

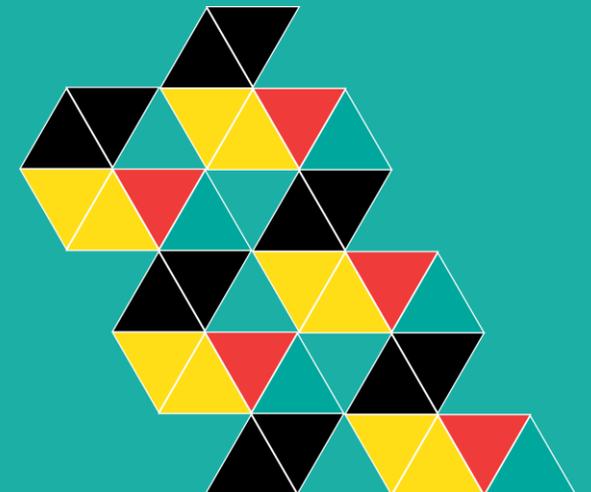
# National Travel Targeting Center

## Daan Vertongen



Nationaal Crisiscentrum  
Centre de crise National

*Limited distribution - For official use only*



# NATIONAL TRAVEL TARGETING CENTER



Belgian Passenger Information Unit (BelPIU)

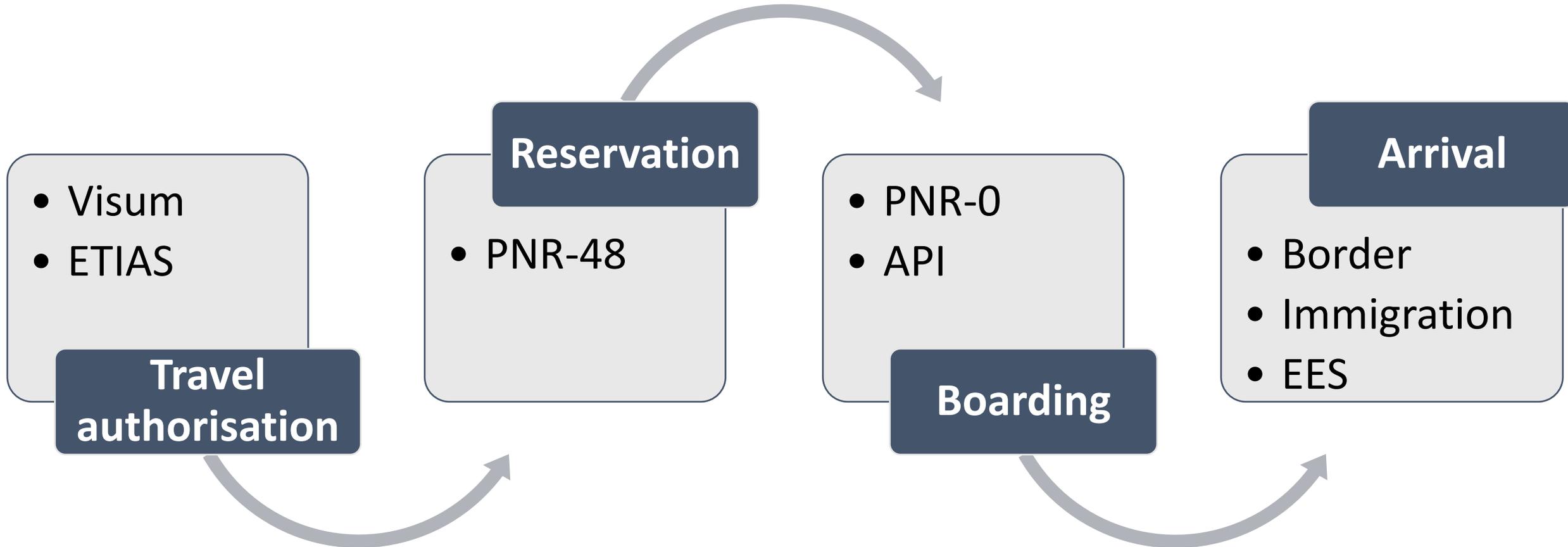
&

Belgian ETIAS National Unit (BelENU)

- Coherent approach pre-arrival screening and the follow-up of travel movements
- In support of Belgian security and intelligence services

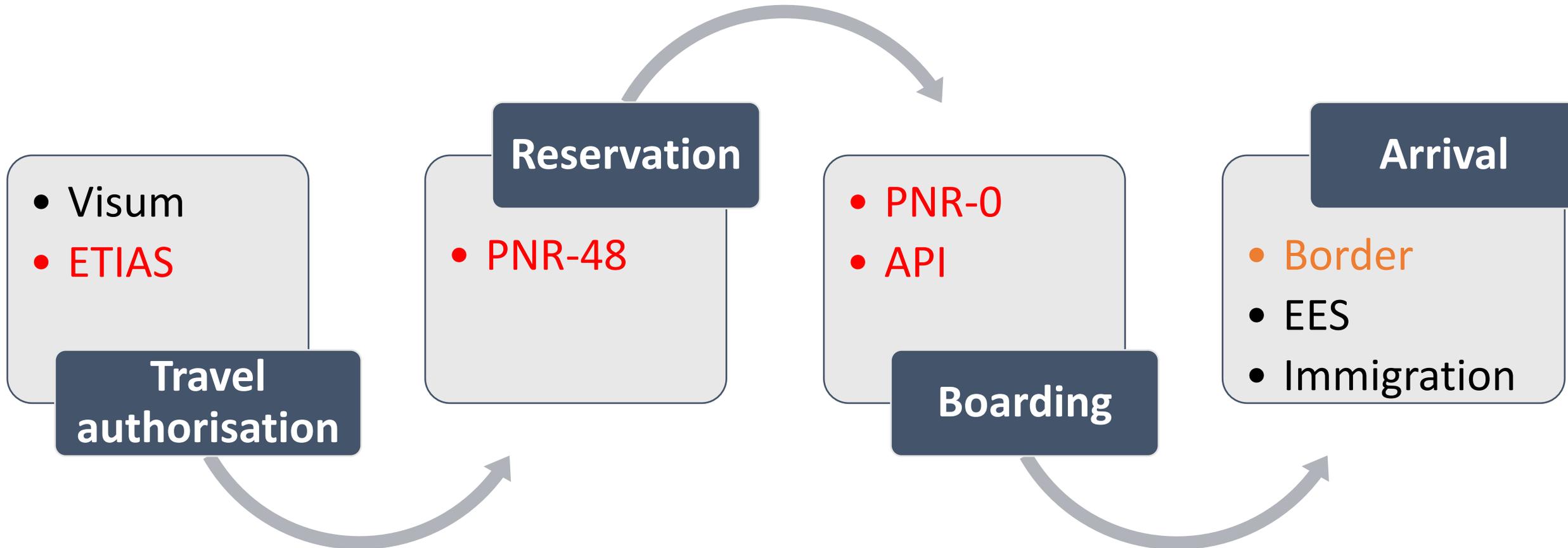
# TRAVEL CYCLE

Example of a passenger arriving at Brussels National Airport



# TRAVEL CYCLE

Example of a passenger arriving at Brussels National Airport



# PASSENGER DATA

WHY?

WHAT?

WHO?

WHERE?

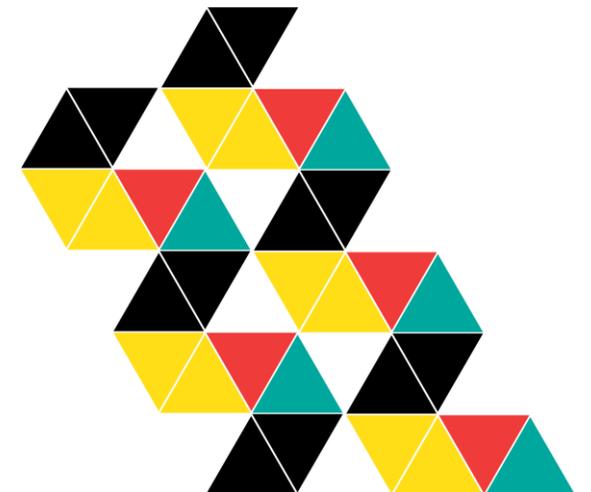
HOW?

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Nationaal Crisiscentrum  
Centre de crise National

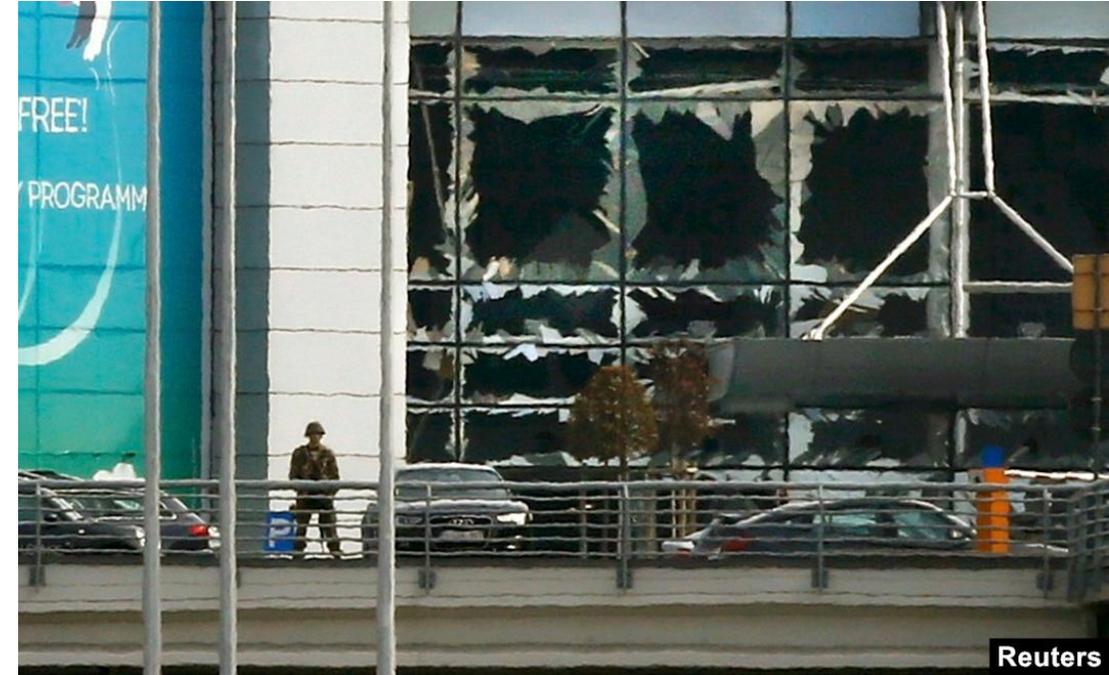
*Limited distribution - For official use only*



# I. PASSENGER DATA

## WHY PROCESSING DATA?

- Emergence of FTFs in 2010s
- European 9/11 moments demonstrate need to share between security services
- Borders Five experience
- Adoption of the EU PNR Directive (2016)
- UN Security Council Resolutions requiring States to collect API



# I. PASSENGER DATA

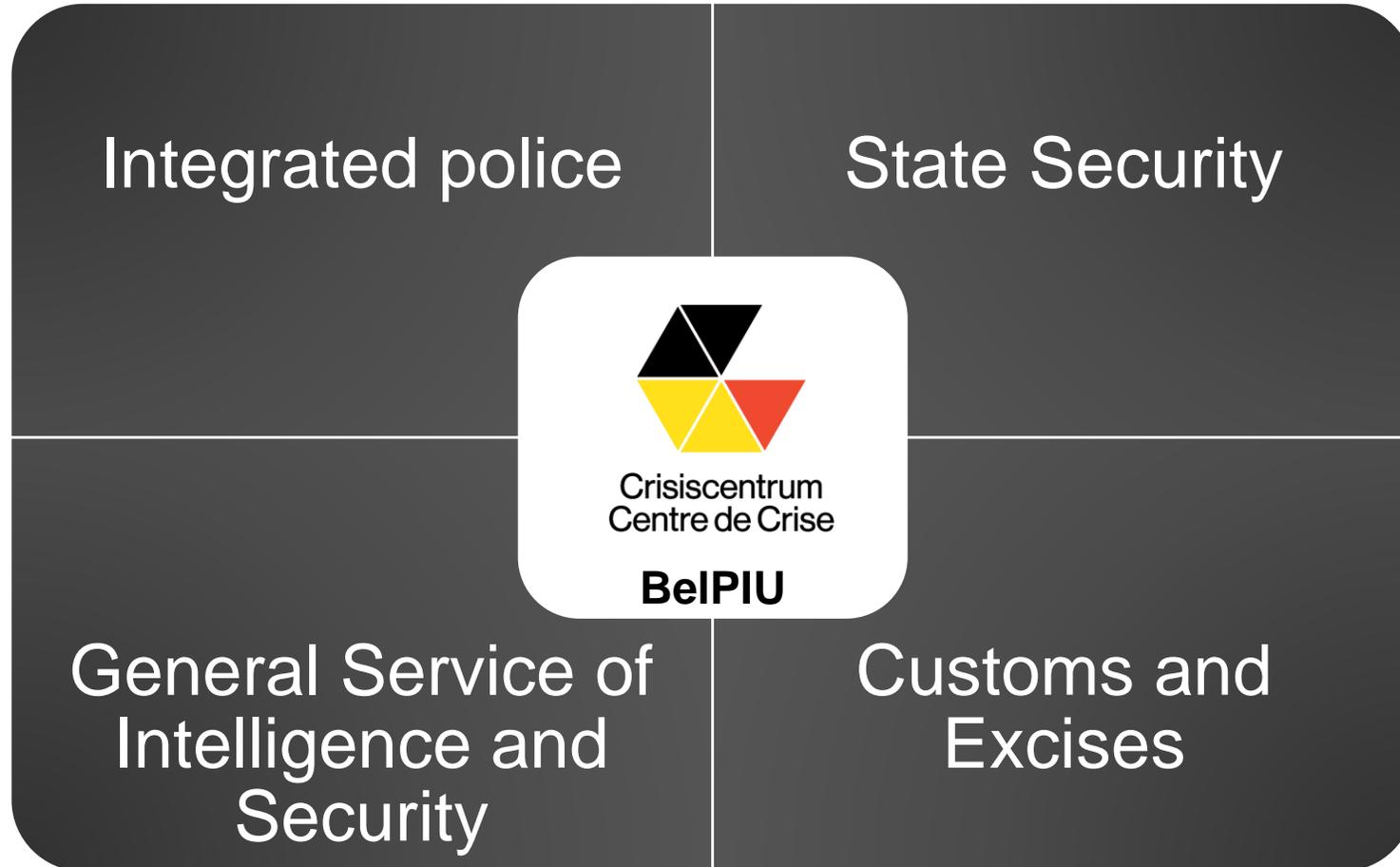
## WHAT ? (1)

- Law of 25 December 2016 and Royal Decrees establishing the **Belgian Passenger Information Unit (BelPIU)**
  - EU API (2004) and PNR (2016) Directive
  - Scope : terrorism and serious crime
- **API** (Advance Passenger Information) = identity data
  - Linked to check-in and boarding, only extra-Schengen flights
  - Name, passport number, date of birth, nationality, seat, luggage, ...
- **PNR** (Passenger Name Records) = reservation data
  - Declarative, for all international flights
  - Name, email address, telephone number, payment information, ...



# I. PASSENGER DATA

WHO ?



# I. PASSENGER DATA

## WHAT ? (2)

- Legislation for aviation + railway + bus + maritime + TA/TO
- Aviation : +- 70 regular airlines in BE
  - Nowadays 51 airlines  $\pm$  94% total air pax
  - Reception 48h before STD and at ATD for incoming, outgoing and transiting pax
  - Since 2018 : > 60 million travel movements registered (5y)
- Pilot projects for railway and bus are being set-up
  - Taskforce HST (BE (chair), NL, FR, UK)
  - Technical standardization of data format

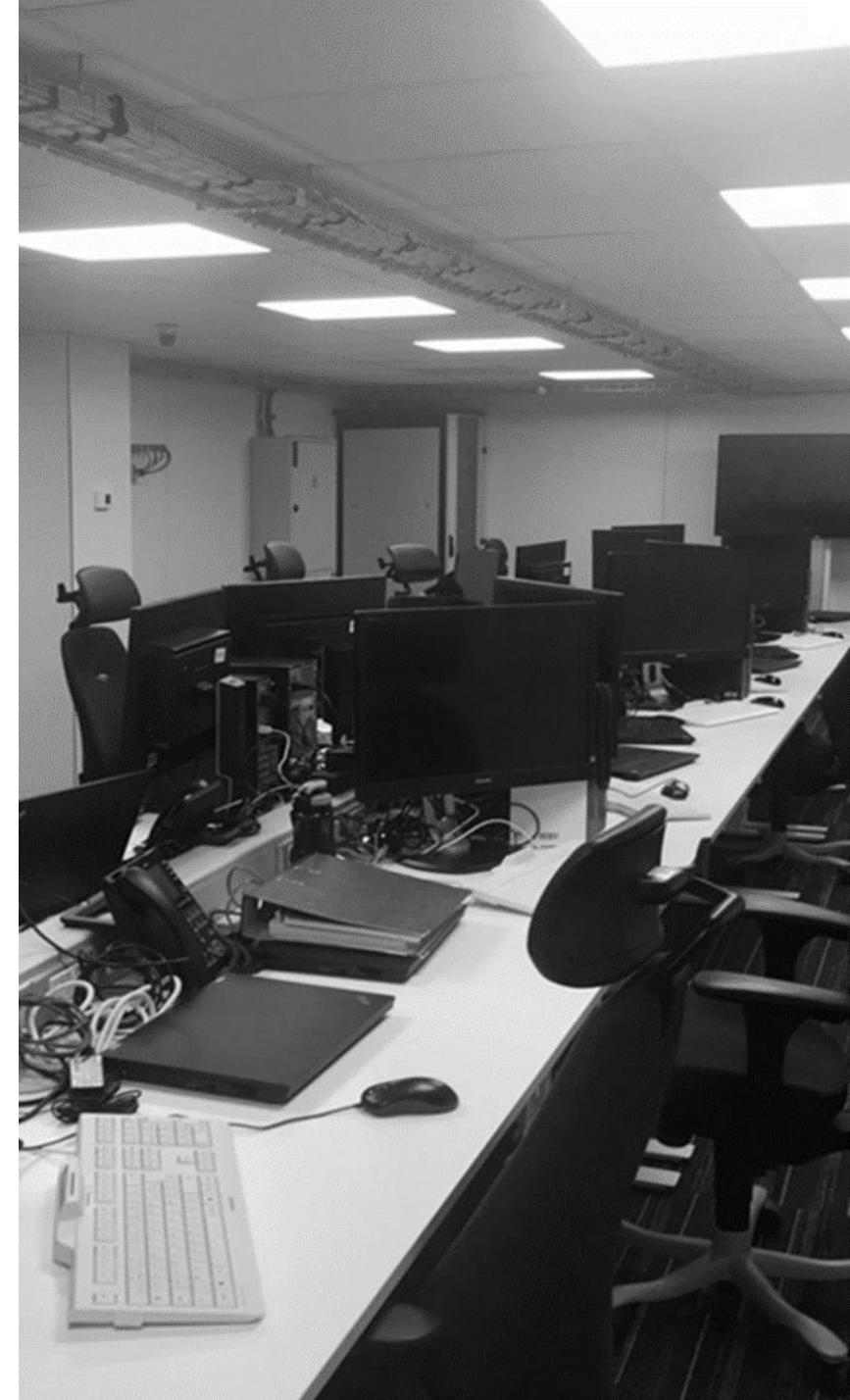


# I. PASSENGER DATA

## WHERE ?

- Operational Travel Intelligence Room (OTIR)
- 24/7 operations
- Various security layers
- Logging and auditing
  - Internal procedures and checks
  - Data protection officer
  - Data protection authorities

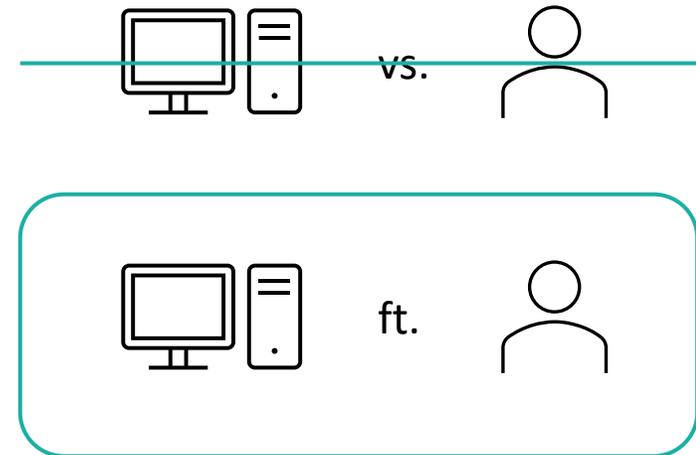
Highly available. Highly secure.



# I. PASSENGER DATA

## HOW ?

- Watchlisting
  - Finding the known
  - Ownership by competent authorities
- Rules Based Targeting
  - Finding the not yet known
  - Predicting probability of crime
- Case by case queries
  - Historical searches



Detection of targets and unraveling of networks

# I. PASSENGER DATA

## HOW ?

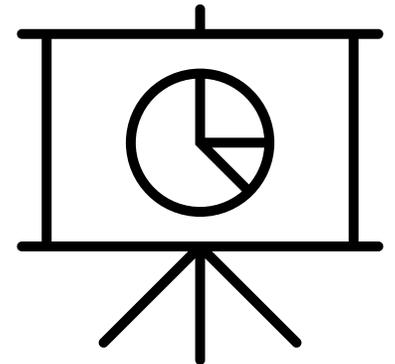
- Automatization of labour intense processes
- Possibility to receive alert 48h before travel of target
- Availability of a relatively rich data set : names, telephone numbers, email addresses, credit card numbers, passport data, etc.
- Intra-Schengen (!)
- Unique collaboration model encouraging information exchange (multihits)
- Availability of expertise in different domains from different services including an analyst team
- Interaction with other PIUs : foreign information requests



# I. PASSENGER DATA

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021 – SOME EXAMPLES

- Impact covid measures : only 13 million travel movements
- 199 actions following a crossmatch with the Common Database
- 61 arrests for immediate detention (importance intra-EU!)
- Prevention of 24 parental kidnappings, 4 arrests
- 110 human smuggling traffickers and victims
- Detection of illegal narcotics with € 7 million value
- Hit > check as incentive to declare goods (e.g. diamonds)
- Historical data : 1400 requests by prosecutor's offices
- >500 requests from EU PIUs
- Pro-active information flow to foreign partners (e.g. HU, CZ)



# I. PASSENGER DATA

## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

1. Between EU Members (Art. 9 PNR Directive)

Since August 2019

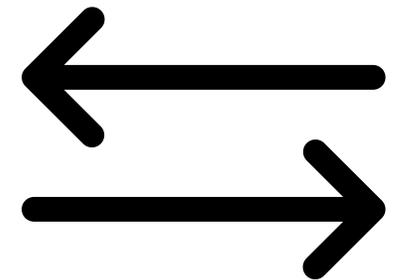
2. With Europol (Art. 10 PNR Directive)

Since 2020, under development

3. With non-EU members (Art. 11 PNR Directive)

Directive (EU) 2016/680

(!) Belgium as driver of international operational collaboration through its presidency of the PNR Informal Working Group



# I. PASSENGER DATA

## OPPORTUNITIES

- New legislation on Advance Passenger Information (API) upcoming
  - Extension to intra-EU?
  - Extension to other modes of transport?
  - EC proposal expected by end 2022

# I. PASSENGER DATA

- Jewish museum attack Brussels (2014) : suspect arrested in Marseille after taking an international train
- Thalys attack (2015) : suspect already on the radar by ES and BE intelligence services
- Paris attacks (2015) : suspect could cross the internal borders while already under international arrest warrant prior to attacks
- Berlin attack (2016) : suspect Anis Amri fled DE > NL > BE > FR > IT

# I. PASSENGER DATA

*March 2017 : 243 pax checked*

- 25 tested positive for drugs (among them one driver)
- 5 illegal in the EU, 3 searched by Europol
- Multiple forbidden items found in luggage  
= 13,5% of passengers

*April 2019 : 171 pax checked*

- 3 illegal in the EU
- 3 searched by police
- 41 illegal narcotics  
= 27,4% of passengers



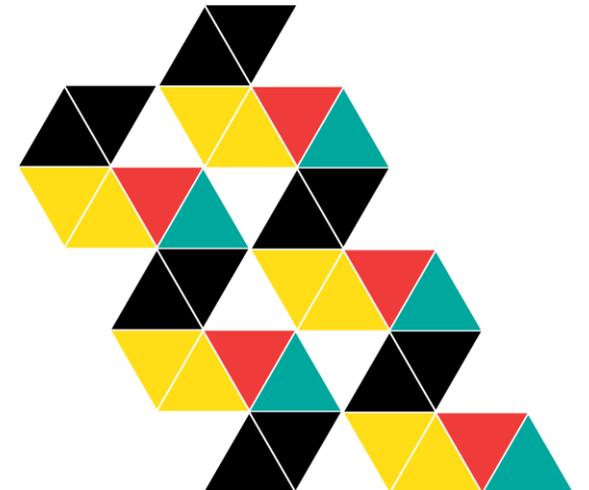
# I. PASSENGER DATA

## CHALLENGES

- >60 questions for preliminary ruling, of which 10 by Belgian Constitutional Court
- **No invalidation of the PNR Directive**
  - except for category 12 of the PNR data list "General remarks"
- The European PNR system can achieve its objectives of combating terrorism and serious crime **in accordance with fundamental rights**, having regard to the guarantees provided for the protection of personal data [...].
- AG describes how the PNR Directive must be **interpreted** (data retention, definition of serious crime, use of PNR by intelligence services, ...).
- **Court ruling on June 21<sup>st</sup>.**



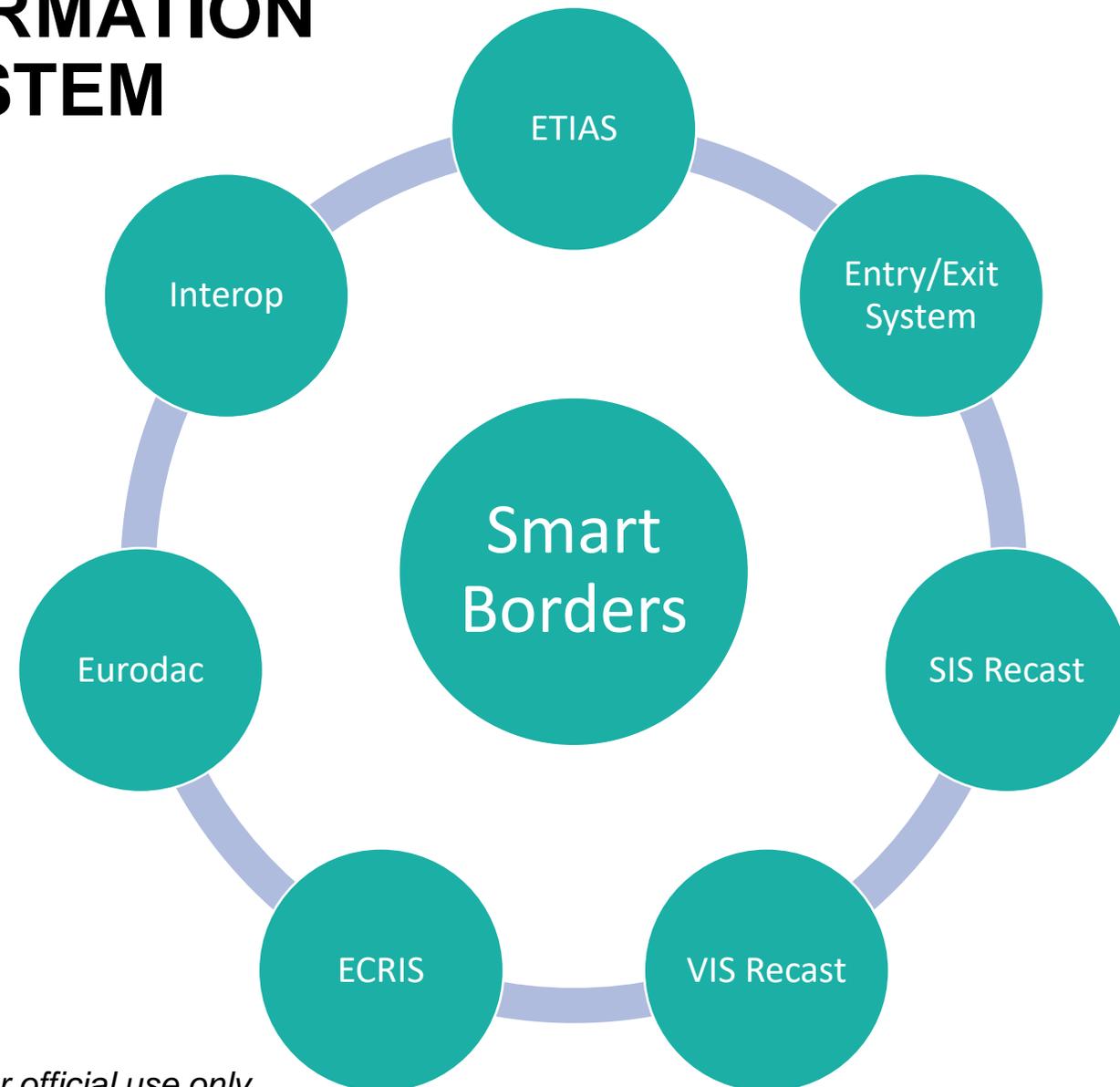
# EUROPEAN TRAVEL INFORMATION AND AUTHORISATION SYSTEM



## II. EUROPEAN TRAVEL INFORMATION AND AUTHORISATION SYSTEM

### ETIAS < European Smart Borders Package

- Reinforcement of external borders
- Facilitation of border management
- Enhanced internal security
- Fight against illegal immigration



## II. EUROPEAN TRAVEL INFORMATION AND AUTHORISATION SYSTEM



- Pre-arrival screening on security, migration and health risks with the aim of authorising or refusing access to EU
- For visa-exempt travelers (currently 62 countries worldwide)
- In collaboration with police, customs, intelligence services, health and immigration authorities
- ETIAS National Unit (BeIENU) LIVE by May 2023



### III. STELLINGEN

- Organisatie “à la belge” : taskforce model t.o.v. centralisatie. Bevoegdheden alsnog verspreid over verschillende departementen. Hoever moeten en kunnen we gaan in het breken van de silo's? Quid een Belgische CBP?
- Internationale samenwerking : Europa met verschillende implementatiesnelheden? In welke mate kan Europa het tempo reguleren?
- Hoever kunnen we gaan in het onszelf opleggen van operationele belemmeringen ten dienste van de privacy en gegevensbescherming?



# Questions?

**Daan Vertongen**

Director of Strategy & Head of ETIAS, a.i.  
National Travel Targeting Centre (NTTC)  
[Daan.Vertongen@nccn.fgov.be](mailto:Daan.Vertongen@nccn.fgov.be)

