



Privacy, Ethical, Regulatory and SOcial  
No-gate crossing point solutions Acceptance

# PERSONA Newsletter

Issue 1 - September 2019 -



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## WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of the PERSONA Newsletter! As you may know already, PERSONA is a H2020 project which has been called into existence by the European Union with the ambitious goal of creating a comprehensive method for assessing public acceptance of no-gate border crossing solutions.

In September this year, we will proudly be celebrating our first anniversary! Looking back, those initial months of project runtime had been spent busily laying the foundations and infrastructure that now support our ongoing research work. Achieved milestones include the definition of our administrative framework, the listing of applicable technologies, the specification of "test studies", an early draft version of the questionnaire for test study participants, and a roadmap denoting the path towards the PERSONA text book which will contain the elaborated assessment method and other project results.

We also successfully held our first PERSONA workshop in June this year which was hosted by VUB in Brussels. An eloquent and well-informed panel of experts paired with an animated and inquisitive audience ensured an interesting debate which delved right into the heart of complexities surrounding the work at hand covering legal, ethical, operational, technical, and societal aspects of both, no-gate border control solutions themselves as well as project content. This first issue of our Newsletter has been dedicated to covering key aspects of the debate held.

Through this Newsletter we intend to share with you our latest achievements, engage you in topical discourse, and announce future events that may be of interest. We hope you enjoy the read!

Your PERSONA Newsletter team

# 1st PERSONA Workshop



On 26. June, PERSONA held its first workshop at VUB premises in Brussels. The event comprised two keynote speeches and two roundtables. The roundtables specifically resulted in lively debate both, with the audience and among the panellists themselves, sparked by their valuable contributions.

Roundtable 1 discussed details surrounding PERSONA's proposed test studies, e.g. the ideal number of questionnaires to be handed to test study candidates along with respective timing (before the test, immediately upon completing the test, and/or some weeks after, etc.), and whether multiple questionnaires ought to differ in content. The majority of panellists saw little use in running another questionnaire longer after the actual test, but it was suggested that participants' perception could be recorded right after "experiencing" the border simulation without preparatory briefing and then again once they have received respective background information about the volume and type of personal data that had been extracted in the process. The addition of focus groups was mentioned which would enable test study candidates to provide a more comprehensive, verbal feedback possibly reflecting individual experience and connected circumstance factors in a better way.

The brainstorm session on what PERSONA should assess "against" in their method, i.e. which benchmark should be used, can be seen as a descriptive excerpt of roundtable 2. Panellists' views included that, instead of making the assessment about an approval of a certain technology, PERSONA should look at tested technology in context and deploy the method as a tool for awareness and democratic assessment. Further comments suggested that "risk" could be part of the benchmark. One panellist observed that as multiple assessments are taking place in parallel a respectively wide range of experts should be involved in a coordinated way. Some struggled with the concept of benchmarks in the context of PERSONA and instead recommended to first identify the features with which one wants to describe the system and through which one will then be able to judge. Another panellist proposed to ask "What are realistic best/worst case scenarios?" stating that PERSONA assessment method could first construct "test context" and then test these polar extremes in their quest for a comprehensive result.

# The Nature of Boundaries

Peter Burgess started off his keynote speech at the PERSONA workshop with the provocative observation that border gate technology, as any form of technology, in itself cannot be ethical. Machines, indeed, can only follow instructions but they cannot do ethics, which is a prerogative of human beings.

He went on challenging the audience stating that border in the sense of "lines" do not exist other than in our heads, if anything, they may be deemed purely effect. A border merely regulates the space located on either side of it: it marks some form of transition. For this reason, the ethics in respect of a border gate do not "happen" at that gate itself but before or after it. The ethics are bound to the space (e.g. country) on each side of it, where culture and regulations differ, and where any associated human and civil rights are guarded by various agents such as the respective border police. We can thus describe borders as "value environments", as "jurisdiction environments". Everything that is of relevance for the border is performed or considered either before or after it, in this way, we can say that the border is happening only in our head. Each individual traveller defines a value trajectory on which the border gate forms a mere component.

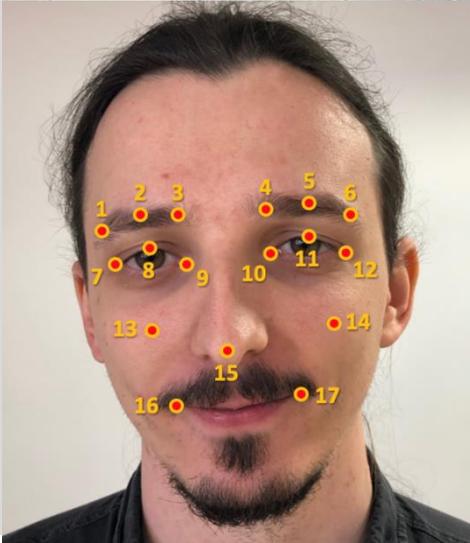
Where arguably the crossing of a border without even knowing you cross it can be seen as the ultimate European dream, one likely future development in the field will include remotely performed border checks, a concept which in turn implies "ethics" performed "remotely", too. This creates the challenge of finding mechanisms that can identify the "bona fide" traveller at a distance, and that can obtain a traveller's consent for respective procedure: to be categorized, entered on a database, catalogued and then compared with other entries and parameters in that database. This fairly challenging keynote speech and the subsequent round of audience participation culminated, not in an answer, but in the ultimate question: Are borders ethical at all?



# The High-Tech Border

In PERONA workshop's 2nd keynote speech, Tomas Piatrik outlined how up and coming border control technologies, as they are being developed, typically rely on a high level of intrusion into the traveller's personal data and privacy. The possibility of gathering such data through these technologies, entails both, a great potential leap ahead for future crime detection and several inherent pitfalls that will need to be navigated.

While an authority-led collection of travellers' biometrics and personal data (in some proposals even of their social media details) may open up new avenues for various fields including criminology, statistics, security, and border logistics, many factors that can influence the success of such technology need to be considered. Public acceptance of these state-of-the-art scanning and tracking methods will depend on the exact level and nature of intrusion, if and how consent for such is secured, the way collected data is handled and (if applicable) stored, the traveller's trust in the authority which deploys such method, influence of media and society in general, how specific related needs of minority groups and individuals are accommodated, and whether there is a palpable payoff for the traveller (e.g. gains in security, travel processing time, convenience, etc). In particular, Tomas Piatrik looked at the limitations of the technologies themselves: do they deliver what they promise? On the example of facial recognition methods, he illustrated that this on first glance seemingly fool-proof technology can indeed fail to return satisfactory results under a variety of circumstances. If development and technical implementation of these border control solutions is entirely industry-led it may result in a lack of transparency and honesty regarding associated risks and functionality. Among its other objectives, PERONA seeks to spark an informed discourse by consulting academia for a more critical analysis and end-users for an assessment of practicability, and moreover, by looking at the sentiment of the affected wider public.



**Join in the  
debate!**

**PERSONA  
values your  
opinion and  
is looking  
forward to  
your input.**

**More info  
here**

## **PERSONA in Events**

Members of PERSONA have, over the course of the last year, participated in workshops and conferences relevant to the project's agenda. Below is a list of key events attended, in which the project's objectives and work were disseminated and which contributed to knowledge transfer and networking.

FRONTEX Workshop, 14 Jun 2018, Warsaw

4th SRA Nordic Conference Workshop, 07 Nov, Stavanger (Norway)

ERNICIP Thematic Group, 13 Nov 2018, London

ICT 2018, 4 - 6 Dec 2018, Vienna

Workshop at University of Tor Vergata, 17 Dec 2018, Rome

Intelligent Security and Forensics Info Day, 30-31 Feb 2019, Paris

IVR Workshop, 05 Apr 2019, Brussels

Acca Conference, 10 May 2019, Namur (Belgium)

d.pia.lab Workshop, 20 May 2019, Brussels

INFOTECH 2019 Conference, 05 Jun 2019, Arandelovac (Serbia)

Future of Security Workshop, 06 Jun 2019, Louvain

The Great Debate: Responsible/Ethical Use of Biometrics, 06 Jun 2019, Brussels

Security Networking Meetings, 13-14 June 2019, Brussels

Rights as Methodology Workshop, 14 June 2019, Brussels

Workshop: Drone based remote Surveillance for Border Security, 25 June 2019, Paris

DECON 2019, 26 June 2019, Ávila (Spain)

PROTECT London St. Pancras demo, 25 July 2019, London

# Brochure Launch



Out soon! - November will see the release of the new PERSONA Brochure which offers a comprehensive overview of the project's work and objectives. You will be able to obtain your own copy on our website!

# Upcoming Events

Here, we list for you a selection of upcoming events which might be of interest. PERSONA will be participating in some of these, so maybe see you there!

- 19-23 Aug 2019 IFIP Privacy and Identity Management - Brugg Windisch
- 16 Sep 2019 EAB Research Project Conference - Darmstadt
- 17 Sep 2019 IDM Europe - Utrecht
- 14-16 Oct 2019 CIPRE Expo - Milan
- 28-31 Oct 2019 Biometrics Institute Congress and Biometrics Week - London
- 20 Nov 2019 Biometric Summit London 2019 - London
- 03-04 Dec 2019 International Security Expo - London
- 20-21 Jan 2020 ICBESM 2020 - London
- 22-24 Jan 2020 CPDP 2020 - Brussels
- 11-12 Feb 2020 SMI 13th annual Border Conference - Rome
- 13-14 Feb 2020 ICBSI 2020 - London
- 12-13 Mar 2020 ICBS 2020 - London
- 31 Mar 2020 World Border Security Congress - Athens
- 28-30 Apr 2020 The Security Event - Birmingham
- 06-10 Jul 2020 IEEE International Conference on Multimedia and Expo - London

## IMPRESSUM

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PERSONA is composed of a multi-national consortium which comprises 11 partner organisations.

Newsletter:

Editor: Susanne Binder (QMUL)

Contributors: Tomas Patrik (QMUL),  
Alessandra Calvi (VUB),

Contact: via our website or social media  
(see right)



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