

## FOREWORD

Welcome to the International Conference on Biometrics for Borders 2019 - A foreword by the Executive Director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, [REDACTED]

Dear distinguished guests,

On behalf of Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, it is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to the International Conference on Biometrics for Borders 2019 (ICBB2019) in Warsaw - Poland. The ICBB2019 signals the first instalment of a series of regular conferences organised by Frontex dedicated to the topic of biometrics, its application in border control, and the opportunities and challenges it may pose to border management and border security.

Frontex plays a crucial role in the European Union's effort to safeguard the area of freedom, security and justice, it has become a cornerstone in guaranteeing an area of free movement without internal border checks. With the progressive expansion of the Agency's mandate, Frontex has more and more increased its activities to combat cross-border crime and help prevent terrorist attacks. Intelligence and information are crucial for formulating an appropriate response to real and potential threats at the EU's external borders. Frontex is continuously piloting new and innovative technologies to modernise the EU's border management, with the objective of striking an appropriate balance between increasing border checks and security screening, while facilitating smooth and fast border crossings of travellers visiting the European Union for business, tourism or study.

Biometric technologies are at the forefront of this effort, with the application of biometric technologies providing new opportunities to border management to facilitate legitimate travel while at the same time making borders more secure. We recognise that the large-scale integration of such technologies into the border control infrastructure does introduce new challenges to border security: Biometric systems can be attacked and subverted for the purpose of passing through border control undetected. This means that with the introduction of novel technologies supporting biometric recognition, countermeasures that can prevent, detect or defeat such attacks are needed. To sum up, for Frontex and the European border management community, the exploration and development of advanced biometric technologies and related capacities is thus crucial to border security.

Though the thematic spotlight of this year's conference is on morphing and its possible implications for border management, the overarching focus on biometrics is strong. The Agency has the ambition to be a driving force in providing support and expertise to Member States and the European Institutions on the topic biometrics, and to lead on the range of possible applications and implications for borders. The conference underlines this ambition, and aims to establish a strong tradition of bringing national authorities, researchers, academics, industry and professionals from all over the world, to support and exchange on activities undertaken in this area, at EU level and beyond.

To all international delegates I would therefore like to express my gratitude for joining the conference. We seek to learn from you while at the same time offering you a valuable insight into the views and experiences of the border management community.

I hope you gain considerably from this conference and will benefit from new ideas offered through a varied and interesting conference programme.

Thank you and enjoy the intensity of this wonderful and relevant event!

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