

Passenger Name Record (PNR)

Executive Summary

'There is no other tool which enables law enforcement authorities to identify "unknown suspects" in the same way as the analysis of PNR data.'

European Commissioner Julian King, Security Union



Passenger Name Record (PNR) data is the information provided by air passengers and collected by air carriers when booking flights and carrying out the check-in process. The collection and processing of PNR data is widely considered to be an important tool to help prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute terrorism and serious crime, such as the trafficking of drugs and human beings, and child sexual exploitation.

The so-called 'PNR Directive', EU Directive 2016/681/EU, outlines how PNR data can be effectively used by law enforcement agencies in the EU Member States. The Member States were required to implement the PNR Directive into national law by 25 May 2018.

Under the PNR Directive, several products and services could be made available to law enforcement agencies through the collection and analysis of PNR data. Potentially these can include:

- searching PNR data for particular known passengers;
- adding an individual to a 'watchlist' in order to identify that person when he/she intends to travel;
- creating a targeting rule to identify unknown passengers who are considered 'high-risk'.

The PNR e-learning module is aimed at those police and law enforcement officers, border guards, customs officers and judiciary staff who are interested or involved in the use of PNR data to combat serious crime and/or terrorism. It aims to provide users with a broad understanding of:

- what PNR data is;
- the EU-level legal framework that enables the collection, processing and storage of PNR data;
- the potential role and relevance of PNR data in combating serious crime and terrorism.

The module consists of an introduction, seven topic chapters and a glossary of PNR-related terms and abbreviations. In the My Progress section, users can check their levels of understanding of each of the topics by considering a selection of true/false statements.

The topic chapters are:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Legal Basis:** This chapter covers the legal basis for using PNR data for law enforcement purposes in the EU. The main legislation is the PNR Directive, but the chapter also discusses the API Directive, the EU data protection package, and the PNR agreements with non-EU countries.
3. **Data Protection:** This chapter briefly sets out issues of data protection in the relation to PNR data. It includes the scope of the rights regarding respect for private life and the protection

of personal data, the safeguards provided in the PNR Directive to ensure these rights are respected, and the guidance available for the practical application of these safeguards.

4. **Understanding PNR Data:** This chapter discusses the information that is contained in the PNR, to show how it can be useful to law enforcement. It covers what types of information may be included, the difference between PNR and API (Advanced Passenger Information) data, and the format of PNR data.
5. **Processing PNR Data:** This chapter covers the processing of PNR data. It includes the gathering of PNR data by air carriers, the transfer to the relevant Passenger Information Units (PIUs), and the processing and distribution of PNR information by the PIUs.
6. **Use of PNR by Law Enforcement:** This chapter explains how PNR information can be used by law enforcement agencies for the prevention, investigation and prosecution of terrorism and serious crimes. It discusses in detail the role of the competent authorities and rule-based targeting.
7. **Intelligence Analysis of PNR Data:** This chapter provides an overview of the six stages of the intelligence cycle and how it relates to the processing of PNR data to provide intelligence to the relevant law enforcement agencies.
8. **Practical Examples:** In this chapter the use and benefits of PNR data are illustrated as practical examples. These examples are fictional but have been inspired by real cases.