

Carriers Working Group of 17 July 2026

Summary

Subject: Monthly Carriers Working Group meeting

Sea and Land Carriers at 10:00– 12:00 CEST

Participants: Carriers representing sea and land industry, their declared service providers, carrier associations, European Commission (DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA (altogether 73 participants).

1. Introduction a. Agenda b. Carriers meeting calendar	eu-LISA presented the agenda of the 56 th Carriers Working Group (CWG). The CWG took note of the next CWG meetings which are scheduled for 9 September and 14 October 2026.
2. Legal updates (European Commission)	The European Commission provided an update on the EES and informed that since its launch, the system registered to date around 140 million registrations with 75 million entries and 65 million exits. Furthermore, the Commission informed about the EU-UK agreement in relation to Gibraltar which provisionally applies as of 15 July 2026. Based on this agreement, legal residents of Gibraltar are exempted from registration in the EES and there is no longer a land border between Gibraltar and Spain. This means that the Gibraltar International Airport (GIB) and their seaport are now entry points into the Schengen Area. The EES must be deployed at the airport only. Travellers arriving at the seaport will be transferred to the airport for EES registration. Third country nationals arriving in Gibraltar will go through two separate passport checks on arrival (so-called juxtaposed controls), the Gibraltar immigration authorities, and the Spanish border authorities representing the Schengen Area. This includes full registration and querying under the EES. For carriers, this means that they are legally required to use the Carrier Interface (CI) to query passengers before they board flights/ferries bound for Gibraltar. Land carriers should note that there will no longer be a land border control between Gibraltar and Spain, therefore there is no need to check the CI for journeys from Gibraltar to Spain.

3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)	eu-LISA shared the latest Carriers Onboarding figures along with an update on progress status across different implementation areas for sea, land and air carriers. Concerning the new enhancement for travellers holding a multi-entry visa (MEV), the Agency announced the activities are currently ongoing and the finalisation is foreseen for July 2026. Until the feature is activated, queries submitted without the “out of scope” flag for such travellers will return a “NOT OK” response. In these cases, carriers are requested to disregard the response and continue verifying the visa sticker manually, in line with existing procedures. Concerning the maintenance of the Playground (PGD) environment, the community was informed about the important upgrade of the entire platform which was planned from 22 June 2026 until 17 July 2026 with impact on certification and training for new carriers (no impact on the production). The activities are still ongoing, and the environment should be available soon. Finally, the Agency provided an update on the new release of the CI with target for deployment in Production (PRD) by end of July 2026. This release includes ICAO codes for arrival location, allow special characters “space” and “less than (<)” in Travel Document Number for all channels except S2S XML, fix footer links on Carrier Web Portal and fix birth date selector in Android mobile app.
4. Carriers and Travellers Support - Operational updates and sea scenarios (Frontex)	Frontex presented an overview of the statistics and types of requests related to technical, operational matters, and cases of technical impossibility (TI) received in COBST between 9 January 2026 and 16 July 2026. The presentation focused on several business questions such as the multiple-entry Schengen visa, journeys inside the Schengen area, first entry in the Schengen area scenario. Concerning the multiple-entry Schengen visa topic and whether the carrier is required to explicitly indicate to the CI that a traveller holds a valid multiple-entry Schengen visa, Frontex reminded the CI scope and explained that the Carrier should indicate (flag) that traveller as out of scope and will receive a Not Applicable (NA) response. If the out-of-scope flag is not indicated, the carrier will receive a NOK EES (with the future enhancement it will be NA) and the carrier needs to manually verify the travel documents. Regarding the scenario of a ship voyage which begins and ends in the Schengen area ports (not leaving the Schengen area), carriers should not query the CI. They should typically query when transporting travellers who hold a short-stay visa for one or two entries from a third country or territory, Ireland or Cyprus to European countries that use EES and also when transporting travellers who are required to be in possession of an ETIAS travel authorisation from a third country or territory to European countries requiring ETIAS TA. Furthermore, Frontex explained that in the scenario of the first entry into the Schengen area, there is no provision in the Schengen Visa Code requiring a traveller to make their first entry into the Schengen Area through the Member State that issued the visa.

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	Once issued, a uniform Schengen visa is generally valid throughout the Schengen Area and does not impose a requirement that the holder must first enter through the issuing country. Travellers should, however, ensure that their actual travel plans remain consistent with the itinerary and purpose presented during the visa application process. The only case where a holder of a Schengen visa must enter a specific country is when they hold a visa issued with Limited Validity, when the Member State concerned considers it necessary on humanitarian grounds, for reasons of national interest or because of international obligations. Carriers were also strongly advised to submit only one query per passenger within the 48 hours before the time of departure. Finally, for any request concerning participation in the Carrier Working Group, the community was advised to contact directly eu-LISA at eulisa-carriers@eulisa.europa.eu
5. Q&A	During the Q&A session, eu-LISA, the Commission and Frontex addressed several topics and responded to questions from the Carriers on the ETIAS EiO and infrastructure at some seaports.

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Summary

Subject: Monthly Carriers Working Group meeting

Air Carriers at 13:30– 16:00 CEST

Participants: Carriers representing air industry, their declared service providers, Carrier associations, European Commission (DG HOME), Member State (MS) experts, Frontex and eu-LISA (altogether 201 participants).

1. Introduction a. Agenda b. Carriers meeting calendar	eu-LISA presented the agenda of the 56 th Carriers Working Group (CWG). The CWG took note of the next CWG meetings which are scheduled for 9 September and 14 October 2026.
2. Legal updates (European Commission)	The European Commission provided an update on the EES and informed that since its launch the system registered to date around 140 million registrations with 75 million entries and 65 million exits. Furthermore, the Commission informed about the EU-UK agreement in relation to Gibraltar which provisionally applies as of 15 July 2026. Based on this agreement, legal residents of Gibraltar are exempted from registration in the EES and there is no longer a land border between Gibraltar and Spain. This means that the Gibraltar International Airport (GIB) and their seaport are now entry points into the Schengen Area. The EES must be deployed at the airport only. Travellers arriving at the seaport will be transferred to the airport for EES registration. Third country nationals arriving in Gibraltar will go through two separate passport checks on arrival (so-called juxtaposed controls), the Gibraltar immigration authorities, and the Spanish border authorities representing the Schengen Area. This includes full registration and querying under the EES. For carriers, this means that they are legally required to use the Carrier Interface (CI) to query passengers before they board flights/ferries bound for Gibraltar. Land carriers should note that there will no longer be a land border control between Gibraltar and Spain, therefore there is no need to check the CI for journeys from Gibraltar to Spain.

3. Technical updates (eu-LISA)	eu-LISA shared the latest Carriers Onboarding figures along with an update on progress status across different implementation areas for sea, land and air carriers. Concerning the new enhancement for travellers holding a multi-entry visa (MEV), the Agency announced the activities are currently ongoing and the finalisation is foreseen for July 2026. Until the feature is activated, queries submitted without the “out of scope” flag for such travellers will return a “NOT OK” response. In these cases, carriers are requested to disregard the response and continue verifying the visa sticker manually, in line with existing procedures. Concerning the maintenance of the Playground (PGD) environment, the community was informed about the important upgrade of the entire platform which was planned from 22 June 2026 until 17 July 2026 with impact on certification and training for new carriers (no impact on the production). The activities are still ongoing, and the environment should be available soon. Finally, the Agency provided an update on the new release of the CI with target for deployment in Production (PRD) by end of July 2026. This release includes ICAO codes for arrival location, allow special characters “space” and “less than (<)” in Travel Document Number for all channels except S2S XML, fix footer links on Carrier Web Portal and fix birth date selector in Android mobile app.
4. Carriers and Travellers Support - Operational updates (Frontex)	Frontex presented an overview of the statistics and types of requests related to technical, operational matters, and cases of technical impossibility (TI) received in COBST between 9 January 2026 and 16 July 2026. The presentation focused on several business questions such as the multiple-entry Schengen visa, journeys inside the Schengen area, first entry in the Schengen area scenario. Concerning the multiple-entry Schengen visa topic and whether the carrier is required to explicitly indicate to the CI that a traveller holds a valid multiple-entry Schengen visa, Frontex reminded the CI scope and explained that the Carrier should indicate (flag) that traveller as out of scope and will receive a Not Applicable (NA) response. If the out-of-scope flag is not indicated, the carrier will receive a NOK EES (with the future enhancement it will be NA) and the carrier needs to manually verify the travel documents. Furthermore, Frontex explained that in the scenario of the first entry into the Schengen area, there is no provision in the Schengen Visa Code requiring a traveller to make their first entry into the Schengen Area through the Member State that issued the visa. Once issued, a uniform Schengen visa is generally valid throughout the Schengen Area and does not impose a requirement that the holder must first enter through the issuing country. Travellers should, however, ensure that their actual travel plans remain consistent with the itinerary and purpose presented during the visa application process. The only case where a holder of a Schengen visa must enter a specific country is when they hold a visa issued with Limited Validity, when the Member State concerned considers it

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	necessary on humanitarian grounds, for reasons of national interest or because of international obligations. Carriers were also strongly advised to submit only one query per passenger within the 48 hours before the time of departure. Finally, for any request concerning participation in the Carrier Working Group, the community was advised to contact directly eu-LISA at eulisa-carriers@eulisa.europa.eu
5. Q&A	During the Q&A session, eu-LISA, the Commission and Frontex addressed several matters and responded to further questions on several aspects such as the MEV enhancement, the Gibraltar topic, the ETIAS EiO and the ETIAS test scenarios, the COBST implementation for the Service Providers, the replies from the CI, the ETIAS information campaign and the Crew Member Certificate (CMC) topic.