ABC4EU Report Summary

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Periodic Report Summary 1 - ABC4EU (ABC GATES FOR EUROPE)

Project Context and Objectives:

ABC4EU proposal is addressed to the topic SEC-2012.3.4-6 Enhancing the workflow and functionalities of Automated Border Control (ABC) gates -Integration Project.

The aim of the ABC4EU project is to identify the requirements for an integrated, interoperable and citizen’s rights respectful ABC system at EU level, taking account of the experience gained from the previous ABC pilots and projects and future needs derived from the Smart Borders and other EU and national initiatives, all of it while ensuring the protection of citizens’ rights, privacy and other related ethical aspects.

This will be finally achieved by the upgrading / amendment (when needed) and integration of already deployed (or deployed in due date) ABC systems in Spain and Portugal, covering all types of borders, i.e. airports, harbours and land borders. The Register Travel Programme (RTP) and the Entry/Exit system (EES) concepts will be specifically tested in the project to assess their feasibility. In ABC4EU especial attention will be paid to legal, social and ethical issues and for dissemination and exploitation. ABC4EU consortium considers that all the research carried out in the project has to be compliant to the laws related to border controls in the European Union and totally respectful to the rights of the European and third country citizens, from the social and ethical point of view.

The project activities are broken down in nine work packages and they will be completed over a period of 42 months. During the first period the ABC4EU project aims at defining a common set of requirements, from the legal, social, ethical and technical perspectives:

- Firstly, by analyzing the up-to-date legal environment regarding Border Control within the European Union focusing on the Schengen agreement and other relevant legislation at the regional level, in individual member States and relevant Third Countries. It will also establish the social, ethical and rights-based concerns regarding modern policies on border management.
- And secondly, establishing a set of common functional requirements for ABC systems from the End User perspective, which will provide a framework for the lifecycle of the project and a baseline towards harmonisation and standardisation. Related to the harmonization of ABC systems in terms of traveller experience, speed up traveller flows and optimize solutions of ABC eGates, several activities were completed providing, as a result, a set of processes, workflows and recommendations for the ABC design.

Project Results:

Within WP1, the contours of the legal, social and ethical assessment of the project began to be laid out. Early deliverables due in this six month period established the legal frameworks for border management and privacy, reviewed past case studies of ABC/EES/RTP, assessed potential acceptability and ethical issues, and provided methodologies for end user training on societal impact. Towards the end of the current reporting period, a methodology for assessment of project outputs was being developed.

Within the framework of WP2, the activities were focused in the deliverables 2.5 and 2.6. The first one is aimed to study traveller flows in different type of Border Crossing Points (BCP) to define guidelines for the harmonisation of automated border
control (ABC) systems. The aim and scope of the study were limited to a review of existing research, secondary data, in order to highlight what exists and is relevant for border guards. The study identifies relevant literature and surveys current estimates in the various domains of knowledge relevant to borders in Europe. The Deliverable 2.6 is aimed to collate and review a common set of requirements with EU-wide applicability, focused on the functional needs of the operational End User at the BCP (be it air, land or sea). Moreover, this document also includes a study on information needs for strategic analysis and the implementation of mechanisms to share such information between the BCP and the national back-office, and between national offices and an E.U. coordination centre, through a feasibility study of integration between C4i and ABC systems.

Within WP3, the activities provide a set of processes, workflows and recommendations for the ABC design from the theoretical and practical Consortium partners’ experience, serving as a consolidation of the available ABC knowledge and a baseline for the subsequent work (analysis, design and development WPs). Within the WP4, whose goal is to define the underlying architectural framework for the subsystems of the project, the first activities have started. The work carried out during these three months was aimed to create a Catalogue of Requirements to define in a formal way the scope of the project to be considered in the development of future Border Management Systems in Europe.

In addition, it has been also developed the first drafts of the high level diagrams describing the subsystem processes and entities involved in those process to be understood by non technical stakeholders. Within the WP7, the project dissemination has been further developed and updated including Social Secure Network (SSN) for consortium use. There has been interaction with other Work Packages, publishing of press release and further developing the project website. A new project leaflet has been designed to replace the initial one.

Potential Impact:

The final expected results of the ABC4EU project are:

- The need for harmonisation in the design and operational features of an ABC System across the E.U. Border Crossing Points (BCPs) is one of the main goal of the project. The harmonisation and standardisation proposals to be produced by ABC4EU project will include requirements and guidelines for all stakeholders (border guards, infrastructure operators, carriers, travellers, etc).
- Contribute towards extending the usage of fingerprint verification, not only as a complement to facial biometry, but as a fundamental part of an automated or semi-automated border control.
- Development of concepts for broadening the scope of ABC Systems to include Third-Country Nationals (RTP, EES and Integration with other Back-Office systems), who could also benefit from an automated BCP process in terms of flow efficiency, while maintaining the security requirements of the border crossing.
- Definition of the concept for the inclusion of BCPs into an Integrated Border Management System (both at National and EU level).

List of Websites:

http://www.abc4eu.eu

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