FASTPASS NEWSLETTER #1
Autumn 2013

FastPass targets the border crossing's harmonization

Security, mobility, harmonization: these are the key words at the core of the FastPass research project. Co-funded by the **European Union** under its Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), it seeks innovative solutions to current and complex challenges in the field of European border control.

Every year, more and more **travellers** cross the European Union's external frontiers and they demand the maximum of speed and convenience at border controls. And yet, **border guards** have to secure Europe against threats such as terrorism, illegal immigration, smuggling, people trafficking and organised crime. Two very important, yet conflicting business objectives…

FastPass aims to establish and demonstrate a **harmonized, modular approach** for Automated Border Control (ABC) gates to reconcile **security and facilitation**, relying on input from a dynamic consortium of 27 expert component producers, research institutions, academics, government agencies - but primarily representatives of end-users.

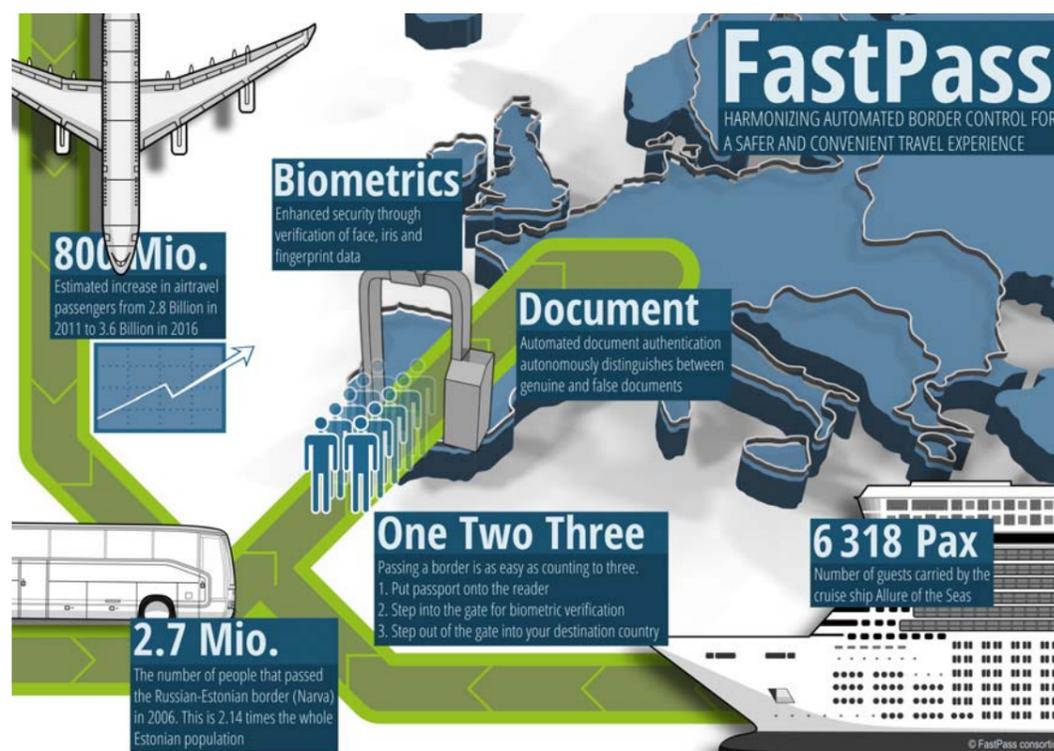FastPass in facts:

27 Partners
Started on **1.01.2013**
4 years duration
Coordination: **AIT** Austrian Institute of Technology
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Built for travellers

Automated border control is still very new and only a small but growing minority of travellers are accustomed to using it, fewer still have even heard of it. An observation of just a few minutes at any of the systems installed in the last few years will show levels of rejection and traveller confusion which need to be reduced if ABC is to fulfil its promises of shorter immigration queues, faster clearance - and secure and affordable border control. FastPass is dedicated to producing designs and processes that will **make ABC the lane of choice** of eligible passengers at Europe's frontiers.

At FastPass we belive that passing through an ABC should be simple, conveneint, open to as wide a range of travellers as possible and above all **secure and effective**. The 'look and feel' of e-Gates needs to be familiar to travellers wherever they cross the EU's borders and simple as using a bank cash machine.

An innovative user-centric approach

FastPass does not only aim at producing an innovative ABC solution, but also an innovative design method: the prototype development will be **end-user centric.** The two most important end-user groups - **travellers** and the **border guards** - will continually evaluate the whole process.

During the first months of the project, the partners have collaborated to determine the system's **objectives and requirements**. We have identified a wide range of ABC user and stakeholder groups and analysed their technical, legal and operational environments. Future border control scenarios are being worked out over the coming months, as well as designs for usability, acceptance and privacy, in order to guaranty best acceptance of the final solution by end-users.

FastPass goes to the edge of Europe

Introducing standardised and harmonised passenger facilitation technology systems to the EU's **external land, sea, rail and air borders** is not a trivial task. Each national border has its own peculiar traffic, processes and physical environment. What works in a calm, air-conditioned, modern airport terminal may not be quite so effective in a bus, open-air vehicle crossing point in near Artic weather.

Therefore FastPass is going out into the field to find out. We have been to airports such as Schiphol, Frankfurt, Dublin, Helsinki, Vienna, to land border crossings between Finland and Russia, Poland and Ukraine and to seaports such as Helsinki and Mykonos.

Is the situation the same everywhere? Well, yes and no. The Schengen Zone has more or less identical border crossing legislation. Travellers are travellers. The majority of border crossers are EU citizens and residents of no particular interest to customs, immigration or police agencies.

But they **travel in different ways** – on foot, in cars, buses, trucks, trains – occasionally and regularly, separately and in groups. How do you build automated border control, self-service kiosks and gates for such a wide spectrum of travel?

Watch for future editions of the FastPass Newsletter to find out.

View of the Port of Mykonos, © FastPass consortium

Source: Wikimedia commons

Looking outwards

Privacy and scientific issues in the field of ABC are in constant evolution so FastPass uses **external expertise**.

The FastPass consortium organises regular consultation with professionals from different fields - research institutes, universities, police, immigration… These experts are able to keep the project up to date with upcoming technical and operational developments and **advise** the consortium on its methodology.

FastPass looks outward not only through the consultancy of external experts, but also by disseminating its activities. The consortium regularly participates in industry events, to improve communication about the project and keep informed about the latest developments in ABC.

Recently, technical papers by FastPass partners AIT, VTT and University of Reading were presented at the Frontex ABC conference in Warsaw. We also published an article in the security journal 'The Vault' under the title 'FastPass - Deciphering the ABC in the EU, UK and beyond .... All public material is available on our website https://www.fastpass-project.eu/ .

Partners