



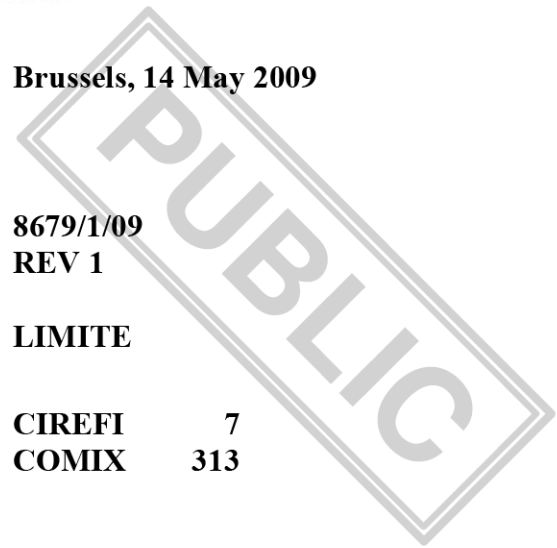
**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 14 May 2009**

**8679/1/09  
REV 1**

**LIMITE**

**CIREFI        7  
COMIX        313**



**NOTE**

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from:            General Secretariat  
to:                CIREFI

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Subject:        **Compilation of replies to the questionnaire on the "Future of CIREFI  
activities"**

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Delegations will find attached contributions<sup>1</sup> from Belgium (corrected), Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg (revised), Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland.

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<sup>1</sup> The General Secretariat has not yet received a contribution from Liechtenstein.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?
  2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?
- A. Functioning of CIREFI**
3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.
  4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:
    - (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.
    - (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.
  5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?
  6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?
  7. To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:
    - third countries;
    - other bodies (Frontex, Europol);
    - any others.

## B. Outputs

8. CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:
  - (a) The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).
  - (b) A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.
  - (c) Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).
9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?
10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?
  - (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?
  - (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?
  - (c) Do you have any other suggestions?
11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?
12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?
13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:
  - (a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.
  - (b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?

14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?
15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).
16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?

**C. Overall Assessment**

17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?
  - (a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?
  - (b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?
18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.

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## **BELGIUM**

### **1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Belgian delegation is of multidisciplinary composition and comprises a federal administrative service (which also acts as spokesperson) and two federal police services (as partners and supporting experts).

These three services are:

- Home Affairs Federal Public Service  
Directorate-General of the Aliens Office  
Directorate for Internal and Border Control  
Directorate for Border Control, Municipalities and Support  
Immigration Service and Liaison Officers
  
- Federal Police  
Directorate-General for Administrative Police  
Directorate of Communication Lines  
Immigration and Border Control Service
  
- Federal Police  
Judicial Police Directorate-General  
Crime against Persons Directorate  
Human Trafficking and Smuggling Department

### **2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

- the decentralised coordination and support directorates in each judicial district (Judicial Police)
- the Traffic Police (Administrative Police)
- the Railway Police (Administrative Police)
- the Waterway Police (Administrative Police)
- the Air Police (Administrative Police)
- the local police
- the Federal Police liaison officers stationed in third countries
- the social inspection services at federal and regional level (in the context of the campaign against illegal employment of third country nationals)
- the Social Information and Investigation Service (Sociale Informatie- en Opsporingsdienst - SIOD/SIRS) (campaign against illegal employment)
- Belgian embassies and consulates in third countries, via the Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs (particularly with regard to visa matters).

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Every effort should be made to have CIREFI meet once a month. The most suitable time would be in the last week of each month as experience has shown that nearly all the delegations are then in possession of all the relevant information for the previous calendar month. That would allow swifter examination of new phenomena and operating methods in use.

It would also give the presidency more time to prepare more thoroughly for the *tour de table* and produce a good summary beforehand on the basis of the translations of the written contributions from Member States.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**
- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The *tour de table* is a useful way of obtaining an overview of the current situation regarding illegal migration and people smuggling in all the Member States. More emphasis could be placed on the administrative and operational measures taken, the follow-up to them, the cooperation routes and established best practices.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

The Belgian delegation feels that the *tour de table* provides sufficient space to share findings with other partners.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

The interaction between participants during the *tour de table* could indeed be improved. A step in the right direction was taken at the initiative of the recent French presidency. To improve the interaction, an effort could for instance be made to circulate a written summary of the written contributions from Member States (a system introduced under the Czech presidency) to all participants a few days before each CIREFI meeting. The ideal situation (although perhaps not feasible in practice) would be to have the compilation of the written contributions available to all participants a few days before the meeting. Participants could then prepare their questions, remarks and additional information in advance.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

In the context of information exchange within CIREFI, it is indeed very useful to have meetings with representatives of third countries. Such meetings are already organised periodically with the candidate countries and the United States and Canada. Exceptional meetings could also be organised with other third countries considered important as countries of origin and transit to the European Union. There have been occasional meetings in the past with such countries as China, Ukraine, Belarus and some of the Maghreb countries (these were all one-off meetings).

It goes without saying that it is very useful, not to say essential, that Frontex and Europol remain constant CIREFI partners.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

The compilation of written contributions from the Member States is a very important and useful source of information but an oral *tour de table* remains a necessity. It offers an opportunity to pinpoint the key points, to clarify a number of cases and even to add certain elements not included in the written contributions.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

In the current circumstances, the Belgian delegation does not consider it necessary to make any fundamental changes to the structure of the national reports. With regard to the statistical section, consideration could be given to whether the statistics might be provided and followed up by other bodies (e.g. Frontex). Heading 2.1 (early warning system) could be deleted since that system is now hardly ever used and is to be removed from ICONET. Perhaps Member States could be made more aware of the need to fill in heading 2.3.5 (abuse of procedures for regular residence). This problem is becoming a pressing issue.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

The current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) can be regarded as satisfactory.

It is important that strategic information be provided both by police services and by administrative services. An annual analysis compiled on the basis of the written contributions from the Member States would indeed be very useful, accompanied by conclusions and recommendations or proposals at European level.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Belgium does indeed use other Member States' reports at national level in the context of the preventive and repressive approach to illegal immigration, pseudo-legal immigration and people smuggling.

Depending on the subject matter and with due regard for competence and confidentiality, parts of those reports are also passed on to the police services, the inspection services and the administration.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Where national reports are submitted initially in a national language not understood in Belgium, the English version of the compilation is awaited.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

- (a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**
- (b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The reports and analyses produced to date by the successive presidencies on the basis of questionnaires are of good quality and in addition they most often contain conclusions and proposals which can be discussed and followed up in one or more of the working parties in the Council structure.



- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

The current practice of discussing ILO reports in CIREFI needs further adjustment. The section on the "situation in the host country in matters relating to illegal immigration" is of particular interest in the context of the activities of CIREFI, the Commission, the Council and the Member States' immigration and police services.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

There are also some data regarding legal migration which could be exchanged, as that is also part of the CIREFI mandate.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Belgium considers the current outputs of CIREFI to be satisfactory. Nevertheless, more could be invested in monitoring the problem of misuse of legal administrative procedures and status, such as marriages of convenience, abuse of the institution of marriage, fake students, abuse of *au pair* status, etc. In line with the new initiative launched under the French presidency, future presidencies will also have to select a key topic to be examined thoroughly. Finally, delegations could be regularly prompted to do a presentation on a particular aspect of migration.

In the context of a uniform approach by the Member States to the problem of migration, CIREFI could also provide markers for the Commission and other working parties with a view to formulating remedies and adopting new legislation.

### **C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

As already pointed out by some delegations at the CIREFI meeting on 27 February 2009, the Belgian delegation considers that the existence of CIREFI continues to be useful for the Member States. The group's defining characteristic is that it exchanges strategic information on illegal immigration, exchanges ideas on societal phenomena and trends, brings those phenomena to the attention of other working parties, draws conclusions and prepares policy proposals for the attention of the competent European bodies.

18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.

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## BULGARIA

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Chief Directorate Border Police.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

- Chief Directorate Border Police
- Migration Directorate
- State Agency for Refugees within the Council of Ministers

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings is once per every two months, as it is at the present.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) **a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**
- (b) **insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The overall situation in the area of illegal information can be studied through regular CIREFI reports.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

No, they do not.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Bulgaria considers CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Bulgaria considers it useful to invite representatives of Frontex and Europol to participate in CIREFI meetings.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

(a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**

Yes, Bulgaria considers these reports as the main source of information on the current situation in other Member States.

(b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

(c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Bulgaria considers that the structure of the national reports is sufficiently up-to-date.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Bulgaria considers the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient.

(a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Yes, Bulgaria considers it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year.

(b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

(c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Yes, Bulgaria uses the reports of other Member States at national level.

- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, it is. It would be better if the national reports provided by the Member States are in English.

- 13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes, Bulgaria considers tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys beneficial and useful.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Yes, the above mentioned practice is useful.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Yes, Bulgaria considers the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient.

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## CZECH REPUBLIC

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic (Department for Asylum and Migration Policy) and The Alien Police Service represent the Czech Republic at the CIREFI meetings.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The main source of information is the Alien Police Service and the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic. In some cases information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Unit for Detection of Organized Crime are being used.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The optimum period between CIREFI meetings should not be longer than two months. Lower frequency would not be appropriate, because regular meetings are a useful instrument for exchange of up-to-date information.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The *tour de table* is a useful measure to acquaint Member States with current situation in the area of illegal migration. As the Member States send their written contributions before every meeting, the *tour de table* enables to focus on the main findings arising from them.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion provide us with sufficient space to report our experience and findings.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

The CIREFI meetings are interactive enough as they are. To enhance the interaction the Czech Republic suggests sending out a short summary of the national contributions to all Member States few days before the meeting in order to enable the Member States to react on significant facts mentioned in the summary.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

The Czech Republic is of the opinion that inviting Frontex, Europol, and third countries to CIREFI meetings is useful. It should continue on the same basis as until now.

## **B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

The Czech Republic considers the regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration a complementary source of information as the initial *tour de table* already enables to underline the most important findings and developments.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

**9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The structure of national reports can be regarded up-to-date in a sufficient way. The persisting problem is that some states use their own standards when filling in the information, not all participating states use the common language and the same format of data. In some cases data still refer to a different time period from the one that is expected to be covered. These conclusions had already been defined in the past on the basis of the Austrian initiative and consecutive presidencies that evaluated the quality of national contributions (progress report on CIREFI information exchange). The quality of CIREFI outputs and discussions taking place at this forum depend on the willingness and readiness of the participating states to cooperate. Following the same rules and formats that had been agreed on would enable the group to achieve higher analytical goals and would be beneficial for all the participating actors.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

The Czech Republic considers it useful to elaborate a situation report for the whole year, but wonders which body would be responsible for drawing up this document. It could be done either by the General Secretariat or the Presidency or both in cooperation.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

The Czech Republic thinks that the current situation reports should be completed with an EU wide summary as it was done by the Czech Presidency during the last meeting. The Czech Republic would appreciate if this initiative could continue.

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Yes, the information provided by other Member States is used at national level. The written contributions are distributed to the Alien Police Service and the Department for Security Policy of the Ministry of the Interior. Usually the follow-up assessment of written outputs is not being done, the summary of the information provided during the *tour de table* are submitted to other institutions which deal with migration issues (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of External Issues, Unit for Detection of Organized Crime, services of Police of the Czech Republic).



- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, the fact that some reports are submitted in national languages complicates the further exploitation of the data.

- 13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes, from the Czech Republic's point of view tailored reports are beneficial and useful. Questionnaires had proved to be a very useful source of reliable and up-to-date information in the past.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Yes, CIREFI constitutes both relevant and convenient platform where ILOs reports should be henceforth discussed. The added value of these reports consists chiefly in provision of valuable information on the current situation (e.g. new development, cooperation between ILOs and local authorities) in countries which are, from migratory point of view, of great importance for the Member States.

In order to ensure full usage of the outputs, these evaluative reports could be utilized also within the framework of other working groups of the Council of the EU which address the issue of migration.

In some cases it would be useful if the liaison officers could attend the meetings themselves.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

A larger attention could be paid to legal migration. There is still a lack of information being exchanged within CIREFI platform. All the participating countries would certainly welcome to be acquainted with the information coming from other states concerning for instance issued stay permits, purposes of stay, or cases of stay permits abuse. Nevertheless as this new initiative would constitute an additional burden for the Member States it should be discussed in detail at the CIREFI meetings. To draw up definitions of newly collected data would also be necessary and it definitely would not be an easy or short term task. Besides, a discussion on this topic could be held with representatives of Eurostat.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

It is becoming apparent that the Member States could be more active in terms of mutual co-operation with the Presidency – e. g. if there is any significant or interesting development in the field of migration within the individual states it could be discussed with the Presidency and consequently could be presented at forthcoming CIREFI meeting.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The substantial benefit of CIREFI lies in the opportunity that is given to Member States with respect to exchange of up-to-date information concerning situation in other countries.

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

CIREFI should remain in existence as a unique platform for regular discussions on current developments in the area of illegal migration and the crossing of borders. Simultaneously, it should preserve its specific role which is different from Frontex.

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## DENMARK

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Danish National Police.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Danish National Police and The Danish Immigration Service.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

2-3 times during each presidency preferably.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

(a) **a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

(b) **insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather difficult, and the group's meetings may thus sometimes seem static. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

The *tour de table* is mostly a reiteration of already reported information which is time consuming and to a certain extent superfluous. The *tour de table* should be a complementary source of information to the reported information. Instead of the *tour de table* it would be more useful with discussions about thematized issues based on the reported information from the Member States.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- third countries;
  - other bodies (Frontex, Europol);
  - any others.

Invitations should be issued ad hoc, depending on the specific themes for discussions in order to entail added value to the discussions.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**
- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
  - (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
  - (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

Based on the reported information, a report/summary could be useful to get an overview of the situation and to identify themes for discussions as a substitute to the tour de table.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The structure is sufficiently up-to-date, but it would be useful if there was a possibility to add further sections if necessary for the discussions of chosen thematized issues. Besides, all reports should use the same template/format for basic statistical data, to make it possible to compare data – for now Member States uses different tables, and it is unclear whether all countries uses same definitions and report on the same issues when reporting statistics. In Denmark's point of view, it would also improve the compilations if the statistics could provide "year until now- information" compared to same time last year or last year's total, and not limit statistics to the month under consideration compared to last month or same month last year. This would give a clearer picture of the recent trends regarding migration flows.

**10. Do you consider the current method of general processing of national reports as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The national reports should form the basis of drawing up a summary in English. The utility of the national reports is very limited as long as some Member States submit their reports in their national language. A summary in the beginning of each compilation – providing trends and movements illustrated by statistical information, as the one prepared for the February 2009 meeting, would be very useful.

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year? Or do you think that all overlap with the work of Eurostat on the basis of Regulation No 862/2007 should be avoided?**

To avoid overlapping with other fora such as the FRONT working group or FRONTEX which deal with the situation at the exterior borders, Denmark considers it useful to get an overview of the situation in the Member States as regards third country residents' illegal stay and illegal work in order to determine the themes for discussions.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

No.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, indeed.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

- (a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**
- (b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Tailored reports are as a rule useful, but EU cover many different problems, and some are relevant to certain Member States but not to other Member States, so before initiating a survey in order to make a report you have to define very specifically the purpose of the survey and ensure that the accessibility of information has added value in relation to Member States with the particular problem.

- 14. In your opinion is CIREFI the relevant platform to draw up reports on immigration liaison officers' activities? What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Not relevant.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Reference is made to the response to question 10a and 18.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should draw up these additional outputs?**

Denmark finds the summary prepared for the meeting in February 2009 useful.

### **C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

Denmark considers it useful to produce an overview of and bring into focus the situation in the Member States as regards third country residents' illegal stay and illegal work in order to determine themes for discussions and to enhance the measures to combat these phenomena.

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future existence of CIREFI.**

Denmark finds this questionnaire and discussion very useful and important as to make CIREFI as efficient as possible. This debate/evaluation could with advantage be held every few years in order to assure that CIREFI continues to develop according to the needs and wishes of Member States.

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## GERMANY

The replies to questions 1 - 16 in parts A and B have been made taking into account the present structures of the Council, the present mandate of the CIREFI group and present proceedings in CIREFI meetings. The main benefit is information exchange which provides an overall perspective on the position at external borders. The *tour-de-table* allows for informed discussion on a wide spectrum of issues. The German delegation sees question 17 of the questionnaire (Views on the benefit/future functioning of CIREFI) as particularly important.

### **1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The German delegation to CIREFI is headed by a representative of the Federal Police department of the Federal Ministry of the Interior. The delegation includes technical experts from the Federal Police and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. In addition, an official from the Ministry of the Interior of the state of Saxony-Anhalt attends the meetings as a member of the delegation to represent the Federal States.

### **2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Federal Police and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

### **A. Functioning of CIREFI**

### **3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Germany considers the present frequency of meetings (every 2 months) sufficient. However, a change to a CIREFI meeting every quarter would have the advantage of synchronising reporting periods with the FRAN (Frontex Risk Analysis Network) meetings of FRONTEX, the European border control agency, which is also convened for the most part on the same subjects. This would lead to greater transparency and improve the comparability of the data and information transmitted to CIREFI, by making use of synergy effects. FRONTEX could also be given the opportunity of presenting analyses and quarterly reports on the situation of illegal migration, which would lighten the load for the Presidency in question and avoid duplication of work.

**4. Do you consider the opening tour de table to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The tour de table is the core feature of CIREFI meetings and should be retained. It offers the opportunity of an up to date and comprehensive exchange of information on current trends/modi operandi in illegal migration and the relevant efforts to combat it in each of the Member States. Furthermore, it offers a good basis for bilateral discussions and cross-border operations between individual Member States.

- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the tour de table and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

An in-depth discussion and analysis of all current developments would be beyond the scope of the time limits of a meeting. A short but meaningful presentation/overview should therefore be made. Conclusive analyses and discussions should take place in the specific international platforms and fora already established for that purpose (e.g. FRONTEX, EUROPOL, ICMPD etc.). In this context reference should be made to the reply to question 4.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming tour de table can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

See also replies to questions 4 and 5. Particularly significant developments for the Member States could be taken as special agenda items in meetings as necessary.

**7. To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**

- **third countries;**
- **other bodies;**
- **any others.**

The already institutionalised regular meetings with experts from the USA and Canada (transatlantic dialogue), with the EU candidate countries Turkey and Croatia and with the Balkan countries should be maintained. FRONTEX and EUROPOL should be permanently represented within CIREFI.



**B. Outputs**

**8. CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial tour de table is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial tour de table.**

The tour de table offers sufficient opportunities to present current developments, give an overview and/or trigger queries and discussions. There is however a very considerable delay in transmission of the collated national reports in English by the Council Secretariat. Direct reactions and queries regarding all contributions on the day of the meeting are almost impossible since national reports are drafted/submitted in the national language in each case. If the national reports were submitted to delegations via a secure encrypted means of transmission before the day of the meeting, the time taken up by the tour de table could be greatly reduced and particular additional points could be discussed in greater detail. An overall report – if only for reasons of comparability – should also still be produced.

- (c) Inefficient (the initial tour de table is sufficient).**

**9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The structure/layout of the national reports is fundamentally satisfactory. Full use is not however made of it by all the Member States, which applies in particular to Section 2 (Salient Facts). This is precisely where important information on key measures for combating illegal migration, details of changes in the legal bases, developments of the ILO networks etc. can be exchanged.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

The suggestion of prior processing, evaluation, analysis and written summary of the information transmitted to CIREFI is very much welcomed. To avoid overlapping and duplication of work, use should be made of the quarterly, six-monthly and annual reports already issued by FRONTEX (FRAN) for the EU region. Corresponding tools for assessment and analysis are already available there – which is not the case for the Council Secretariat. This would considerably lighten the burden for the Presidency. The written summary on the day of the meeting introduced by the Czech Presidency is in our assessment very helpful and useful.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

The reports are used as required by the authorities mentioned in the reply to question 1, as a complement to electronic information systems.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

See reply to question 8. Transmission of the report texts in English would be helpful in this connection.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

- (a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**
- (b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Tailored reports/analyses by the Presidency are, in German's point of view, basically a good idea. However, to avoid overlapping and duplication of work they should be harmonised beforehand with FRONTEX and EUROPOL and with other Council working parties in the same subject areas. See the reply to question 10 in this connection.

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

CIREFI is an appropriate and suitable forum for feedback and information on the activities of the liaison officer networks. CIREFI thus also offers the opportunity to work out key points for the liaison officer networks and give recommendations, which is advantageous for the Member States and for ILOs in their places of posting.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Although basically covered by the present CIREFI mandate, the area of "legal migration" should continue to be exclusively left to the bodies and working parties set up for the purpose within the present Council structures. Additional coverage of this subject area would go beyond the present framework of CIREFI meetings. Furthermore, this would also necessarily have an effect on the composition of delegations.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

See reply to question 10.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

In considering the future direction of CIREFI the question of the added value of the group is key.

Since the conclusions of the Council of the European Union of 30 November 1994, when CIREFI came into existence, the area of Justice and Home Affairs has undergone a process of dynamic development, as have the Council's structures. The exchange of information now takes place in an institutionalised and efficient manner in several other European institutions – in addition to the Council's working parties. A number of tasks arising from CIREFI's mandate (Official Journal of the EU No C 274, 19/09/1996, pp. 0050 – 0051) are today performed in parallel and to the benefit of the Member States by the border control agency FRONTEX. This results in a great deal of overlapping with the CIREFI Council working party: these synergies should be made use of. It accordingly needs to be considered with an open mind whether any tasks, and which ones, can be usefully carried out by FRONTEX and which then remain to be performed by CIREFI. Foremost in these considerations should be avoidance of redundancy and duplication of work. This matter could be dealt with by CIREFI experts in a "Friends of the Presidency" composition and subsequently discussed in a CIREFI meeting.

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## ESTONIA

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Board of Border Guard.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Board of Border Guard, Citizenship and Migration Board.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The frequency of meetings is satisfactory.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Yes, *tour de table*, is considered as useful and necessary, as gives the possibility to share information on illegal migration as well legal migration, expulsions, changes in legislation etc, which is one of the initial ideas of the meetings of CIREFI in accordance with Council Conclusions of 30 November 1994. *Tour de table* gives Member States possibility to highlight most important changes in the field. Time between sending information and participation at the meetings is quite long, but situation in illegal immigration is changing rapidly, therefore informing other Member States during *tour de table* is necessary.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Yes, CIREFI meetings are considered by us as sufficiently interactive.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
**- third countries;**

Inviting third countries' representatives considered useful while there is a need and interest to discuss the problems and exchange issues related to immigration and frontiers.

- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

As FRONTEX gathers information on illegal immigration (illegal entries between border crossing points; illegal entries at the border crossing points; facilitators; illegal stay; refusals of entry; applications for international protection; third country nationals using false travel documents for entering the territory illegally; false documents used for entering the territory illegally) it is useful to share experiences, information at the CIREFI meetings

- any others.**

Participation of other actors is considered useful on a case by case basis. For example participation of ILO-s, other international stakeholders.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

CIREFI regular reports on the situation are considered as complementary source of information, because participants get the reports first time at the meetings. A better and more comprehensive overview is given by Member States during *tour de table*. Due to the problem, that there is no common language set for the reports, it is hard to get from the reports full information.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The structure of national reports should remain the same.

- 10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Yes.

- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

Discussions on the principles of writing reports should be organised with FRONTEX in order to give an added value for Member States.

- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Yes. The document is available on the principle “need to know” as the one with limited access (Restricted). All related officials of relevant authorities are guaranteed access (Ministry of the Interior, Citizenship and Migration Board, Police).

- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes. Due to the problem, that there is no common language set for the reports, it is hard to get from the reports full information and further exploit it according to the own needs.

- 13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

- (a) **Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes.

- (b) **Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Information exchange with ILO-s becomes more and more actual, therefore discussions on ILO reports are considered appropriate. Information exchange with ILO-s should be facilitated on next meetings.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

No.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Yes.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

- (a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

Main benefit of CIREFI is sharing information, views and initiatives on a regular basis.

- (b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

It is important for the future of CIREFI to assess and analyse all the answers to the questionnaire to avoid duplication of activities e.g. with FRONTEX.

Writing summary report of the information received is considered as prerequisite for successful discussions and evaluation of the situation.

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## IRELAND

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Garda National Immigration Bureau.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Garda National Immigration Bureau.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

As at present.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Because it gives delegates an opportunity to discuss issues that may affect their individual jurisdictions and that may impact on other jurisdictions, such as, new *modus operandi* in illegal immigration. The openness and frankness of the discussions are particularly beneficial to participant Member States.

- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, and the time allowed to make comments is always provided.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Ireland disagrees. The mutual interaction between participants is, in the opinion of Ireland, sufficiently interactive and benefits from the simultaneous translations of the interpreters.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

The participation of FRONTEX and EUROPOL has been very beneficial to date and should be continued. The participation of third countries would also be welcomed.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**
- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
  - (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

Ireland also recommends the continuation of the summary document produced by the Czech Presidency at the February 2009 meeting.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**
9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The Presidency should examine whether or not the document should be restructured.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Yes, the current method is sufficient and working well.

- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Ireland does not carry out assessments at present.

- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

From Ireland's point of view, it would be more beneficial to have all the reports in the English language.

- 13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

It is important in the context of illegal immigration to have discussions on ILO reports in CIREFI.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

It is Ireland's experience that it is not lacking.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

In general, yes, but Ireland also thinks that the summary document produced by the Czech Presidency at the February 2009 meeting was a useful initiative and should be continued.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The main benefit is information exchange which provides an overall perspective on the position at external borders. The *tour-de-table* allows for informed discussion on a wide spectrum of issues.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

CIREFI is an important forum for the dissemination of information among immigration authorities, border police and relevant government departments. The participation of EUROPOL and FRONTEX ensures that these agencies are up-to-date on all current issues in each Member State.

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## GREECE

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Greece is represented at CIREFI meetings by the Hellenic Police.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Hellenic Police and the Hellenic Coast Guard contribute information to the national report.

**A Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Greece is of the opinion that CIREFI meetings should perhaps be held less often than now, given that other institutions (FRONTEX, EUROSTAT) within the framework of the EU deal with the gathering of statistical information regarding illegal migration and the risk analysis to deal with it.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**
- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

During the opening *tour de table*, various issues that are considered important are being introduced, as well as other issues of interest that were potentially not included in the m-s written contributions.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Not always.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Greece would suggest that the meetings should be more constitutive and only the most important issues should be discussed.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

It is useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings that may come from third countries, or other bodies, or any other (mainly a representative from FRONTEX), as long as their participation may contribute in any way to the issues that are being considered at the meetings.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

Yes.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient)**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Greece considers the national reports to be sufficient.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

Yes.

- (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

The reports of other Member States are not being used at a national level, however, the information provided is being taken into consideration.

- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

The information and the national reports provided are submitted in the agreed templates and formats and is therefore not considered as a problem.

- 13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Greece considers this to be in the right direction, because it provides information to the Member States about the activity of the ILOs. Furthermore, it would be useful if the actions to deal or utilize the reports provided by the ILOs were defined and other WP of the Council were also informed like HLWG, Relex, Frontiers, Visa.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Greece considers that the data that would accentuate the size of the burden the Member States have to confront in the field of illegal migration (per type of border) and asylum.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Greece considers that these should be empowered. The Group should be responsible.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

Greece considers that CIREFI should continue to exist, as it offers and it will continue to offer a lot in the direct information of the Council regarding the state of play on illegal migration within the EU.

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

A more complete and thorough study and analysis of the information provided could take place, and based on them, a risk analysis on illegal migration.

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## SPAIN

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Ministry of the Interior.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Ministry of the Interior.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

It would be very helpful for meetings to be held every month, so as to provide information which is as up to date as possible.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The *tour de table* is very useful as a way of together interactively crystallising the most significant developments over a particular period. It should go on to focus on some particular issue calling for closer, more detailed assessment.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

CIREFI meetings are at present not fully interactive, but that could change if they assess and discuss specific situations or issues and go on to draw up some conclusions concerning them.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex or Europol);**
  - **any others.**

From Spain's point of view, it would be very helpful for other participants to play an active part in meetings, as their contributions will help provide a fuller picture of immigration-related topics.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration as presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**
- (a) **the main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary);**
  - (b) **a complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*;**
  - (c) **inefficient (the *initial tour de table* is sufficient).**

Spain sees both the reporting format and the *tour de table* as sources of information, provided the latter is conducted more interactively, with greater participation.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up to date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Yes, but there is a need to add to all sections of the reporting format, so as to provide fuller information.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) to be sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**
- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
  - (b) **Would you consider it useful in future to complete the current situation report for each country with an EU-wide summary of these country reports?**
  - (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

Spain does consider the information supplied sufficient, although it could be extended to include any other relevant data not contained in information provided by other bodies.

11. **Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Yes, Spain sometimes does so for specific consultations. In some cases, they are requested by other Spanish bodies dealing with immigration.

12. **Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in countries' own languages?**

Yes, addressing this would facilitate scrutiny of data a sufficient while beforehand.

13. **Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

- (a) **beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**
- (b) **insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Yes, they are beneficial.

14. **Please indicate if, in your view, the current practice of discussing ILOs' reports in CIREFI is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Yes.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Yes, some adjustments should be made as regards both the current situation and the rules applicable.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Yes.

**C. Overall assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

CIREFI is at present the only body at the Council which deals with most aspects of immigration in overall terms, going on to raise specific issues concerning migration flows within the EU.

Besides the statistical data supplied there, CIREFI also shares operational information of particular significance.

It should be added that CIREFI is the only Council body able to deal with legal immigration within the EU.

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## FRANCE

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Central Border Police Directorate (DCPAF).

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Central Border Police Directorate (DCPAF).

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

According to the rules, the group is supposed to meet every month, which does not happen in practice. France is of the opinion that the optimum frequency would vary between four and five meetings per Presidency. To meet less frequently would diminish the interest of the *tour de table* which takes place at meetings and of the report which the delegations must regularly submit on recent phenomena or key events with regard to illegal immigration.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**
- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

The *tour de table* is the very heart of CIREFI, the whole purpose of which is the exchange of information. When it is interactive, the delegations react to the declarations of each Member State, which enables migration trends to be clearly identified. France considers exchanges between the delegations should be encouraged at the *tour de table*, and the reading of written contributions by each Member State avoided; delegations need to be reacting verbally to the comments of other delegations.

Nor must the *tour de table* be a recitation of statistics, but on the contrary, should serve to clearly outline trends. The final aim must be to come away from the discussions with ideas that can help the operational services, and this aim can only be achieved by ensuring that the quality of such discussions is maintained.

In order to stimulate this interactivity at the meeting, it is important that an analysis of the various contributions sent in by the Member States is carried out upstream by the Presidency in office so as to identify points of convergence, or conversely of divergence, and thus to bring in one or another delegation to comment at the most appropriate time, if they do not do so on their own initiative.

In addition, delegations which want to present an issue in detail should be encouraged to do so under the heading "other business" or as a specific item on the agenda, so as not to slow down the pace of discussions.

A meeting that started with a *tour de table* in the morning, with other agenda items being examined during in the second part of the day, would probably enable greater interactivity between delegations. This being so, it is up to the Presidency to sound out delegations in advance so as to better organise each meeting in terms of its agenda.

**7. To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
**- third countries;**  
**- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**  
**- any others.**

In this area, care must be taken that the "invited" bodies do not confine themselves to a presentation of their organisation, but give the delegations useful information on events or new trends, along the lines of the quarterly analyses of the FRONTEX Agency, which have real added value.

France considers it is necessary for these bodies, in particular EUROPOL, to be invited to CIREFI, as they receive operational information there which is useful for determining their strategic approach.

As regards inviting third countries, this needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis and it is up to the Presidency to confer on this subject with other CIREFI Member States

**B. Outputs**

- 8. CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**
- (a) The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
  - (b) A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
  - (c) Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**
- 9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**
- 10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**
- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
  - (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
  - (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**
- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**
- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The reports published by CIREFI are useful and must be continued, but they are not sufficient to inform the delegations on all facets of illegal immigration in the Member States. The *tour de table* mentioned earlier (see Questions 4, 5 and 6) should thus also be continued.

With regard to the monthly contributions by the CIREFI Member States, there is no need for them to be the subject of a summary every year, as they relate to the same matters dealt with in the various annual reports of the FRONTEX Agency. On the other hand, France supports the Presidency's initiative of circulating before each meeting a summary of each delegation's contribution for the preceding month or months, as this is a stimulus to discussion.

Lastly, there is clearly a recurrent problem with the transmission of national contributions to the GSC, for which the use of ICONet should be preferred, so that all participants have the delegations' contributions in advance.

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Discussing the Presidencies' reports on the Immigration Liaison Officers' activities is useful in respect of major migration trends observed from third countries to the EU.

On the other hand, using this operationally is made difficult by the volume of the information that has to be recorded in these reports, which leads to every Presidency publishing the report very late. For this reason, France supports the Commission in wishing to revise Regulation 377/2004, and in particular its proposals on the more operational nature of the information that should be contained in the OLI networks' biannual activity report.

In its role as the preceding Presidency, the French delegation is currently drawing up a report on the activities of the liaison officers posted in Turkey, to which it intends to attach a covering note setting out the main lessons to be drawn regarding illegal immigration and, if appropriate, containing recommendations that could be submitted to the Council.



**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

Meetings of the CIREFI group, based on reflection and dialogue, are not simply a matter of presenting current or past studies but, rather, stimulate real discussion between Member States. In this sense, CIREFI must remain a useful forum for dialogue and open debate.

The French delegation chose to concentrate on a specific theme, that of illegal working on the part of third-country nationals, during the six months in which it held the Presidency of CIREFI. It seems to us that this kind of approach, if it became general, would make the group's work even better, particularly through the adoption of a report which could possibly be put to good use by other Council groups.

With this in mind, the questionnaire technique should be kept going so as to have an overview of a given issue, to detect points of convergence that could appear and undertake a genuine exchange of good practices. The action of certain Member States can also be highlighted and attract the interest of delegations facing similar phenomena.

In conclusion, the French delegation considers that capitalising on operational information (migration trends, human trafficking networks, departure points, operating procedures, transport conditions, document fraud) in the way this is done in CIREFI offers real added value in terms of internal security for the Member States.

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## ITALY

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Department of Public Security (Central Directorate for Immigration and Border Control) at the Ministry of the Interior.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Department of Public Security (Central Directorate for Immigration and Border Control) at the Ministry of the Interior.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Italy considers the appropriate frequency to be four to six meetings per half year.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

(a) **a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

(b) **insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The *tour de table* is a useful way of providing all delegations with a succinct yet full overall picture of the main migration trends emerging in individual Member States.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

In Italy's point of view, greater interaction within CIREFI depends not so much on arrangements for exchanging information as on the content of the information. If the topics discussed are of direct interest to all Member States, this will make for greater interaction and more lively debate within CIREFI.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex and Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Participation by other bodies or agencies or by third countries in CIREFI meetings is very useful.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports presented by each country on the situation in the field of illegal migration. Do you consider these reports to be:**
- (a) **the main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary);**
  - (b) **a complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*;**
  - (c) **inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient)?**

The reports compiled by the General Secretariat of the Council, containing all Member States' contributions, provide a useful way of expanding on the information given by individual delegations in the *tour de table*. A distinction needs to be drawn, however, between the initial version of the report, supplied by the Secretariat on the actual day of the meeting, in which many Member States' contributions appear in the original, i.e. in their own languages, and the second version of the report, produced a few weeks later, in which their contributions appear in an English translation. The latter version, being in English, is of course more usable than the initial one, which may still be used as a source of statistical data or for a more detailed account of the situation in Member States which submit their contributions in English or French (the main working languages).

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up to date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Italy considers the information contained in the present national reporting format to be adequate.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) to be sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) Would you consider it useful in future to complete the current situation report for each country with an EU-wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

Generally speaking, Italy considers the current method of collecting and processing data, by means of national reports, to be appropriate. However, further consideration could be given to some suggestions, in particular:

- at the first CIREFI meeting in each calendar year, usually held in late January, delegations could be asked to submit a national report not just for the last month but for the whole of the last year, together with comments also pointing to any upward or downward trends in comparison with the preceding year. It should be noted, moreover, that some delegations do already, of their own accord, submit a kind of annual account;
- a summary report, based on analysis of Member States' more or less monthly individual national contributions, would be a useful way of providing an up-to-date snapshot of the unlawful immigration situation in Europe. The problem arising here is twofold. By whom should that summary report be drawn up (by the Presidency, by the Council Secretariat, by the Presidency with the Council Secretariat's assistance or by the Council Secretariat under the Presidency's supervision)? And what should be the form or structure and the content of that report? In Italy's point of view, too, if that report were also distributed to other bodies, such as the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA), it would also, once drawn up (by the Presidency or the Secretariat), have to be approved by CIREFI. See also the reply to question 17.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

The information and/or statistical data contained in Member States' contributions may be used nationally for analysis and intelligence purposes. In some cases, information supplied at CIREFI meetings is used in making the Italian border-control and anti-illegal-immigration police aware of particular methods employed by migrant-trafficking criminal organisations, routes taken by unlawful migrants, use of specific passport- and visa-forging techniques, etc.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

See the reply to question 8.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

**(b) insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Assessment reports drawn up by the Presidency on the basis of Member States' contributions (usually in response to questionnaires prepared by the Presidency for the purpose) are useful, provided they remain distinct from work institutionally carried out by the European Borders Agency (Frontex). Basically, in order to avoid duplication, assessment material produced within CIREFI should cover particular topics and issues not specifically assessed by Frontex, or at any rate apply methods and criteria different from those normally used by Frontex.

**14. Please indicate if, in your view, the current practice of discussing ILOs' reports in CIREFI is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Italy does consider the current practice of submitting six-monthly reports on ILOs' work within CIREFI to be appropriate. These reports serve to focus Member States' attention on particular third countries or regions involving a high risk of unlawful immigration. The reports should probably give greater prominence to individual Member States' cooperation initiatives in such countries or regions.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

In its normal practice, CIREFI does not usually gather information on lawful migration, even though that task comes within its institutional remit. In Italy's point of view, in any event, such work should play no more than a minor part in relation to its other work. That is not, of course, to disregard the importance of means of managing lawful immigration in the broader context of strategies for tackling illegal immigration, let alone to underestimate the value of statistics and information on lawful immigration in forming a fuller picture of illegal immigration pressures.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Yes. However, see also the suggestion made in our reply to question 17.

**C. Overall assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

In Italy's point of view, despite the availability of other international cooperation forums and specialized agencies within which information on unlawful immigration is exchanged, CIREFI still provides EU Member States with a useful platform for tackling the various complex migration-related issues, for the following reasons:

- (a) the regular basis on which CIREFI meets;
- (b) the speed with which information can be exchanged;
- (c) the extensive content of information exchange, providing an all-round picture of migration problems and issues;
- (d) CIREFI's homogeneous membership (immigration and border-control experts), which allows the use of an unambiguous terminology and thus facilitates mutual understanding;
- (e) the close cooperation built up among delegates, which has made it possible to establish a real network of contacts, to be drawn on even away from CIREFI meetings;
- (f) attendance at CIREFI meetings by representatives of Frontex and Europol, who can systematically provide direct knowledge of work carried out within their respective spheres of responsibility.

As to any suggestions for making CIREFI's operation more effective, Italy considers that CIREFI should be able to provide the relevant Council bodies, particularly SCIFA, with a brief summary report on the main unlawful immigration trends emerging in the short term, on the basis of individual Member States' contributions in writing ahead of CIREFI meetings or orally at those meetings. The task of drawing up such summary reports, which would be reader-friendly and certainly more usable than the present compilation of all Member States' contributions (or "compilation of contributions to the situation report on current knowledge on illegal immigration and facilitation"), could be assigned to the General Secretariat of the Council, working in cooperation with the Presidency and under its supervision. Consideration could also be given to similarly producing a six-monthly and/or annual summary report. See also the reply to question 10.

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## CYPRUS

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Cyprus Police - Aliens & Immigration Unit.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Cyprus Police.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The frequency of the CIREFI meetings will depend on how frequently the exchange of information is needed by the Member States. Since, as it stated above, the CIREFI forum enables Member States to rapidly exchange up-to-date finding on the migration situation in their countries and migration data of comparable informative value, then the meetings should be held at least once a month or at least four times per presidency.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The opening *tour de table* is believed to be useful because not only it informs the Member States about the situation of illegal immigration in the other Member States but it also provides information on modus operandi of illegal immigrants, traffickers, police operations and updates on migration policy and law of each of the participating country.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

The *tour de table* does provide sufficient space (in terms of time span) to report our experience and findings and in addition it provides opportunity to ask questions or clarifications on the discussed matters.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

The *tour de table* is not considered time-consuming or making the CIREFI meeting to be sufficiently interactive. There are instances where some of the participating countries repeat the findings that already are in the statistical report which is handed out or take too long (almost half an hour) which makes the situation tiresome and causes the listeners to lose track.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Cyprus is in favour in inviting the abovementioned countries and bodies and it would be useful to have an annual meeting and have reports from other non EU countries and countries from other continents so a global picture of the illegal immigration situation can be drawn.

## **B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**

Cyprus considers these reports to be the main source of information which in turn complements the initial *tour de table* and vice versa.

- (b) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Some Member States do not send their contributions on time or they are a month or two behind and thus comparability can not be established at the given time. Further emphasis should be given to that all reports should use the same structure.



**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) is considered to be sufficient. It should be noted that the M Tables should be updated due to the fact that the number of EU Member States has changed (Bulgaria and Romania has been added) and two new countries were created by the separation of Serbia Montenegro.

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

It is very useful to do so because the trends of illegal immigration can be seen at a European level and further a comparison of previous years can show or predict future illegal immigration flows.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

It is believed to be useful.

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

In addition to the abovementioned situation report for each country, the interrelation with other countries regarding illegal immigration should also be included.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

On many occasions Cyprus referred to the reports of other Member States at national level for comparison and information.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

It is very important if all countries submit the information in one language because time is lost until the translation version is sent to the Member States. The matter should be placed on the agenda of the CIREFI meeting and let the Member States decide on the matter.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

The tailored report and analyses processed by the Presidency is found to be beneficial and useful in giving the insight picture of the situation at hand.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

The current practice of discussing ILOs reports is consider to be appropriate since it provides the Member States with an insight information regarding cooperation of ILOs with the countries they are stationed.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Migration should be seen as a whole, legal and illegal. In order to bring such data to CIREFI other Sections or Services of the Government will be involved and it might cause some discrepancies in the statistics due to time lapsing and time of availability regarding the collection and analysis of information.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

The current outputs of CIREFI are considered sufficient. Possible cooperation with other bodies (such as Europol and FRONTEX) regarding a common collection, analysis and evaluation of statistical information should be considered in order to have comparability and assessment of the illegal immigration situation.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

The existence of CIREFI is considered to be useful.

- (a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The main benefit of CIREFI is the exchange of statistical information, modus operandi, problems that arise from illegal immigration and introduction of possible solutions to these problems.

- (b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## LATVIA

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia (under subordination of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia).

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

CIREFI meetings should be organized every month in order to be a useful information exchange forum on the spot.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

*Tour de table* is important in order to acquaint all representatives of the EU Member States with the current situation in case if there is some urgent information which is not included in the monthly situation report.

- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

CIREFI meetings are sufficiently interactive.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

It is useful to invite all above mentioned entities to participate in CIREFI meeting. Entities, which are invited to participate in the meetings, should be chosen in accordance to their concerns of the questions included in CIREFI meeting agenda.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**
- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
  - (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
  - (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

As the monthly situation reports are produced in all EU languages and it is not always clear what is written. This is the reason why Latvia considers that in some cases regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal immigration should be written only in English.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Structure is sufficiently up to date.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Current method of collecting and processing data is sufficient. In order to get to know the real situation in the field of illegal migration it is important to collect the statistical data and to write situation review every month.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

No.

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Yes, Latvia uses reports of other Member States at national level and carries out its own follow-up assessment of outputs of the monthly situation reports. State Border Guard's departments are provided with this information.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

It is complicated. All national reports should be in one common language - probably English.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

It is useful.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

In Latvia's point of view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI is appropriate.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Not all EU Member States prepare up to date information on the illegal migration timely. It inconveniences analysis of this data.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

They are sufficient.

### **C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

- (a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The main benefit for the participating institutions is direct contacts with representatives of the law enforcement institutions of the EU which improves direct information exchange.

- (b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

Concerning the existence of CIREFI meetings it must to be considered that FRONTEX Agency collects the same statistical information which is available for each Member States on the ICONET system as well as the incident reports concerning the border security.

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## LITHUANIA

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

State Border Guard Service at the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – SBGS) represents Lithuania at CIREFI meetings.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

SBGS and Migration Department at the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania contribute information to the national report for CIREFI.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Lithuania is of the opinion that the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings is three CIREFI meetings per half a year. During every meeting participants are acquainted with the two months information. The two months information is optimal for the presentation and for the awareness.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Lithuania is of the opinion that the *tour de table* is a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in all Member States. All Member States receive a written report of common information on the situation in the field of illegal immigration and facilitation. During the *tour de table* every Member State presents only actual and interesting information, it can ask other Member States or institution (EUROPOL, FRONTEX, COMMISSION) for their opinion or experience, every Member State shares good praxis with other participants.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, they do.



6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Lithuania considers CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive.

As CIREFI is a forum for regular discussions and exchange of information the essence of *tour de table* as quite informal forum gives confidence to Member States to share information, ask questions and etc. and that makes interaction between Member States easier.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Lithuania considers it very useful to invite to CIREFI meetings Frontex, Europol, Commission and third countries. Participants are acquainted with the latest information about projects and etc.

The participation of Frontex, Europol, Commission could be useful in almost every CIREFI meeting, but the participation of third countries should depend on the questions discussed in the meeting and their relevance to appropriate third country, on the sensibility of questions (for example if the document presents risk analysis, is limited (or restraint)) and other relevant factors.

## **B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

CIREFI regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration are more statistical product. It is a good possibility to acquaint participants with the information on the changes and trends of illegal migration in different countries. During the *tour de table* important cases can be underlined, problems can be discussed and an exchange of experience can be made.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Lithuania considers the structure of the national reports sufficiently up to date.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Yes, Lithuania uses information and statistical data of SBGS (1. Statistical data and general trends: 1.1., 1.2., 1.3. and 2. Salient facts) and of Migration department at the Ministry of the Interior (1. Statistical data and general trends: 1.4., 1.5).

CIREFI reports include not only statistical data (as in EUROSTAT reports), but the information on most important cases and other information..

- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Lithuania is of the opinion that during CIREFI meetings it is enough to exchange the information on the situation in the field of illegal immigration of 1 – 2 months.

- (b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

Lithuania finds the summary of Member States written contributions, given at the last meeting, very useful.

- (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

11. **Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Lithuania provides this information for competent SBGS's officers to be acquainted with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in all EU Member States.

12. **Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, it is complicated. Lithuania proposes all countries to contribute national reports for CIREFI in English or to translate all reports into English. Then there would be more possibilities to use the common report in our work.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Lithuania considers tailored reports and analysis beneficial and useful, especially for countries which face the problems, which are analysed.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Lithuania considers the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI is appropriate.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

No.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Lithuania considers the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient.

### **C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

Lithuania considers there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI. Immediate and regular communication between participating institutions from all Member States, other institutions (EUROPOL, FRONTEX, and COMMISSION), possibility to meet delegates from third countries – is the main benefit of CIREFI.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

## LUXEMBOURG

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration and the Grand Ducal police.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

While it is true that meetings were held fairly frequently in the past, it should be noted, however, that circumstances have changed somewhat in recent years. The establishment of the FRONTEX agency is merely one notable example of recent, evolving European cooperation. Added value remains the desired aim. Luxembourg therefore favours less frequent meetings, possibly varying according to current geopolitical developments, while at the same time aiming for greater effectiveness.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

As with other fora, the large number of Member States participating in this *tour de table* obviously gives rise to reservations. While it is essential to preserve this working party's essential mission, namely the exchange of information, consideration should also be given to the method used. Either a fair balance is struck between the time spent on the *tours de table* and the written reports or the Member States agree to opt for one of the two working methods. While Luxembourg tends to favour a flexible approach to this issue, its preference is for the interactive method.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Given the significant number of Member States, the agenda should be strictly limited to important and indeed topical issues.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

As with the previous point, time should be devoted to essential items that will make it possible to analyse the information gathered, draw conclusions and subsequently make recommendations in the short term.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Luxembourg firmly supports this proposal which would undoubtedly make information exchange more effective. The range of bodies that could be invited to participate should remain fairly broad so that a large number of the issues dealt with by the working party can be covered. A restructuring of the meetings would seem inevitable.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

See point 4(a) → Interaction should play the dominant role complemented by the reports which remain an additional and essential source of information.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

As the desired aim is to maximise the value of the working party's activities, the form of the reports should be re-examined. Luxembourg favours reports that are drawn up clearly and concisely and uniformly for use by all the Member States. This should make it possible to improve the presentation and the comparison of related figures and wording.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

In general, it should be noted that the number of reports already drafted in different fora has increased considerably in the area of immigration and asylum. Luxembourg is therefore opposed to the pointless proliferation of reports

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

No comment/no.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Luxembourg has little regard for this working method and favours the use of a standard form completed in a common language.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

- (a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**
- (b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Luxembourg supports this working method, which involves drafting fair and accurate reports summarising the salient points.

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

No comment.

15. **With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

No comment.

16. **Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

As with the points raised previously, Luxembourg would clearly support the idea of holding meetings prepared sufficiently in advance, thus facilitating structured, detailed and targeted discussions on a particular and, where possible, topical theme and making for an effective exchange of information.

### **C. Overall Assessment**

17. **Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

(a) **If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

(b) **If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

The urgent problems posed at present by the illegal immigration and residence of third-country nationals in the Member States highlight the importance of concerted and united action on the part of the latter to contain or even reduce illegal migratory and often secondary movements as best they can. The creation of new EU bodies shows the extent to which our efforts need to be combined. Combating both the criminal activities of smuggling networks and the falsified document networks and improving the policy on returns have for years been mainstays in the area of immigration and asylum. In view of the above, Luxembourg firmly supports joint actions to increase cooperation on immigration and asylum within the EU. That is why it is important to maintain the tools which in the past have enabled us to exchange information usefully and draw essential conclusions. However, some working methods also need to be adapted in the light of current requirements. The CIREFI Working Party should not therefore balk at regenerative treatment in order to regain the place it deserves.

18. **Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

See point 17.

## HUNGARY

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The experts from the Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement and from the National Police Headquarters represent Hungary at CIREFI meetings.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Office of Immigration and Nationality and the National Police Headquarters (Border Policing Department) contribute information to the national report for CIREFI.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Hungary is of the opinion that the future function of CIREFI must be a group preparing strategic decisions in the area of illegal migration and the crossing of borders (see more details at Point 17). 2 CIREFI meetings would be the optimum frequency during a Presidency. The meetings should be held following the risk analysis quarter reports carried out by FRONTEX.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

If CIREFI does not change its functions Hungary considers that the opening *tour de table* could be a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States, if the experts from Member States gives other specific information which is not included in the regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide us with sufficient space to report your experience and findings.



6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Hungary considers that CIREFI meetings could be more interactive if the regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country would be sent to delegations (e.g. via ICONet) before the meetings in English language.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Hungary is of the opinion that the future functioning of CIREFI must be a group preparing strategic decisions in the area of illegal migration and the crossing of borders it would be desirable to invite the competent authorities of third countries, other bodies (e.g. UNHCR, IOM, ICMPD) or relevant NGO-s involved in the actual problems in the area of illegal migration. Hungary also suggests that representatives of EUROPOL and FRONTEX should be invited to be permanent members of CIREFI meetings.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

Hungary considers that regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country are inefficient because the reports are not available electronically, many Member States use their own languages in the contributions and the implementation of categories differs in Member State's national legislation.

- 9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

In Hungary's point of view the structure of the national reports is not up-to-date. Beside the above mentioned problems the structure must be divided in two parts; the first part should contain templates and statistical data and the second should contain analysis, interpretation, comments, new operating methods and causes identified. If the CIREFI keeps on producing regular reports in the future information on visa applications should be added to national reports.

- 10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Hungary considers it unnecessary to draw up a situation report for the whole year, because FRONTEX draws up a similar situation report every year.

- (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

Yes, it would be useful to complete the current situation report with an EU wide summary of these country reports.

- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

Hungary of the opinion that it would be desirable to use EXCELL format to contribute national situation reports and if these reports would be available via ICONet.

- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Following the establishment of FRONTEX Hungary could hardly use the reports at national levels because a part of the statistical data are not comparable (see Point 8) and Hungary does not have sources to provide translation for non-English-language reports. Hungary has also difficulty using the reports of other Member States because the reports are not available electronically. Hungary does not provide any other institutions with the information acquired.

- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes (see Points 6, 8 11).

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

No. The current state of their processing is insufficient.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Hungary considers that tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be insufficient. Hungary is of the opinion that the FRONTEX Agency is an effective organ of the EU to provide tailored reports and analyses in the area of illegal migration and the crossing of borders. In Hungary's point of view, CIREFI could be a great tool to assist the Member States in effectively studying legal immigration preventing illegal immigration and unlawful residence and in effectively combating immigration crime. The specific tasks of CIREFI shall be to draw conclusions, give advice and prepare strategic decisions for the Council and the Commission on the basis of the reports and analysis of FRONTEX, ILO networks and other relevant organisations.

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Hungary sees the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI as sufficient; however it could be more efficient. From ILOs, CIREFI could gain first-hand information on the current situation in third countries, and CIREFI would even have the opportunity of inviting migration related ILOs to make presentations about their current greatest challenges and latest achievements.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

If the CIREFI keeps on producing regular reports in the future information on visa applications should be added to national reports.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Hungary considers the current outputs of CIREFI to be insufficient. The specific tasks of CIREFI shall be to draw conclusions, give advice and prepare strategic decisions for the Council and the Commission on the basis of the reports and analysis of FRONTEX, ILO networks and other relevant organisations in the area of illegal migration and the crossing of borders. Hungary believes that the Presidency should be responsible for preparing a summary on these additional outputs following CIREFI meetings.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

Hungary considers that there are good reasons for the existence of CIREFI; however the future functioning of CIREFI must be a group preparing strategic decisions in the area of illegal migration and the crossing of borders. In Hungary's point of view, CIREFI could be a great tool for assisting the Member States in effectively studying legal immigration, preventing illegal immigration and unlawful residence and in effectively combating immigration crime. The specific tasks of CIREFI shall be to draw conclusions, give advice and prepare strategic decisions for the Council and the Commission on the basis of the reports and analysis of FRONTEX, ILO networks and other relevant organisations.

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## MALTA

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Malta Police Force covers these meetings as the Commissioner of Police is the designated Principal Immigration Officer.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Immigration Police and the Refugee Commission.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Since it is important for all Member States to be well aware of what other Member States are encountering, monthly meetings should be secured. Immigration trends change and thus this frequency has to be maintained.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

It is a necessary measure to get acquainted with the situation however it may be considered fruitful to allow for brief submissions to be made after each Member State since clarifications may be required.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

As above.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

There may have been instances when the delegate will not be in a position to give further information on any particular aspect of his report. This can be considered as an aspect that can be worked upon and discussed further in order to have the delegations well briefed on their Member State's current situation.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Malta agrees that further interaction may be necessary to clarify certain aspects of the discussion. Yet the time constraints have to be taken into consideration since the meeting is usually spread over one day.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
**- third countries;**

It is of utmost importance that when considering third countries to be invited, CIREFI may take note of the countries of origin of problematic nationals for consideration. When considering examples, USA and Canada prove to give very interesting points for discussion, yet, these may not be relevant for certain Member State. The same goes for Turkey and Croatia.

- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

These prove to be of interest as they submit an overall view of what all Member States are reporting and efforts made by them to combat illegal immigration.

- any others.**

Other groups working in the field of migration may also be invited, yet the current systems of having rapporteurs have proven to be quite effective.

## **B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

The *tour de table* serves as the main source of information which information is complemented by the reports. It is essential to have the opportunity to further request details should any particular item of the report be of particular interest to any Member State and therefore it is important to continue with the *tour de table*.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The main issues concerning immigration are all mentioned in the report structure which also gives the opportunity for any Member State to include other information that they may deem to be relevant as well.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

This will obviously assist in the annual risk analysis process but current trends need to be recognized and tackled immediately and an annual report may result to be too late.

- (b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

This could prove to be very useful especially since most of the reports are not provided to all Member States in the English language and a summary highlighting the main issues and areas of concern would be an asset.

- (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

11. **Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

The reports are used as a source of information in order to assess better current trends that directly effect us or may eventually do so. Some of the information may be shared with other government department such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in view on Consular sections interest.

12. **Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

As mentioned above, this is a drawback but since during the initial tour de table, the highlights are explained and translated, this assists us greatly.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

They prove to be enough and any additional analysis may always be undertaken by any Member State that wishes to do so.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Although Malta has no experience with ILOs, it is most beneficial that reports of these officers are shared in order to allow countries not represented in certain region to obtain more country information.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

As stated in (9) above, information requested in the national reports is considered to be sufficient. Legal migration should not further burden this working group even though certain issues which may effect illegal migration may be considered, such as the amount of visas issued and the nationalities to whom they were issued.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

During this working Group the CION/Frontex/Europol may be invited to give regular updates as to the progress made by the EU on immigration issues that are greatly affecting the Member States. Other information which could be desirable has been included in question 18.



**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

It is a source of information and an early eye opener for other Member States who may be easily affected by trends in neighbouring and distant countries. Illegal migration methods are constantly changing and becoming more complex. It is therefore imperative that the proper authorities need to be aware of as early as possible in order to be in a position to take appropriate and remedial action.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

One may consider adding in the reports issues that are linked to country information of those countries from where illegal immigration is generally increasing. This may be enhanced with the input of immigration authorities in countries which have ILO's posted there.

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## THE NETHERLANDS

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Ministry of Justice co-ordinates the delegation that comprises a representative of the Migration Policy Department, a representative of the Information and Analysis Centre (INDIAC) of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and on a less frequent basis a representative of the Royal Marechaussee (border control authority).

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Royal Marechaussee, The Immigration and Naturalization Service, Expert centre for Human Smuggling and Human Trafficking, Seaport Police, The Repatriation and Departure Service and the Migration Policy Department contribute to the monthly reports of The Netherlands.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The Netherlands is in favour of the exchange of the statistical information and most salient facts on a monthly basis. The meeting itself can be held less frequently (for instance three meeting per Presidency), if chosen for a more thematic/focused approach. Instead of the *tour de table* the Netherlands suggests Member States to bring relevant and urgent themes and developments that could not be incorporated in the monthly report, to the attention of the other Member States under the agenda-item Any other business (AOB). A concise room-document to introduce the agenda-item could be distributed at the start of the meeting.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**
- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The nature of the topics discussed is too fragmented and it seems that the ‘tour’ has become an end in itself. The idea to exchange both detailed information as well as up-to-date information on ‘urgent’ trends could be furthered by using distinctive channels of communication, being respectively the monthly report and agenda-item AOB (please take notice of the suggestion in the answer to question number 3).

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

The Netherlands would prefer a topical debate/exchange of views on specific themes between Member States based on preparatory work (analysis) by the Presidency of the Council. For example, if the Member States agree on a bi-monthly meeting, the Presidency will prepare three different subjects. The preparatory work of the Presidency may comprise of a concise discussion paper on the theme to be discussed, which will be distributed timely (two weeks before the meeting). Such a paper will be of use for Member States to prepare their contribution to the discussion during the meeting. In addition it enables the Member States to send their right experts on these topics. This may generate a more lively and informal debate/increased interaction between Member States during CIREFI meetings.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Information exchange with third parties/countries is bound by legislation. This should be taken into account when arranging these meetings. It may be of interest to organise a specific annual/biannual meeting with relevant third countries. If chosen for a biannual meeting with third countries, the southern neighbours of the EU could be invited in the first half of the year while the eastern neighbours of the EU are invited for the second half of the year. During these meetings presentations could be given on working methods (as is currently the case with the Canada/US meetings). FRONTEX/EUROPOL could attend the meetings as an observer and use (in line with the legal framework) relevant information for analysis.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**

Under the condition that each Member State provides for the requested information in time and uses the same definitions. Furthermore the Netherlands refers to our suggestion under 3.

- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Yes.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

(a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

(b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

(c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

The feasibility of drafting an overall yearly report, drawn up by the secretariat, per member state with an EU wide summary and analysis which addresses the most important issues, could be studied.

11. **Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

The Netherlands principally uses our national report of the CIREFI meeting. In exceptional cases, the details of the full country reports are looked at, when the issues mentioned in the meeting are of particular interest to us. The contributing institutions receive a copy of the reports.

12. **Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes. The Netherlands would prefer the contributions to be written in English, which enables us to read the reports directly. The main benefit of CIREFI is the rapid exchange of information and to function as an early warning system. Reports written in national languages result in a substantial delay in obtaining the translated information which could be outdated when they become available. It saves time and money in the process after the initial compilation.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The results of the questionnaire surveys are very useful. It could however be considered to provide for a shared follow-up to initiate activities and/or monitor changes.

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

The Netherlands is of the opinion that these reports are useful. However, the region to be studied should be dependent on trends of illegal immigration/human smuggling/trafficking.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

As already mentioned, in addition to the regular statistical data and new modus operandi, it would be appreciated if discussions and exchange of information could take place in a more thematic way.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

As mentioned in the answer to question number 10, the feasibility may be studied to produce overall yearly reports, drawn up by the Council Secretariat and written in English.

### **C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The main benefit of CIREFI is the relatively rapid exchange of the information on new trends and new modus operandi and the useful interaction of representatives of the Member States.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

The Netherlands would prefer more uniformity in the definitions, formats and requests for information for CIREFI, Eurostat, EIL and Frontex. The information produced by CIREFI should preferably be complementary to the information produced by other institutions mentioned above.

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## AUSTRIA

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Ministry of the Interior, Foreigners Police Department

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Asylum Department of the MoI, Federal CID, anti-trafficking unit, Foreigners Police Department

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Monthly meetings would be the optimum. The added value of CIREFI is the operationally important exchange of information on newly detected modus operandi, networks of facilitators, routes etc. The minutes of the meetings are immediately afterwards – with the relevant documents – conveyed to the relevant departments within the ministry.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Necessary, since most of the Member States send in their contributions to the situation report in their mother tongue (including Austria).

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

There is plenty of time to concentrate on the important facts within the mandate of the CIREFI.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Even if not all topics can be discussed in depth during the *tour de table* there is plenty of time during breaks to discuss bilateral problems with colleagues. Up to now any delegation who wished to do so had plenty of time to contribute to the ongoing discussions.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
- **third countries;**

It is essential to gain from the experiences of other countries with much the same problems like the USA and Canada; on the other hand inviting the candidate countries or the countries of Western Balkans can give a good overview of the changing situation in these countries eg. improvements made in the course of the approximation towards EU legislation.

- **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**  
- **any others.**

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**

During the tour de table Member States mainly concentrate on the most important developments and tendencies concerning illegal migration for the reporting period. In addition salient facts can be presented. The tour de table is a valuable addition to the report prepared by the General Secretariat of the Council.

- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

It is as important as the tour de table. The report gives the exact figures which can be compared provided all Member States send in the contributions for the same period and do not lag behind.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The definitions should be regularly updated and adjusted to the changing legal situation. See Austrian note.



**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

This task will be done by EUROSTAT anyway, the first time for the year 2008. It remains to be seen when the final report will be published. Deadline for Member States contributions was 31 of March.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

A general outline of the situation would be utmost useful, but it should not go into too much details.

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

The data can only be compared if Member States report data for the same period. There are still Member States who lag behind for one or two months compared to the majority of the contributing Member States. All Member States should use the agreed format for reporting data.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Immediately after the meeting the minutes and the documents are widely distributed within the Ministry of the Interior.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

This only concerns the salient facts, but for this reason there is the tour de table. If all Member States follow the agreed format for reporting, all data can be well understood despite using a non familiar language.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Depends greatly on the quality of the questionnaire and the topic covered by the questionnaire, however, usually a well made questionnaire should enable the Member States to give adequate replies.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

The reports as well as the minutes of the meeting are forwarded to the ILO-department in the ministry. The relevant documents originated from the CIREFI this is why the reports are being presented in this Working Party. The reports give an excellent overall situation of the countries/region covered by the report.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

The original mandate of 1992 comprises information on legal migration as well, however, was never ever discussed. There is a Working Party on Migration-admission which should be the competent body to discuss legal migration. It could be interesting however to compare the statistics of legal migration for each Member State once a year.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

The present situation concerning the output of CIREFI is the result of a very long process (it took almost five years to agree upon definitions), there were some initiatives (Italian presidency for example), which were not continued by other presidencies. The present output can be seen as the maximum for which the Member States are prepared to contribute or are willing to contribute.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The main benefit is the rapidity with which information can be and is being exchanged. Other fora like FRONTEX cover different data (external borders only) and the compilation of EUROSTAT for the previous year cannot be considered operationally useful, since information is more than one year old. It remains to be seen when these data will be published for the first time comprising the figures for 2008.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## POLAND

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Border Guard subordinated to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Office for Aliens and Border Guard.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Poland supports conclusions of Ministers decision responsible for immigration on 30 November and 1 December 1992 establishing CIREFI. According to the a/m decision CIREFI should meet once a month. Poland is of the opinion that this is an optimum frequency and should be maintained and respected. Frequency resulted from the need to exchange information on current situation (as current as is possible) in order to utilize it efficiently during services' activities.

**4. Do you consider the opening tour de table to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Poland is on the position that tour de table is an issue of utmost importance and plays a vital role during information exchange at the meetings. Written contributions are usually submitted to the General Secretariat in Member States' national languages which cause difficulties while analyzing final report. Moreover written contributions are often limited to statistical data which is not sufficient. During tour de table Member States delegations may add additional comments which is really profitable (usually) and explain thoroughly all the crucial aspects related to described phenomenon in written contributions.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the tour de table and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Executed solution met Polands expectations and Poland finds it as optimum.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming tour de table can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Poland is of the opinion that CIREFI meetings are sufficiently interactive. There is no need to change it.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

Frontex and Europol definitely should participate in CIREFI meetings. Their contributions should be incorporated to CIREFI written reports because play a important role in assessment of general situation and particular phenomena as well.

Representatives of third countries (especially candidates to UE) or ILOs also should be considered as a participants of particular CIREFI meetings. Their presence should be taken into account while discussing specific areas/phenomena directly linked to these countries. In such situation their contributions would be more beneficial than now.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial tour de table is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial tour de table.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial tour de table is sufficient).**

Both sources of information: tour de table and writing contributions generally are treated on equal terms as a complementing each other. The main criterion in assessing the usefulness of a/m sources is their quality and language applied.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Poland is of the opinion that the structure of national reports introduced by SCIFA in 2005 is still sufficient (doc. 8386/05 with further amendments). The main constrain in utilizing it efficiently is lack of eagerness of Member States to respect implemented structure.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Presented initiative is definitely worth considering. However bearing in mind different quality of submitting national contributions it would be difficult to draw up such report. Nevertheless Poland support this idea.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

CIREFI reports constitute important (complementary) source of information for Border Guard. Reports support analytical process and may constitute a starting point for new analysis focused on concrete phenomenon presented on the meeting (tailored analysis).

Acquired information is processed and analyzed by Border Guard (Strategic Analysis Bureau in the HQ) and afterwards disseminate to appropriate departments inside Border Guard or cooperating services and institutions (e.g. Departments in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office for Aliens, Police, etc.).

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

As it was mentioned before (point 4A and 8) the usefulness of contributions submitted in national languages is limited.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Poland considers such analyses beneficial and useful. Moreover it would be a good practise to prepare by each Presidency-in-office tailored report/analysis on the topic resulted from the program of each Presidency and related to illegal migration issue.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

ILOs' reports play only a complementary role, but still are an useful source of information. Its usefulness results from the lack of information on situation in third countries in Member States' contributions. From the analytical perspective this indicator is important while assessing situation especially at the external EU/Schengen border.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Poland is of the opinion that there is no lacking data in the CIREFI questionnaire. See point 9.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Poland evaluates CIREFI reports as a sufficient and beneficial. Nevertheless, the Czech Republic Presidency presented a summary of national contributions which is interesting and its preparation should be considered as a permanent task of each Presidency. Moreover, Poland suggests that each Presidency prepares a tailored report on specific topic related to Presidency's program regarding illegal migration issues.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The form of CIREFI group to support Member States activities with data and information exchange at the EU strategic level, as elaborated in doc. 8386/05 is still up to date and meets expectations in this field.

Bearing in mind advantages of different platforms dedicated to information exchange the following issues must be emphasised with regard to CIREFI:

1. only CIREFI provides a possibility to exchange information and discuss it directly among national experts which plays important role in tightening mutual cooperation,
2. contrary to other platforms CIREFI meetings are run by Member States and are totally focused on information sharing. The chairperson is on the same foot as other delegations and plays a supporting role during the meeting what is unique among other platforms arranged especially by EU Agencies,
3. many platforms focusing on data and information process are limited to specific areas (FRAN to EU external borders, Europol to organised criminality) and CIREFI covers all important categories of data and information related to illegal migration.
4. only CIREFI meets on a regular basis and support Member States with regular outputs.

All these aspects make CIREFI unique comparing to other platforms.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

See point 17.

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## PORTUGAL

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras / SEF (Portuguese Immigration Service) – Ministry of Internal Affairs

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras/SEF

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

According to the Council Conclusions (JOCE N° c 274/50 de 19.09.1996), CIREFI shall meet on a regular basis, as a general rule this should be once a month, in the form of a standing Conference.

The number of the CIREFI meetings depends on the programme of Presidency-in-office. However, bearing in mind the need of ensuring the regularity and the updating of the exchanged information, there should be a minimum of three meetings, always during the last week of the month.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The privileged tool for the exchange of information is the written (uniform format) contributions of the Member States, complemented by the oral presentations in the CIREFI meetings.

The added value of these presentations during the *tour de table* is to stress the main occurrences, the developing illegal migration trends and the most recent counter measures adopted by the Member States.

The information changed is an important reference to the upstream control at the countries of origin and transit and to prevent the consular fraud.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Vide above.

5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?

Yes.

6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?

In fact there has been a large increase on the number of delegations, since the beginning of CIREFI. Nevertheless the format is adequate as the delegations always have the opportunity to interact with the others, by bilateral or multilateral contacts, and to turn to the informal cooperation, which for a long time has been one of the main advantages of this group.

7. To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:
- third countries;

As a very important forum for exchanging information on legal and illegal migration, unlawful residence, use of fraudulent or falsified travel documents, trends and reports of ILOs, the invitation of third countries is always very useful.

From our experience, in some occasions, several third countries, besides Canada and USA, have been invited and Portugal found their presentations and experiences very interesting. On this point of view Portugal suggests a meeting with North African countries.

Under this perspective, it would be important to have the Candidate Countries each semester and sometimes a third country, depending on the respective risk assessment and the bonds with the country that assumes the Presidency.

- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);

Frontex, Europol and, depending on the issues, Interpol, IOM or ICMPD.

It would be much more lively and useful if these bodies could participate, sharing actively updated information.

- any others.

**B. Outputs**

**8. CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be?**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**

The situation reports are the main source of the current situation on illegal migration; trends and legislation, further the contributions during the tour de table, and they are an important instrument that can be used, when necessary, to seek information and make some details clearer.

- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

**9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The structure of the situation reports is sufficiently up-to-date, as Portugal believes that the Member States make their best for providing the most recent (the previous month before the meeting) and complete information.

Regarding this, the need of Member States to keep the uniform format and provide the data regarding the month before the meeting, in order to ensure the comparability of the data, has to be stressed.

Concerning the data provided, it has been an improvement the reference to the previous month and the same month of the year before.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

Portugal considers the current method as sufficient. Nevertheless, it would be very useful to keep the CZ initiative of producing a summary of the Member States written contributions, before the meeting.

At the end of each Presidency, it could be produced a document including the summary of the topics of the situation reports /exchange of information to be submitted to the SCIFA with the main conclusions and possible proposals.

As it is known the CIREFI is not empowered to give instructions to the Member States' authorities but it would be very useful to provide the SCIFA with the most recent information in order to anticipate the adequate initiatives when appropriate.

It would not be necessary to have a very structured document but an effective tool to give an opportune state of the art on illegal migration, unlawful residence, networks, trends, asylum, travel documents, expulsion matters, airports, marriage of convenience, countermeasures, among other issues.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Yes.

Yes.

So far each situation report is in the English version, it is disseminated to the different departments of the PT Immigration Service / SEF (General and Deputy Directors, operational regional departments, Immigration Liaison Officers and some other operational unities).

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

The situation report is only disseminated in English version.

As regards the language, the General Secretariat of the Council deserves a special reference as there has been a remarkable progress in the time for translating the reports in the national languages, with additional benefits.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Bearing in mind that when possible, discussions adequately prepared in advance should be structured around a particular current item of common interest to permit an efficient exchange of information, it is a CIREFI competency.

Moreover, it is beneficial and useful, mainly when the scope is a specific nationality, a modus operandi or migration flow of common interest. To analyse more deeply some migration issues it is always of great interest.

It would be very important that each Presidency could promote an initiative aiming a specific topic of general interest.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

One of the Conclusions of the 1<sup>st</sup> Seminar on ILOs of the EU, held in Funchal – Madeira, November 2000, considered the CIREFI group as the proper *forum* for the ILOs related issues, regarding its mandate.

Consequently, some topics on ILOs activity have been discussed in CIREFI, when they are under the umbrella of the Council.

Nevertheless, the discussion of the report format was under the umbrella of Commission although the CIREFI experts take an active part in this work, contributing with their experience on exchanging information.

For us, as the time being, CIREFI is the adequate forum for discussing ILO reports and these are a very interesting and valuable instrument as they include a very detailed information about specific countries, such as legal and illegal migration, institutions, organization, legislation, etc, from the point of view of the immigration officers posted abroad, and the reports strengthen the need to improve the networking among ILOS, at local and regional level.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

The Regulation on Statistics is quite important, namely providing data on illegal migration. However the statistical data collected in CIREFI, although on a provisional basis, is an added value as the situation can be looked at when and as necessary.

Actually, in CIREFI, the timing prevails against the consolidation of the statistical data.

About legal migration, the main output is the exchange of information on initiatives and legal measures adopted by some Member States that for other Member States can be of great help to control illegal migration and to stimulate legal migration.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

The improvement of the work and more successful results depend on the Presidencies and Member States initiatives.

CIREFI is a very particular group which make possible to anticipate new migration phenomenon, more effective procedures to collect and compare information on illegal migration and to develop new ideas in order to aim the general interest and needs of Member States.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

As concluded in the CIREFI meeting on 27 February 2009, the point C should be the Chapter of this questionnaire. In fact our assessment has already been transmitted before. Nevertheless, and pointing to the answers above, some conclusions could be drawn.

The CIREFI is a distinct group, as it collects and provides information on the different issues, as already mentioned, almost on time, privileging the effectiveness and celerity.

The oral and written contributions of Member States on the different modus operandi of illegal migration, many often on legal grounds, and the countermeasures adopted on the upstream level, contribute to the anticipation of some occurrences in other Member States.

The exchange of information on legal migration, deportation and legislation is very important.

It deserves a reference the stimulus of CIREFI to the networking among the officers of the Member States, an added value for the informal cooperation, since its beginning.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

As mentioned before, the goal is to improve the exchange the information as quick as effective is possible and for this it is needed the contribution and participation of all Member States.

## ROMANIA

### **1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Romania is represented at CIREFI meetings by the representatives of the Permanent Representation of Romania to the EU and the representatives of the Romanian Immigration Office.

### **2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The national contributors to the national reports for CIREFI are the Romanian Immigration Office and the Romanian Border Police.

### **A. Functioning of CIREFI**

### **3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Romania considers that an optimum frequency for CIREFI meetings should be quarterly. Romania considers this is an optimum frequency taking into account the scope of the CIREFI - to assist the Member States in effectively studying legal immigration, in preventing illegal immigration and facilitator networks, in better detecting forged documents and in improving expulsion practice.

Taking into account that one of CIREFI's tasks is to "effectively study" legal and illegal immigration as well as facilitators' networks, the provision of relevant statistics in those areas is desirable. Thus, provision of statistics to CIREFI should be in line with Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 311/76 on the compilation of statistics on foreign workers.

Furthermore, for urgent exchange of information on illegal immigration and facilitator networks the Early Warning System set under CIREFI in May 1999 should be revitalized.



4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.

Romania considers that the *tour de table* is a useful measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal immigration in other Member States.

The opening *tour de table* allows the Member States' delegation to present not only the statistical information in the area, but to let the other delegation know facts about the operative situation in other Member States (e.g. *modi operandi*, new routes, and trends). This will ensure a better exchange of information among the national authorities dealing with immigration issues.

- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.

5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?

Romania considers that the space provided for each country is sufficient, taking into account the scope of a *tour de table*. (For more details see the answer to question no. 6)

6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?

Romania considers that sometimes the interactivity of the participating delegations is not very satisfactory.

Romania considers that measures to increase the interactivity of the meetings could be:

1. The agendas should comprise presentation on the situation of illegal immigration by each participating delegation (2/3 per meeting). The schedule of presentations and the reference periods should be proposed by each acting Presidency at the first meeting.

Or,

2. The acting Presidency should include into the agendas more concrete items to be discussed by the participating delegations.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
**- third countries;**

Romania considers this could be a good opportunity for the third countries to present the situation in the area of illegal immigration from their perspective.  
Even so, it will be difficult to establish what third countries should be invited.

- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

Frontex and Europol are already participating in CIREFI meetings and their contribution is important for reaching the scope of the group regarding the exchange of information in the area of illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings.

- any others.**

Taking into account interactions between CIREFI and EUROSTAT (statistical information), the second one could be invited on regular bases to CIREFI meetings.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**  
(b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

Romania considers the regular reports produces by CIREFI as a complementary source of information for the information provided during the *tour de table*.

Taking into account the reports are provided during the meetings they are studied and used afterwards. So, the information provided by the *tour de table* is the initial information, the incentive, and the reports are the base for a deepened study.

- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Romania considers the structure of the national is not sufficiently up-to-date.

It has to be kept in mind that one the objective of CIREFI is to assist the Member States in effectively studying legal immigration. Currently, the structures of national reports and of the CIREFI reports (Compilation of contributions) do not comprise information on this subject. So, information on this subject should be added.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Romania considers that drawing a situation report and an analysis of trends every six months, by each acting Presidency could be useful for the participating delegations.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Romanian Immigration Office (the national authority representing Romania at CIREFI) is using the contributions of other Member States and, especially, the Compilation of contributions written by the General Secretariat in carrying out their own assessments.

The analyses based on those documents are used by Romanian Immigration Office in its activity, and periodically it is send to Romanian Border Police.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, it is. Taking into account that there are 23 languages that are considered to be official languages of the EU, Romania considers that CIREFI should decide on one language to be used in writing the reports.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Romania considers that the tailored reports processed by the Presidency-in-office are both beneficial and useful.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Taking into account the current situation, when no third countries authorities are invited to CIREFI meetings, the discussion of ILO reports constitutes a good opportunity for the other delegations to be informed on the situation in the specific third country.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

See answer to question no. 9

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Romania considers that the current outputs of CIREFI are sufficient, but they can be improved.

The current outputs should be supplemented with information on legal immigration. Also, half-yearly situation reports and an analysis of trends are more than welcomed.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

- (a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

Firstly, Romania wants to stress that, according to its objectives, CIREFI is not a platform dealing only with issues of illegal immigration. Keeping in mind these objectives and the importance given by the EU to legal immigration, CIREFI should be a platform where issues of legal immigration should be linked with issues in the area of legal immigration.

The main benefit of CIREFI is the exchange of information, not only statistic but operational. The quality of the information exchanged can be further improved by including the area of legal immigration.

- (b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

Romania considers that for the future, CIREFI should align its working methods and procedures to other relevant pieces of legislation (e.g. the Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 311/76 on the compilation of statistics on foreign workers and the Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 of 17 February 1997 on Community Statistics as regards the availability to the public of the statistical information).

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## SLOVENIA

Slovenian delegation welcomes efforts of the Czech Presidency while composing the questionnaire about the future tasks and functioning of CIREFI. Slovenia is also aware of the difficulties that will arise during the evaluation of this questionnaire. Aiming to make the background of our answers more coherent Slovenia would like to stress that all questions were answered within the framework of the Council Conclusions on the organization and development of the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on crossing of Frontiers and Immigration (CIREFI).

### **1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Employees from the Border Police Division within Police, Ministry of the Interior represent Slovenia at the CIREFI meetings.

### **2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The following authorities are responsible for the contributions to the CIREFI national report:

- Border Police Division within the Police
- Criminal Police Directorate within the Police
- Asylum Section within Ministry of the Interior

### **A. Functioning of CIREFI**

### **3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

CIREFI meetings should be held every second month, as Slovenia believes that this is an optimal period for exchanging up to date information and assure continuity. On the other hand, there should be enough flexibility to recognize a need for additional meetings in cases of sudden increasing trend or in case of new modus operandi appearance that would need on the spot exchange of information.

### **4. Do you consider the opening tour de table to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Tour de table is an opportunity for Members States to exchange additional information or to underline some of the findings. On the other hand, Slovenia sees tour de table also as an opening to a vivid informal debate during breaks.

- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

5. **Do the tour de table and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, it does.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming tour de table can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Slovenia considers CIERFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive. Slovenia does not consider tour de table to be time-consuming, if the delegations stick to the agreement not to repeat the information, which is already given in the situation report. Moreover Slovenia would say that the tour de table enlightens mutual problems of Member States and gives us all the opportunity to discuss them and share possible solutions.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**

- **third countries;**

Co-operation with third countries is one of the corner stones of integrated border management, therefore it is necessary to invite third countries in order to assess their ability to share CIREFI type of information, but on the other hand also to hear their experiences in fighting and preventing illegal migration;

- **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

EUROPOL and FRONTEX co-ordinate activities to fight illegal migrations at the EU level based also on the information exchanged in CIREFI reports and meetings. It is only natural that their representatives are present at CIREFI meetings.

- **any others.**

## **B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

(a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial tour de table is thus no longer necessary).**

CIREFI reports give a possibility for a quick overview of situation in all Member States on the basic elements of illegal migration, therefore it is the main source of information. On the other hand (and see above) tour de table is an opportunity to give some additional information or to underline some of the main findings.

(b) **Inefficient (the initial tour de table is sufficient).**

**9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

If the good practice “tour the table” is continued, the structure of the national reports does not need to be changed. Otherwise some points would have to be added and the report would have to be structured differently – opened questions and the possibility to give additional information.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

As the main purpose of CIREFI was to collect and analyse up-to-date findings on the modus operandi together with basic statistical information and other fora already make situation reports for the whole year Slovenia believes it is unnecessary to do it also in the CIREFI group. But some kind of overall yearly report could be introduced at the first tour de table in the next year.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

The current situation reports should be sent exclusively in English. That would lighten the work of the presidency when drawing up the summary and the report would be applicable to all users.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions**

Slovenia includes the information from the CIREFI situation report and tour the table in our risk analysis. On basis of the statistics from other Member States, the changes of modus operandi and the routes of illegal migration can be followed.

Slovenia does not provide other institutions with the information exchanged in the CIREFI group, but the information is share indirectly with other bodies through dissemination our risk analysis.



**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Inconsistency in sending reports in English is especially hard for the presidencies (as well as officials from the Secretariat General) since they have to prepare the meeting, main findings and possible additional questions based on reports prepared in several languages. On the other hand copies reports dully sent in English at a later stage could loose its value and could be out of date.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

(a) **Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

(b) **Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Slovenia considers the ILO reports as additional information to the situation reports and therefore very useful. Through the ILO reports additional information about the situation and problems in the particular countries is provided.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Slovenia believes that data collected so far is sufficient. Instead of including additional data into exchange of information focus should be made on complete reporting by all Member States.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

The current outputs of CIREFI are sufficient.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The main benefit is to give all the Members States an equal opportunity to discuss in professional working environment variety of issues connected to the illegal migration phenomena. On the contrary of some other EU bodies working parties with the Council guarantees equal treatment of all Member States.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

CIREFI was established with the purpose of combating criminal illegal immigration networks. The only tool available to CIREFI is the exchange of information. With a proper and regular use of this tool it can be very effective. In addition to that CIREFI is the only platform that collects overall data regarding the illegal immigration. All other platforms collect either just the data connected to the external borders (FRONTEX) or the data is not so extensive and up-to-date.

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## SLOVAKIA

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Slovak Republic is represented at CIREFI meetings by the police officers from the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Contribution to the CIREFI national report consist of the Bureau of Border and Alien police of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The Slovak Republic considers two months frequency of CIREFI meetings as adequate for valuable exchange of information and discussion on immigration in the EU.

**4. Do you consider the opening tour de table to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Slovakia considers the tour de table as a useful and necessary tool for exchange of information between Member States and other participants. The tour de table gives an overview of the submitted reports which are mainly in the national languages, therefore very difficult to understand. Slovakia recommends having all reports in English.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

**5. Do the tour de table and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, the tour de table enables the Slovak Republic to report experiences and findings as well as discuss actual topics.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming tour de table can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Slovakia considers CIREFI meetings as interactive. When a problem occurred in one country, also other countries are willing to contribute to the discussion.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
**- third countries;**

When a significant trend with impact on another country occurs, then it is relevant to invite the appropriate country.

- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

Slovakia supports inviting other bodies like EUROPOL and FRONTEX, whose activities are related to items on the CIREFI agenda.

- any others.**

Slovakia supports inviting other entities such as intergovernmental or non-governmental bodies.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial tour de table is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial tour de table. Yes, but regular reports should be in English.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial tour de table is sufficient).**

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Yes, national reports are sufficiently up-to-date and other type of information in the national reports is not needed.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

Yes, Slovakia considers it useful to have the current situation for each country with an EU wide summary.

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

Slovakia considers that re-evaluation of the definitions to be used by Member States when sending the requested information could be very helpful for the further evaluation of the data.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Slovakia considers using the national reports in our analytical work within the Bureau of Border and Alien Police and this information is used by Ministry of Interior.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, it is rather complicated to use national reports submitted in many different European languages.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes, Slovakia considers it useful and beneficial for improving the efficiency of CIREFI actions.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Slovakia considers it important to discuss ILO reports in CIREFI and suggests inviting ILO's to meetings for further possible discussion on the reports.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Slovakia considers the information exchanged as sufficient to the main scope of CIREFI.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Slovakia suggests having overall statistics with an EU scope, prepared by the Presidency. Slovakia suggests having overall statistics also in graphics and to highlight new trends in the illegal migration from national reports (analyzing of national reports).

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

From Slovakia's perspective the main benefit of CIREFI is the possibility to exchange up to date information in illegal migration within the EU and to share opinions with other delegates.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

No further information.

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## FINLAND

### 1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?

The Ministry of the Interior, including the Migration Department and the Finnish Border Guard. The National Bureau of Investigation when needed. Finland's Permanent Representation to the European Union is usually present.

### 2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?

The Ministry of the Interior, including the Migration Department and the Finnish Border Guard, the Finnish Immigration Service and the National Bureau of Investigation contribute information. The Migration Department co-ordinates and completes the national report.

### A. Functioning of CIREFI

### 3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.

The frequency is quite good as it is now (one meeting in two months). The frequency of one meeting in every three months might be useful if only operational aspects are considered. However, in this case there would be only two meetings for every presidency country to chair. That might be too little.

### 4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.
- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.

The *tour de table* should concentrate on new phenomena, changes in the environment and cases of great significance. In the current form too much time is used for individual cases. It should also be noted, though, that there are more than 30 delegations in CIREFI now and the floor must be given to each of them.

### 5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?

Mostly yes.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Mostly meetings are not interactive enough. One suggestion for development might be that the main topics raised in the *tour de table* should be put on the agenda, so the participants could prepare to comment or ask about them. This would require that the countries should point out in their monthly reports those matters they will raise in *tour de table*.

Besides the *tour de table*, short prepared presentations by 1-2 delegations or experts during the meetings on certain topical issues with background information and analysis are informative and effective. Even some of the meetings could be organised thematically.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
**- third countries;**

If the topics on the agenda or partnership/co-operation issues need this, yes.

**- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

They should be present in every meeting.

**- any others.**

Possibly researchers and representatives of relevant NGOs when needed.

## **B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

(a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**

The reports are the main source in CIREFI meetings. The *tour de table* only completes the written reports. Completing addresses concerning new or topical issues may, however, be very informative.

(b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**

(c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**



9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The structure is mostly useful. However, for better usefulness all countries should adhere to the common form and language.

10. **Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**
- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

This proposal is very useful. The focus should put on an analysis of new trends.

- (b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**

Drawing up trends also in the course of the year with a practical and not so laborious method could be useful supplement to the suggested yearly situation reports.

11. **Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

The main content and findings of the reports are reported nationally to essential ministries and other state authorities soon after meetings by the Ministry of the Interior in co-operation between the Migration Department and the Border Guard. The initial reports are not sent to other institutions by the Migration Department.

The Border Guard does not have much use for the initial country reports. Their main sources in this field are the reports and analysis made by FRONTEX. However, the CIREFI reports are occasionally used for one source among the others for their own analysis work. The reports are not sent to other institutions by the Border Guard, either.

12. **Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

This is a big disadvantage. The reports should be translated to English. For example all the reporting in FRONTEX is made only in English.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Mainly they are useful.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is Appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

This practice is appropriate since this is mainly the only platform where the ILO reports of the EU Member States are discussed.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

The statistics reported in part one of the monthly report are sufficient as well as other data and findings. No proposals about changes.

**16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Suggested yearly situation reports with analysis completed with lighter summaries during the course of the year. Thematic meetings and reports based on data, analysis and national contributions. Summaries of the national reports to be delivered to national authorities prior to meetings (as CZ let us know in the last meeting). Responsibility: Presidency with the Council.

**C. Overall Assessment**

**17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

CIREFI is the only platform for sharing information and discussion on illegal immigration and phenomena related to this as a whole. The role of the body is different from e.g. Europol and Frontex. Initiatives and focused action are needed for developing our work to a direction more useful and characteristic particularly of CIREFI among other institutions and networks: also thematic approach, summaries and analysis.

Solely from the Border Guard's point of view the CIREFI co-operation could be developed more closely to the co-operation under FRONTEX and in the future maybe unite these two co-operation platforms to one which will be managed by FRONTEX. Alternatively FRONTEX could be the main co-operation platform for the border authorities and CIREFI for the immigration authorities.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

**18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

No proposals for this.

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## SWEDEN

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

- Swedish Migration Board
- Swedish Central Border Management Division, National Criminal Police
- Ministry of Justice, Division for Migration and Asylum Policy

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

- Swedish Migration Board
- Swedish Central Border Management Division, National Criminal Police

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

- Present numbers of meetings are sufficient (i.e. 6–8 meetings per year).

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**
- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Answer to (a) and (b):

Even though the *tour-de-table* is a time consuming way of sharing information it provides for a general and valuable overview of the current situation in Member States. There is a clear benefit to listening to information from Member States orally on recent trends and influx of certain nationalities, rather than simply reading their written contributions. This allows for a comparison of information and data that is highly useful for further discussions. This is also useful considering that some Member States submit their written contributions in their native language. Preferably, only Member States which have special facts to report should take the floor during the *tour-de-table*.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Interaction could be increased if Member States receive the situation reports before the CIREFI meeting takes place. Interaction could also be increased if a certain topic were to be discussed during the CIREFI meetings. Member States could decide that during the forthcoming CIREFI meeting focus will be put on a certain geographical or thematic topic, and thereby increase interaction.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

It is essential that Frontex and Europol are invited to participate in CIREFI meetings and that they are given enough time to inform Member States on the work carried out. Depending on the topics discussed, it is also useful to invite third countries and other bodies to CIREFI meetings.

## **B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

(a)-(c):

The regular reports are the main source. However, the complexity and varying format of the contributions to the reports makes it difficult to digest. As some Member States submit written information in their own native language, the tour-de-table is a valuable complementary source of information.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Yes.

10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?

(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?

Yes.

(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?

(c) Do you have any other suggestions?

11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?

A summary from the CIREFI meetings and reports is distributed to the Unit for Planning and Analysis in the Swedish Migration Board, to the Migration attachés and Liaison Officers posted abroad as well as distributed in the law enforcement community.

12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?

Yes.

13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:

(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.

Yes.

(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?

14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?

These reports are of a very general nature. In order to make them more useful and to give added value they need to be more developed.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

More focus could be put on current migration topics, including legal migration, of equal interest to all Member States.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

Yes.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

The main benefit of CIREFI is that it gives Member States an opportunity to exchange up-to-date information orally and highlight specific events of interest to other Member States and associated countries.

It is important to stress that duplication of work should be avoided. Salient facts about smuggling of human beings, trafficking in persons, false documents etc. is today also mandated to and dealt with by Frontex and Europol. The compilation of statistics is an area also dealt with by other fora like Frontex (i.e. Frontex Risk Analysis Network) and Eurostat. CIREFI is however also mandated to carry out information exchange on legal migration issues. A future functioning of CIREFI could be to elaborate more in detail on the abuse or misuse of legal means to enter into the EU.

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**
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## UNITED KINGDOM

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The UK Border Agency

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The UK Border Agency

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The preferred optimum frequency is bi-monthly: often enough to monitor and respond to emerging trends. It would also tie in to our reporting cycle.

**4. Do you consider the opening *tour de table* to be:**

(a) **a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

(b) **insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

United Kingdom thinks the *tour de table* is useful and necessary. It is only a flavour; more can be gained from the full reporting, but participants need to focus on the key issues.

**5. Do the *tour de table* and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, and it provides an introduction to other colleagues to expand where necessary in the margins of the meeting.

**6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming *tour de table* can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Given the scale of the meeting, the United Kingdom finds interaction is satisfactory as mentioned, additional business can be conducted in the margins.



7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**  
**- third countries;**

The United Kingdom finds the interaction with the US and Canada helpful, but would prefer to hear more from European neighbouring countries; particularly from North Africa.

- other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

The relationship with Frontex and Europol is essential to the group.

- any others.**

The United Kingdom would like to invite the IOM to more meetings; as this is helpful.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial *tour de table* is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial *tour de table*.**
- (c) **Inefficient (the initial *tour de table* is sufficient).**

None of the above; used properly the tour de table can highlight issues better, but should complement the reporting.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Acknowledgement must be made on the constraints on producing information.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

Trend analysis is helpful, supported occasionally with specific reporting from operations.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Some of the information is used when making an analysis; but reports are not reproduced unless agreed.

**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, but where necessary, translations has been arranged for.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

- (a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**
- (b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The United Kingdom thinks that the Presidency should highlight one issue during their term of office.

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Sometimes helpful.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

It would be useful to track trends on regular migration; sometimes there is displacement.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

The United Kingdom finds the current outputs helpful.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

The United Kingdom agrees that CIREFI is a unique platform, and thinks that it still functions as was planned as an appropriate forum for discussions on current developments in the area of illegal migration and the crossing of borders. CIREFI enables good contacts to be made with colleagues from other Member States to rapidly exchange up-to-date findings on the migration issues.

The United Kingdom finds that it adds value.

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

Delegations need to look at how they work with Frontex in developing our threat analysis.

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## ICELAND

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The JHA Counsellor at the Icelandic Mission to the EU in Brussels attends the meetings on behalf of the National Police Commissioner and the Icelandic Directorate of Immigration.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Icelandic Directorate of Immigration is responsible for submitting the data which is gathered from their files in addition to the files of the National Police Commissioner, the Reykjavik Metropolitan Police, the district Commissioner in Keflavik Airport and the district Police Commissioner in Seydisfjordur.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Due to Iceland's geographical position and its low numbers of data in all categories its interests do not require frequent meetings. Meeting every fourth month would satisfy Iceland's needs. However, Iceland is aware that this is not the case of many other Member States so Norway is not opposed to the current frequency of meetings, that is, every other month.

**4. Do you consider the opening tour de table to be:**

- (a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**
- (b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

The answer to this question is a mixture of a and b. Since all the relevant data are already in the statistical report there is no need to repeat the data. However, a tour de table can be of great use to highlight new trends or problems that have emerged. It should otherwise not repeat what is stated in the report.

**5. Do the tour de table and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes.

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming tour de table can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Iceland finds the meetings to be sufficiently interactive. Coffee breaks can be useful to interact further.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**
- **third countries;**
  - **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
  - **any others.**

It is easy to see that both the CIREFI members and members of Frontex and Europol could benefit from CIREFI meetings. Information points on the latest trends from the two organizations are beneficial for the national representatives and the tour de table discussion could as well be beneficial for the two organizations. Inviting third countries to CIREFI, particularly those which have common borders to the Schengen countries can also increase cooperation in preventing illegal migration flows. In addition it might be beneficial for the CIREFI group to invite third countries whose nationals count a majority of the statistical data or those countries used for transit. Such invitations would at least be informative but might also lead to common approach to tackle some of the problems faced.

**B. Outputs**

8. **CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**
- (a) **The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial tour de table is thus no longer necessary).**
  - (b) **A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial tour de table.**
  - (c) **Inefficient (the initial tour de table is sufficient).**

Iceland considers the regular reports to be the main source of information (a). See further answer to question no. 4.

9. **Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

The national reports are considered to be sufficiently up-to-date.

- 10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The method is considered to be sufficient. It was very useful to get the three-page summary of the report at the last CIREFI meeting and that should be continued.

- (a) **Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**
- (b) **Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**
- (c) **Do you have any other suggestions?**
- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

The Icelandic Directorate of Immigration reviews the reports but does not carry out its own follow-up assessment. The information is not distributed in a formal way but rather used to respond to requires from other institutions such as police authorities or the Ministry of Justice.

- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

No problems have been encountered regarding the use of national languages although English is preferred.

- 13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

(a) **Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes.

(b) **Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

It is appropriate and the reports are often very informative.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

No.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

The current outputs of CIREFI are sufficient.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

- (a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

The main benefit is quick and easy access to information and statistics from other Member States providing an overall picture of the situation and the problems that Schengen States are dealing with in the field.

- (b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

No special remarks.

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## NORWAY

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, the Directorate of Immigration and the National Police Immigration Service.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, the Directorate of Immigration and the National Police Immigration Service.

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

Norway believes that the optimum frequency of meetings is 6-8 meeting per year. If meetings are held less frequently, the information provided by the participants may be outdated and thus of little value. If meetings are held more frequently, it is possible that the information provided by the Member States is repeated from the previous meeting(s).

**4. Do you consider the opening tour de table to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

It is very useful to receive information that is up to date, the countries should make a point of the most salient facts. Norway believes that the new short summary of the Member States' written contributions (meeting document in English) is of great value, and hope that such summaries will be provided in the future. Norway is of the opinion that the Presidency's presentations of the summary of the written contributions should always be the first issue on the agenda.

In addition to this presentation, all countries should be encouraged to participate in the "tour de table", Norway suggests that the Member States' allotted time for speaking is limited to 5 minutes. This to ensure that all Member States have to opportunity to report on the current situation in their country.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**



5. **Do the tour de table and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Yes, the “tour de table” provides us with sufficient space to report about our experience and findings. (Especially when the Presidency draws up a summary of the written contributions and refers to this document in the beginning of the meeting, as the first item on the agenda).

6. **The large number of delegations and the time-consuming tour de table can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

The interaction has been improved in the last meetings. This is a positive development. It is important to be able to ask questions in order to clarify the information given.

7. **To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**

- **third countries;**

Norway is not invited when third countries (USA, Canada) take part in the CIREFI-meetings. However, it would be very useful for us to be invited to these meetings in order to get an overall picture of the current situation regarding illegal migration.

- **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**

The information given by Frontex and Europol is always useful, these bodies provides very important information concerning ongoing operations in Europe and neighbouring countries. Furthermore, Frontex and Europol often refer to important information bulletins etc.

- **any others.**

**B. Outputs**

**8. CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial tour de table is thus no longer necessary).**
- (b) A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial tour de table.**

The “tour de table” is the main information source regarding illegal immigration . Norway believes it is useful to have a “tour de table” at every CIREFI-meeting because the Member States often give additional and new information supplementing the written report (added value). The regular reports are of good value however, a summary (meeting document) is even more important to get a good picture of the current situation.

- (c) Inefficient (the initial tour de table is sufficient).**

**9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Norway believes the national reports are sufficiently up to date. It is important to emphasize that the national reports must refer to the same periods of time and use the same definitions regarding the data. Norway believes that this has been improved the last two years.

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

The Member States data should be more harmonized (using the same definitions), the written contributions should all be in English (common working language) and the final report should be distributed electronically. (An extensive report in different languages, distributed only by regular mail is of less interest).

- (a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Norway believes a situation report for the whole year would be useful. It should sum up the most important discussions which have taken place in CIREFI, and also point out some themes CIREFI should follow closely in the future. Norway believes that a situation report for the whole year or an analysis should be limited to 10-15 pages.

- (b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

A short EU wide summary of the country reports seems useful.

- (c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

- 11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Norway uses the reports to analyse the current situation and trends concerning illegal immigration and the main asylum flows. The CIREFI meetings give us a good picture on the situation regarding illegal immigration in Europe. It enables us to make a short report to our national authorities. This information is shared with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. However, Norway believes that there still is a potential in Norway to use the information from the CIREFI-meetings to be even more proactive.

- 12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes, especially because it does takes some time (3-4 weeks) before the translated reports are ready.

- 13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

It is useful when the Presidency points out certain themes the Member States should focus on. This is because it provides us with in depth knowledge, and because these subjects often are closely linked to other immigration issues.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

- 14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

The ILOs reports are useful because they focus on different countries and the immigration system in these countries. Norway believes it is important to further develop the ILO-networks.

- 15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Norway believes that CIREFI for the time being has the right focus on data regarding illegal immigration. There is of course a link between illegal and legal immigration, but Norway believes legal migration ought to be dealt with in other groups.

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

The current outputs of CIREFI are sufficient, especially when a sort summary is provided by the Presidency.

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

Norway believes there are good reasons for the existence of CIREFI. CIREFI is important because it gives a picture of the situation in the Schengen Member States regarding illegal immigration. It is also important that CIREFI provides useful information to the policymakers who are responsible for taking necessary measures. Norway believes that it is necessary that the issue of illegal immigration is addressed in different fora. CIREFI is one of several fora where up to date information on illegal immigration is provided. (Frontex (FRAN meetings) and IGC-meetings are also important sources of information). Norway believes that it is of value to the SCIFA-group, COREPER and the Council meetings to have direct access to vital information through CIREFI.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI?**

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

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## SWITZERLAND

**1. Which authorities represent your country at CIREFI meetings?**

Swiss Boarder Guard (Grenzwachtkorps, GWK), Ministry of Finance and Federal Office for Migration (Bundesamt für Migration, BFM), Ministry of Justice and Police.

**2. Which national authorities from your country contribute information to the national report for CIREFI?**

Boarder Guard (GWK), Office for Migration (BFM), International Airports Zurich and Geneva

**A. Functioning of CIREFI**

**3. In your opinion, what is the optimum frequency of CIREFI meetings? Please give reasons in favour of meetings being held more frequently or less frequently.**

The frequency seems to be quite fine. A monthly rhythm could also be envisaged. The value of the CIREFI would decline, if the meetings would take place less frequently.

**4. Do you consider the opening tour de table to be:**

**(a) a useful and necessary measure to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

Yes, Switzerland considers the tour de table (TdT) as very useful. Delegations can update their written reports with information about findings and incidents which have taken place after handing in the monthly report. Furthermore delegates can pinpoint to the most relevant points. Not to forget that the written national contributions are almost all written in the national languages of the Member States, which means that not all the written contributions can be understood immediately. The translated version of the contributions only arrives at a later stage. For our work it is important to have the most recent information possible. The older the information is, the more it loses its value for immediate action.

**(b) insufficient to acquaint participants with the current situation in the area of illegal migration in other Member States? Please give reasons.**

National delegations should be encouraged to make at least a short oral statement (if reasonable). The Chair and other delegations should also have the opportunity to ask questions or to comment / to add national views (similar cases, comparable modi operandi etc.).

- 5. Do the tour de table and the ensuing discussion in the course of the meeting provide you with sufficient space to report your experience and findings?**

Switzerland has the impression that the meeting is quite often under a certain time pressure (esp. if the meeting is intended to end at 2 p.m.) Then sometimes the TdT goes rather fast.

- 6. The large number of delegations and the time-consuming tour de table can make mutual interaction between participants at CIREFI meetings rather unsatisfactory. Do you consider CIREFI meetings to be sufficiently interactive? If not, what do you suggest to increase interaction?**

Switzerland considers the CIREFI meeting as very relevant and very valuable. However the size of the meeting exacerbates interaction. Switzerland has noticed that some relevant information, which is only of interest for two or three participating countries (but not for the whole meeting) are most efficiently exchanged during the meeting breaks! So Switzerland considers it crucial to have at least two breaks - one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Switzerland also suggests to generally holding day-long meetings (and not only - as it happens from time to time) half-day meetings (see also answer to question n°5). Also lunch time can be used to exchange information on a bi- or trilateral level.

- 7. To what extent do you consider it useful to invite other entities to participate in CIREFI meetings? Please give your views on inviting:**

- **third countries;**
- **other bodies (Frontex, Europol);**
- **any others.**

Switzerland has no explicit opinion on point one due to the fact that the Swiss delegation is not authorised to attend the meetings with third countries (such as US, Canada, Croatia, Turkey etc.). However, it would be appreciated if the Commission could review its position as regards the participation of the Schengen associated states Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland at those meetings, since the information exchanged with third states is also important for us.

Switzerland considers the attendance of Frontex and Europol as crucial. Their contributions are always of high relevance and substance.

Switzerland could imagine that CIREFI also invites from time to time other bodies which could present findings (e.g. forensic specialists who do document analysis; academic world, such as research institutes which present the findings of a study on irregular migration etc.; IOM).

**B. Outputs**

**8. CIREFI produces regular reports on the situation in the field of illegal migration presented by each country. Do you consider these reports to be:**

- (a) The main source of information on the current situation in other Member States (the initial tour de table is thus no longer necessary).**

Yes, the regular report is the main factual source, BUT (as explained under pt. 4a!) the handout cannot replace the TdT.

- (b) A complementary source of information, the main source of information being the initial tour de table.**

The written contributions are crucial because all the facts and figures cannot be given during the TdT.

- (c) Inefficient (the initial tour de table is sufficient).**

No. However the form of the delivered documents (voluminous, printed, paper, only one copy per delegation!) needs urgent change. Switzerland suggests to make all the national contributions, Power Point presentations etc. available on the ICO-Net platform - even prior to the meeting itself. If data protection reasons do not allow such a proceeding the distribution of a CD-ROM (e.g. 2 copies per delegation) could be envisaged.

**9. Do you consider the structure of the national reports sufficiently up-to-date? If not, how should the structure be changed or what type of information should be added?**

Despite the fact that there is a common template, the national contributions differ sometimes quite a bit from each other. Switzerland suggests that CIREFI not only presents an empty template but also a filled in fictitious sample contribution to give some orientation. Furthermore Switzerland suggests that the top 5 countries are always listed by name and together with the respective individual figures.

Finally, Switzerland would like to suggest, that in the months without CIREFI-meetings the reports are sent to the Member States, using one of the methods suggested under pt. 8 c).

**10. Do you consider the current method of collecting and processing data (national reports) as sufficient? If not, what changes would you like to see in this respect?**

Switzerland considers the current method as "second best". The filling in an electronic template which is directly placed on a (searchable) database could be envisaged. Over the time a unique, comprehensive database with an outstanding data stock would grow. Analysis and the establishing of prognosis etc would be enhanced, speeded up and professionalised.

**(a) Would you consider it useful to draw up a situation report for the whole year, including an annual consolidation of the statistics sent by each Member State and an analysis of the trends observed during the whole year?**

Yes, Switzerland would consider it as very useful. A sort of prognosis should be part of this situation report. The annual report should be submitted to CIREFI at the beginning of the each year, at latest in February. Such an annual report could be done together with - or exclusively by Frontex. As they already do the FRAN Quarterly reports any overlapping should be avoided.

**(b) Would you consider it useful to complete in the future the current situation report for each country with an EU wide summary of these country reports?**

Switzerland rather suggest "only" doing an EU- / Europe-wide situation report. The national situation report should remain the task of the national entities. However an EU-wide report may broadly refer to national figures and findings and bring these together on an international level (e.g. forged documents, irregular migration influx of Somali, Eritrean, Nigerian nationals etc.). It is nevertheless necessary, that this report would be established quickly after the national reports have been handed in. If the assembling of the report would take too much time, the value will diminish as a big part of the information will be outdated.

**(c) Do you have any other suggestions?**

All the presentations hold during the meeting should systematically be made available to the national delegations. Sometimes one gets an executive summary, sometimes a comprehensive handout (with all the Power Point-folios) and sometimes just nothing. Again: All presentations and contributions should be made available in an electronic format.

**11. Do you use the reports of other Member States at national level? Do you carry out your own follow-up assessment of these outputs? Do you provide any other institutions with the information acquired? If so, which institutions?**

Yes, Switzerland follows closely the development going on in other countries and the findings presented in the national contributions. National analysis on irregular migration which affects or which may affect Switzerland is also based on these facts, figures and findings of other Schengen states. Analysis - not the basic information - is shared on a strategic level with federal organisations dealing with irregular migration (national security, federal police, federal crime investigation).



**12. Is subsequent exploitation of the information provided complicated by the fact that national reports are in some cases submitted in national languages?**

Yes. Although Switzerland is able to cover the most important languages in the EU, some (very valuable and informative!) national contributions can only be treated after the translation is provided by CIREFI.

**13. Do you consider tailored reports and analyses processed by the Presidency-in-office on the basis of questionnaire surveys to be:**

**(a) Beneficial and useful? The current state of their processing is sufficient.**

Yes, Switzerland considers tailored reports / analysis - based on specific questionnaires - as useful and providing an added value.

**(b) Insufficient? What changes would you like to see in this respect?**

See also above! However, it should be looked to it that there is no overlapping with Frontex or other EU-bodies surveys and that the questionnaire really deals with the core issues related to CIREFI (which means irregular migration, asylum, migration flows, migration liaison officer postings...).

Due to the workload caused by a survey Switzerland strongly suggests to have only one survey per presidency. The participating states should be consulted in advance whether they judge the envisaged survey as useful / nice to have.

**14. Please indicate if, in your view the current practice of discussing ILOs reports in CIREFI, is appropriate. What do you consider to be the added value of such reports?**

Switzerland considers the compilation, presentation and discussion of these reports as very useful. The last couple of reports have contained a lot of very useful, detailed information of direct use for analysis purposes - mostly information that can hardly be gathered elsewhere.

**15. With respect to the orientation of CIREFI, do you find that exchange of certain types of data and findings is lacking? If so, please state what they are (e.g. data and information on legal migration).**

Yes, an exchange of certain types of information could be added with regard to the annual report (e.g. the size of the top-20 diasporas in the participating states; in addition it might be helpful, if not only the top 5 nations of diasporas are mentioned in the report, but also the top 5 states of [or all states with e.g. more than 50] asylum claims, detected illegal migrants, returned illegal migrants etc.).

- 16. Do you consider the current outputs of CIREFI sufficient? If not, what other regular outputs would you consider useful? Who should be responsible for these additional outputs?**

As already mentioned above: Switzerland strongly suggest having all the information on an electronic platform - accessible for the participating states. "All" means: All the statistics (hard facts) in searchable format, all the background and contextual information (soft facts) and all presentations given during the CIREFI meetings. The problem is not really the lack of information but the insufficient access to the information stored somewhere (in paper format!).

**C. Overall Assessment**

- 17. Considering the activities of other platforms dealing with the issue of illegal migration, do you consider there still to be good reasons for the existence of CIREFI and that it continues to be useful for the participating institutions?**

**(a) If so, what do you consider to be the main benefit of CIREFI?**

Switzerland cannot see any other platform which would really replace CIREFI. In Switzerland's point of view CIREFI has a very high legitimacy and has to be strengthened, not replaced. Detected weaknesses are good reasons for improvement, not for abolishment. CIREFI is a unique platform to exchange and assess information related to irregular migration / asylum. The high expertise of the national delegates and the Europol / Frontex experts guarantees a very high analytical value.

**(b) If not, what are your suggestions for the future functioning of CIREFI? --**

- 18. Please indicate any further information you consider important for the future of CIREFI.**

It might be considered to have once a year a CIREFI meeting that may last for two days, e.g. the meeting where the complex annual report is presented. Other topics might be added too. This would open the possibility to have an informal diner with all the participants. This would help to strengthen the ties between the participants and would allow further networking. These sorts of meetings could be joined with FRONTEX and held in Warsaw.

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