, including the EaP. In addition, Mr. Gruszecki mentioned that CELBET already has a successful experience in cooperating with Belarus in the framework of the project related to creating the joint procedure on the development of BCPs infrastructure.

See [the presentation “CELBET initiatives in the area of cooperation between agencies and countries”](#).



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Tour-de-table

After the session, the participants discussed the possible options of cooperation between the EaP states and the CELBET. In particular, Ukraine and Belarus expressed the interest in a training course on cooperation between the border guard and customs authorities and in further exploring the matter of responsibility sharing during the joint control implementation. Among other issues discussed were practical aspects and challenges related to the implementation of synchronized control and joint control.

Session II - Cooperation of the EaP countries in the European Border Surveillance systems (EUROSUR)

Mr. Patrick Chatard-Moulin, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME), EC, presented the concept of EUROSUR, its objectives, method, the components of the governance framework and the model of cooperation with third countries envisaged by the Regulation (EU) No. 1052/2013 of 22 October 2013. Mr. Chatard-Moulin also touched upon the EUROSUR effectiveness evaluation as well as proposals regarding the scope and functioning of EUROSUR and its improvement with respect to third countries that were presented by the President of the EC in his State of Union Address on 12 September 2018. See [the presentation “Cooperation of the EaP countries in the European Border Surveillance systems \(EUROSUR\)”](#).

Mr. Piotr Malinowski, European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), exposed the main features of EUROSUR framework. He spoke about the role of national coordination centers, situational pictures (national, European and common pre-frontier), as well as about the border sections impact levels. Mr. Malinowski also presented the main Eurosur Fusion Services including vessel services and vessel detection, multipurpose aerial surveillance and Copernicus Programme services that include a provision of weather and maritime forecasts and past data, visual data discovery and satellite imagery. See [the presentation “European border surveillance framework EUROSUR”](#).

Mr. Oleksandr Panchenko, SBGSU, devoted his presentation to the Ukrainian experience of implementation of smart border approach to border protection. He noted that 157 BCPs in Ukraine have already been equipped with biometric control equipment, biometric data processing system and access to INTERPOL databases. Mr. Panchenko provided the participants with an overview of automated system of calculation of foreigner's stay in Ukraine (PTR 90/180), integrated interagency telecommunication system “ARKAN” that



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facilitates information exchange between State Fiscal Service and State Border Guard Service, and development of maritime situation awareness through the installation of the first early detection, prevention and targets identification system “AEROS”. It was also stressed that Ukraine closely cooperates with EUROSUR at the national level including the transition of relevant information. To further strengthen such cooperation, Ukraine has applied for a status cooperation agreement with Frontex and currently is waiting for the decision from the EU side.

See [the presentation “Smart border approach in border protection”](#).

Tour-de-table

During the discussion session, the participants focused on such issues as aerial surveillance and the data received from the aircrafts, API/PNR, responsibilities of Frontex regarding the inland waters monitoring. As it was underlined by Frontex representative, the monitoring of inland waters within the EU lies out of Frontex mandate, while the inland waters in third countries could be a subject of such monitoring in some cases, however, it is not the main Frontex’s target. Another important issue raised was human rights adherence in the course if EUROSUR implementation and the conclusions of the evaluation conducted by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency.

Session III – Integrated Border Management – what does it really mean and how is the concept evolving?

Mr. Patrick Chatard-Moulin, DG HOME, EC, dedicated his presentation to the European IBM concept. He listed the key objectives of the European IBM, the main milestones of its evolution and its 11 strategic components. Mr. Chatard-Moulin recalled that the European IBM is based on four tier access control model, which includes measures in third countries, measures with third neighbouring countries, border control measures and measures within the Schengen area. The European IBM is implemented by the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) which comprises the EBCG Agency and national border and coast guard authorities in the EU MSs having shared responsibilities and should be guided and further developed through unified IBM strategies. At the end of his presentation, Mr. Chatard-Mouling provided the participants with an overview of recent proposals on the introduction of the multiannual strategic policy cycle and integrated planning of the European IBM.

See [the presentation “European Integrated Border Management”](#).



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Session IV – Integrated Border Management: Issues and challenges

Ms. Livia Styp-Rekowska, IOM Regional Office for South-Eastern, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, presented the participants with an overview of desk research conducted specifically for the Panel meeting. Ms. Styp-Rekowska collected and analyzed the IBM strategies and action plans of the European and some other countries in order to identify good practices, outline their general features and to reveal the areas which are typically prioritized and which are rarely considered. Ms. Styp-Rekowska described the main outcomes of her research and concluded the presentation with recommendations on IBM strategy drafting. She also stressed that border management is getting more and more complex by the day. If border agencies want to keep up with the developments, if they want to remain effective and efficient in the face of contemporary challenges, such as the exponential rise in cross-border movement of people and goods, then they need to change the way they work. The best way to optimize resources and get the best results is through improved intra-service, inter-agency and international cooperation.

See [the presentation “Integrated Border Management Strategies - Desk Research Overview”](#).

Ms. Laura Scorretti, IOM Mission in Ukraine, stressed that IOM Ukraine is happy to support the first IBM related meeting in the framework of the updated Panel. She presented the discussion paper prepared by IOM Ukraine on the basis of the answers to the questionnaire submitted by the EaP states. In particular, the discussion paper covered an overview of the IBM state of play in EaP countries (IBM strategies in place; border surveillance – best practices and challenges of interagency cooperation; IBM priorities – potential areas of further EU support). Ms. Scorretti outlined the best practices of coordination/cooperation of the EaP countries and their most common challenge in the context of IBM – imperfect mechanism of data exchange which requires further improvements. She also highlighted the common IBM priorities for the EaP countries identified in the course of discussion paper preparation, e.g. risk analysis and management, advancing the cooperation at different levels, human resources development as well as developing or improving the IBM strategies and/or frameworks.

See [the presentation “Integrated Border Management. Overview of national experiences of the EaP countries”](#).

Mr. Kristina Cernejute, EU Support Group for Ukraine, spoke about the practical benefits of having IBM in place as well as about the modalities of support provided by the EU to Ukraine in IBM field. As it was underlined by Ms. Cernejute, IBM has the real beneficial impact on the country's security but also on the economy. Integration and optimization of the border agencies' work processes lead to reducing the border processing times, which make the country more attractive for doing business, enhance cross border trade and improve the



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investment climate. Ms. Cernejute has pointed out that the EU has provided substantial support to border management in Ukraine over the past 10 years (estimated 300 million EUR in total) and to a dedicated mission (EUBAM since 2005) and described the directions of further IBM development in Ukraine. In particular, she stressed the importance of the comprehensive IBM Strategy and Action Plan elaboration as well as the crucial role of IT component. Apart from that, the EU concern was highlighted regarding the situation with 11 Rapiscan Mobile Scanners provided to State Fiscal Service of Ukraine in 2009. Ms. Cernejute concluded her presentation with a statement that despite a few existing challenges, the EU is considering the possibility of further support of IBM reforms in Ukraine in order to address the existing gaps and to achieve the positive developments in this field.

Mr. Oleksandr Panchenko, SBGSU, devoted his presentation to the features of the implementation of the IBM concept in Ukraine. Mr. Panchenko stressed that Ukraine fully shares the European approaches to IBM with due consideration of domestic administrative experience and the internal and external factors that affect national border security. He described the main directions of the IBM concept implementation in Ukraine, in particular, harmonization of Ukrainian border legislation as well as border control system in accordance with EU standards; implementation of the TWINNING project recommendations (which include *inter alia* developing the IBM strategy and action plan); increasing the efficiency of the data and information analysis system, capacity building for enhancing the Ukrainian maritime security, including the establishing the Joint Maritime Operation Center and Logistics Support Center; human resources development and anti-corruption campaign implementation.

See [the presentation "Integrated Border Management – closing the gaps in Ukraine"](#).

Tour-de-table

During the discussion, the participants raised several important questions concerning the practical implementation of IBM strategies and cooperation between the various stakeholders. One of the questions sounded by the representative of the EaP Civil Society Forum was related to the cooperation with the civil society, its role in the process of IBM implementation and the added value it can create. As an example of such cooperation at the EU level, the involvement of the European Social and Economic Committee in the process of developing of the new Commission's EBCG proposal of 12 September was mentioned. Another example of such cooperation is the Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights composed of 15 organizations, mostly NGOs and international organizations such as IOM and UNHCR, and which, according to Frontex regulation, advise on fundamental rights issues, including advising on gender issues, contributing the training curriculum etc.



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In addition, the representative of Armenia raised the question regarding the challenges related to the implementation of the IBM related agreements between the EaP countries bound by the EU Association agreements (Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova) and those who have membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (Armenia and Belarus). As it was explained by the representative of Ukraine, there are no obstacles for cooperation in IBM field with other EaP countries, in particular with Belarus, and many IBM elements are successfully implemented, e.g. information exchange, joint control etc. The representative of Belarus confirmed the very positive experience of cooperation with Ukraine regarding the BCP's management. It was also mentioned that Ukrainian experience is very helpful for Belarus in the course of adaptation of European IBM approach to the national realities.

Session V – Different modalities of continued EU support – ongoing projects and future cooperation

Mr. Zlatko Miletic and **Ms. Dace Kozule**, Frontex, devoted their presentations to support provided by Frontex to EaP countries in IBM field. Mr. Miletic presented an overview of the EaP IBM Capacity Building Project – the EU-funded project that is part of the EaP/IBM Flagship Initiative. The project supports the implementation of IBM across borders in the six EaP countries according to European best practices. The main focus of the project is the capacity building and enhancing the training capacities of the immediate project beneficiaries – the national agencies in each EaP country that are involved in border management, such as border police and customs. The overall objective of the project, therefore, is to facilitate the movement of persons and goods across borders in the six EaP countries, while at the same time maintaining secure borders through the enhanced cooperation at national, cross-border and international levels. The specific objectives of the project were outlined during the presentation as well as its three components: capacity building, IBM related training/enhancing capacities, horizontal issues. Mr. Miletic also provided detailed statistics on implemented activities and main outcomes of the project as well as additional achievements, e.g. drafting the Comparative Analysis of the state of play in the field of IBM in EaP countries, establishing the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network (EaP RAN), developing the Anti-corruption recommendations for border guards/customs etc. Ms. Dace Kozule, in her turn, has reconfirmed the continuation of the Frontex support to EaP countries in IBM field. She mentioned that currently the appropriate modality of such support is being considered and the feedback received from EaP states. Ms. Kozule invited the meeting participants to use the platform provided by the Panel to express their needs in IBM field. More details regarding the further assistance which could be offered by Frontex to be announced at the final conference of the IBM capacity building project to be held at the end of November 2018.



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See [the presentation “Eastern Partnership \(EaP\) Integrated Border Management \(IBM\) Capacity Building Project”](#).

Mr. Slawomir Pichor, EUBAM, presented the progress achieved over the years by Ukrainian and Moldovan border agencies, with EUBAM’s support, in advancing the IBM. He stressed the role of joint border control in the IBM concept and the main EUBAM’s activities that resulted in the implementation of joint control at six border-crossing points at Moldova-Ukraine border. Mr. Pichor listed main challenges for joint border control, e.g. legal framework, border infrastructure, control procedures and information flow, and underlined the importance of the new agreement on joint control signed between Moldova and Ukraine in 2017 that provides for common control at all BCPs of the Moldovan-Ukrainian state border, including the central segment. He provided the participants with an overview of the EUBAM support of infrastructure development at joint Moldova-Ukraine BCPs (“Palanca”, “Kuchurhan-Pervomaisk”, “Reni-Giurgiulesti”) and listed further planned EUBAM activities. See [the presentation “EUBAM for a qualitative change in border management”](#).

Mr. Maksym Samusevych, SBGSU, presented Ukrainian border security model and recent experience of conducting successful joint border operations with Belarus (“Rubezh”), the EU (“Kordon”), EUBAM (“Janus”), Frontex (“Alexis”, “Vega”, “Minerva”, “Triton”, “Poseidon”) and the U.S. (“Sea Breeze 2018”s). He stressed the importance of joint activities for the border security of Ukraine and outlined the prospects for further cooperation. See [the presentation “Joint Operations as an effective tool for border security: state of play and future perspectives”](#).

Tour-de-table

The discussions covered such questions as the applicability of legislation in case of violation detection during the joint control implementation, the importance of having respective international agreements in place clearly defining such issues and challenges related to the conclusion of such agreements and coordination of national legislation. As it was stressed by the EUBAM representative, the trust between the governments and the border and customs agencies is crucial for an effective joint control implementation and reaching the respective agreements.

Other businesses and closure

At the end of the meeting, the representatives of two countries – Belarus and Georgia expressed their interest in hosting the next IBM Panel meeting.



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Mr. Darski, EEAS, on behalf of the EU appreciated the initiative of both states and ensured that both proposals would be duly taken into account. He also thanked all the participants for fruitful exchange of information and emphasized the following important outcomes of the meeting: need of strengthening the cooperation between the CELBET and the EaP countries, in particular in Caucasus region, is noted by the EU side; the EUROSUR should be considered as an effective model of interagency and interstate cooperation; the IBM implementation should take into account not only security aspects but also people-to-people contacts and human rights dimension; regardless some changes in technical *modus operandi* the cooperation between the EU and EaP countries will continue, including direct cooperation with the particular EU Member States.

Mr. Darski closed the meeting with the words of appreciation to the Ukrainian hosts for the excellent organization of the meeting.

28 September 2018 – Day 2

Field visit to Kuchurgan-Pervomaisk BCP

On the second day of the Panel Meeting the participants visited the Kuchurgan-Pervomaisk border crossing point at the invitation of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine and had an opportunity to observe the practical organization of an effective interagency and international cooperation and coordination between the border guard and customs authorities of Ukraine and Moldova while conducting the joint border control.

All the presentations mentioned in this report, as well as all the materials related to the meeting, can be found on [the Panel website](#). The presentations are accessible to logged-in users only.



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