

Press Release

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AIT PRESENTS DIGITAL BORDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN LILLE

The Hauts-de-France region commissioned the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology to design and evaluate an automated border control system for vehicles at Calais and Dunkerque

The innovative Région Hauts-de-France relied on the know-how of leading specialists to implement an innovative e-gate system for automated entry and exit control of vehicles at the ferry ports of Calais and Dunkerque at the English Channel and realised a pilot project (FastPass Hauts-de-France) for a modern automated and rapid border control.

"At a time when the EU and the UK are shaping their future relationship, the FastPass experiment has opened up interesting perspectives and opportunities with the use of e-gates for vehicles. The Hauts-de-France Regional Council worked intensively with those responsible for the "original" FastPass EU project and other stakeholders and authorities to design a smart border that guarantees security and smooth clearance of people and goods crossing the border," **says Xavier Bertrand**, President of the Hauts-de-France Region, explaining the motivation behind the development of an experimental e-gate system to control border traffic with vehicles.

As the contractor, AIT brought to the project its comprehensive understanding of technology and processes for the integration of digital border control technologies as well as for the harmonisation of European border control concepts, which it had built up in many European research projects, and led the consortium to implement the pilot in France.

"As a European centre of excellence around automated border control, we have successfully contributed our technical expertise and many years of experience to the now successfully implemented project "FastPass Hauts-de-France" in order to reconcile security requirements with societal goals. Thanks to the technological competence established at AIT in the field of biometric and highly secure digital systems, we have become a key player internationally," **says Helmut Leopold**, Head of Center for Digital Safety & Security at AIT, as the general contractor responsible for the project, explaining the strategic project orientation in cooperation with leading industrial partners.

In the EU project "FastPass", a modular European reference architecture was developed to address the different requirements of border control points in air, sea, and land traffic. In parallel, there was a strong focus on the best usability of the developed technologies for the end users (border police officers and travellers) of the systems. These findings made it possible for the "FastPass Hauts-de-France" project to develop the e-gates originally designed for automated passenger checks at airports and the biometric identification procedures used for this purpose could also be adapted to border checks with vehicles.

The "FastPass Hauts-de-France" project impressively proves how high-tech made in Europe can work. The renowned industrial partners Veridos and Magnetic contributed significantly to the success of the French pilot project with their specific design, development, and production know-how. Veridos provided the automated biometric identification systems and the technical control processes for the entire installation. Magnetic provided the essential prerequisites for automating the identification process of the occupants in the vehicle. The specialists for access control were, like Veridos, a member of the FastPass project from the beginning and with TerraPass® have the world's only sensor-controlled vehicle interlock in their product range. At the heart of the Magnetic system are terminals that move quickly and precisely to the windows of the vehicle and allow the occupants to be identified by means of identity documents and biometric features. In this way, passenger checks can be systematised and considerably accelerated without the need for additional personnel.

Intensive cooperation of all European stakeholders

In the EU project "FastPass", comprehensive expert knowledge about the entire technology value chain of ABC (Automated Border Control) solutions was combined with the requirements of all necessary stakeholders: system and component manufacturers, research institutions, authorities with responsibility for border and entry management, operators of neuralgic international traffic hubs such as airports and seaports, ferry operators and cruise providers. Clarification of acceptance issues for travellers was also an inherent part, as well as data protection and inclusion requirements in the European legal area. This made it possible to evaluate and test all the requirements necessary for efficient border security and to raise border control management as a whole to a new and harmonised level of development.

It is precisely this intensive cooperation of all European stakeholders in the development of modern digital border crossing and control technologies that provided the necessary know-how to be able to very quickly carry out evaluations of biometric identification technologies for people/vehicle checks in simulated real border scenarios, such as those that occur during entries at ferry ports, in a concrete contract project, as is now the case with the Hauts-de-France region.

The Hauts-de-France Region will now further specify the demonstrator of biometric personal identification and sensor-based vehicle verification in automated border crossing gates developed in the project for the roll-out of a Smart Border concept for joint border control and clearance by French and British border officials at ferry ports along the English Channel. With this project, the Hauts-de-France region has taken on a pioneering role in the automated handling of EU border management.

Special note on data protection and privacy at the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology

The protection of data and privacy are essential for a modern society. They form the fundamental basis of trust for cultural, social, and economic development. The associated creation of "security" is therefore a key core task at the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology. Against the backdrop of diverse, constantly changing threats to our society, it is important to develop innovative approaches to countering these threats. A particular focus of research activities at the AIT is therefore on methods, architectures, and technologies in order to fundamentally consider and incorporate the highest possible level of data protection in any technical solution through privacy by design approaches. Data protection and privacy are sensitive and worthy of protection, which is considered a top priority in all research activities conducted at the AIT.

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