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EFEN NEWSLETTER

Introduction

Welcome to the 2nd edition of the EFEN Project Newsletter. This newsletter provides an update on the work of the EFEN Project.

We have now held workshops with 18 Member States and have a further four planned. We have also held our second network meeting and completed our work with Croatia.

Hungary Workshop Feedback

The Hungarian workshop was held in Budapest on 3rd October, and was attended by representatives from the Hungarian Institute of Forensic Science, Municipal Court of Budapest and Criminal Records Authority. Although currently there are no plans to use fingerprints in criminal records exchange in Hungary we received some positive feedback.

"I'm really glad that we had the opportunity to take part on a workshop in connection with the exchange and use of fingerprints in identification processes. We found it very useful, that we could receive a lot of information on the experiences of the UK and its partners regarding fingerprint-related matters. The topic of using fingerprints for the proper identification of the persons and sending; receiving them accompanied by the notifications captured our attention."

Rita KOROM dr. Head of Criminal Records Authority, Hungary

Swedish Workshop

The Swedish workshop was held on the 6th September, and was attended by 20 delegates from the Police Department, County Bureau of Investigation Stockholm, Judicial Training Academy, Prosecution - UC Gothenburg, RKP Register Group and the administration department in Kiruna.

This was the first workshop where we had the judicial delegates attend the same workshop as the criminal records and fingerprint delegates. This was a successful meeting, and this is a format that we will be using in the future, as it allowed all departments to meet each other and discuss the flow of information through the criminal justice system.

Croatia

As reported on in the last newsletter, the workshops with Croatia have been completed.

As a result of these workshops Croatia are currently making some changes to their current processes as they have seen the benefits of using fingerprints for identification purposes.

In Croatia criminal records are owned by the Ministry of Justice, and fingerprints are owned by the Forensic Science Centre, the two organisations are working together to agree an arrangement so that fingerprints can be exchanged with criminal records. Croatia has also decided to include the topic of EU criminal record exchange arrangements in one of the judicial training activities on EU judicial cooperation in criminal matters in the future.

Conference Update

The EFEN project conference is planned to be held in Rome, Italy in September 2014. We expect to send out invitations to this event in early 2014.

We currently have funding for two delegates from each EU Member State to attend the conference. We do of course welcome additional delegates to the conference.

The conference will relay the findings from the project which will include detailed information on; the availability of fingerprints to EU Member State Central Authorities, best practice in the management of fingerprints within EU criminal records exchange and identification in criminal records exchange and its impact on the use of foreign convictions in criminal proceedings.

The project also plans to present a number of related topics to identification within EU criminal records exchange and will include expert speakers from across EU Member States.





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Network Meeting

The second Network meeting was held in London on 7th October 2013 and was attended by representatives from our partner countries. At this meeting the group started to discuss and debate issues on topics relating to fingerprints. These included; the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior divide, the use of fingerprints for TCN exchange and the exchange of fingerprints for purposes other than criminal proceedings. Additionally, the project team provided an update of the project and gave an insight to some of the outcomes and findings of the workshops.

The use of Fingerprints for purposes other than Criminal Proceedings

- At a recent workshop the topic of using fingerprints with requests for non-criminal proceeding was raised. The project team had primarily focused on criminal proceedings and therefore had

limited experience of this. It was agreed that they would investigate this area in some detail. As a result it was raised at the Network Meeting in October where the group discussed different views and opinions, the attendees of the network meeting initially have agreed that there are difficulties in engaging fingerprints in this process and will continue with this topic on their agenda. The group will look to provide a view on this area in the future. The project team welcome any input on this subject from other Member States.

The minutes of the network meeting can be found on the EFEN Project CIRCABC interest group.

If you are interested in becoming a member of this network, or you would like more information and details of the next meeting, please contact the EFEN Project- please find the details at the bottom of this newsletter.

Czech Judicial training seminar

On the 19th November 2013 the EFEN project held a seminar at the Czech Judicial Academy as part of work stream three of the project. The seminar titled ; Identification measures and its impact on the use of foreign convictions; was delivered by David Crispin and Sarah Fleming from the project team along with Robert Butlin from the Home Office. The seminar was designed to inform delegates of the criminal record exchange arrangements across the

EU, the associated challenges with identification and its impact on the use of foreign convictions.

The seminar was advertised on the internal website of the Judicial Academy and attended by 23 participants from the Czech Republic. Those who attended were judges, prosecutors, and Ministry of Justice representatives, experts from the police or experts from customs. This seminar was the first of this kind completed by the project and was extremely successful.

Improving the processing of incoming fingerprints to the UK Central Authority

The UK Central Authority already has the ability to extract fingerprints in NIST format from the UK fingerprint database. This works well and, where appropriate, is used to support notifications and requests out to EU Member States through ECRIS.

Processing incoming fingerprints from EU Member States is currently onerous for the UK Central Authority and the EFEN project therefore were tasked to deliver improvements to this process.

The current process involves a lot of manual intervention which is inefficient, prone to error and reduces the quality of the fingerprint information. The new developments will allow the Central Authority to electronically search the UK fingerprint database from their application that supports criminal records exchange. It will also allow the users in the Central Authority to load to the fingerprint database.

Amongst all the efficiency benefits, the new interface will provide the Central Authority with a considerable cost saving per set of fingerprints processed.

This functionality will go live soon and the project team will then look to evaluate its performance and relay these findings to interested EU Member States.

Days left of the workshop phase
as of 19/12/13:

60

For further information or to schedule in a workshop, please contact:

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