



# Transfer of firearms IMI User guide

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## 1 Introduction

This document explains how to use the Internal Market Information system (IMI) to exchange information concerning authorisations to transfer firearms as set out in **Regulation (EU) 2019/686**. It involves three types of information exchange:

- 'Notification of Prior Consent' (authorisation to purchase or acquire firearms from another Member State)
- 'Notification of an Authorisation to transfer firearms' to another Member State
- Recording of the 'List of Firearms for which prior consent is not required'

### Legislation

The Firearms Directive 91/477/EEC, amended by Directive 2008/51/EC and Directive (EU) 2017/853, lays down rules on control of the acquisition and possession of weapons in all Member States of the EU. Following the 2017 amendment, Article 13 states that 'The competent authorities of the Member States shall exchange, by electronic means, information on the authorisations granted for the transfer of firearms to another Member State'.

Regulation (EU) 2019/686<sup>1</sup> stipulates when information is to be exchanged and what information should be included in the information exchanges. It also stipulates that the exchange shall take place through IMI.

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/689 makes the provisions on exchanges relating to the transfers of firearms within the Union subject to a pilot project under article 4 of Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 and sets out the basic technical functionality and procedural arrangements required to implement the relevant administrative cooperation provisions.

### IMI

IMI<sup>2</sup> is a secure, multilingual online information exchange tool. It was developed to facilitate the exchange of information between public administrations across the EU and the European Institutions and Bodies involved in the practical implementation of EU law.

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<sup>1</sup> **Regulation (EU) 2019/686 on ELECTRONIC exchange of information relating to transfers of firearms in the EU:** <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019R0686&from=EN>

<sup>2</sup> **IMI Website:** [https://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/imi-net/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/imi-net/index_en.htm)

## 2 Using IMI

### 2.1 Logging in to IMI

IMI is accessed via a standard Internet browser. To log into IMI, copy and paste the following link into your Internet browser, or click below:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/imi-net/>

When logging in for the first time, enter your username and the temporary password provided to you.

For users logging in for the first time, you will immediately be asked to change the temporary password to a new password of your choice. Once this is done, you will be asked to create and confirm a 12-character security code that will be used each time you log into IMI.

For subsequent logins, you will need to enter your username and password, and then provide three randomly selected digits from your security code as highlighted on screen.

Once logged in you will be redirected to the IMI home screen.

### 2.2 The IMI Home Screen

When you successfully log into IMI, your IMI dashboard will be presented. A menu on the left side of the screen allows you to:

- Search for existing notifications
- Initiate new notifications
- Download reports
- Change your password and security code
- Manage / view your Authority's details
- View the details of other authorities registered to use IMI

### 2.3 Dashboard

The dashboard supports day-to-day management of information exchanges. It lists your draft notifications, recently received and recently updated notifications. For central authorities, it also shows notifications requiring approval if the regional or local authorities' notifications are subject to coordinator approval.

### 2.4 Searching

The search functionality in IMI allows you to search for existing entries in IMI by specifying search criteria to filter your results.

There are two menu options for retrieving notifications, 'Search all forms', and 'Search by form'. Search by form allows you to search only for Prior Consent notifications, or, only for Transfer authorisation notifications, and offers wider search criteria.

You are **recommended** to use the '**Search by form**' menu option.

For example, if you want to search for a previously received Prior Consent notification: from the menu select 'Alerts and Notifications' -> 'Search by form' -> 'Firearms - Prior consent'.

You can then specify the reference number of the prior consent if you have received it in paper form, or, specifying the issuing country and part of the name of the purchaser or the seller. **Note that**, to search on the name of the purchaser or seller, you first have to indicate whether the purchaser or seller is a legal or natural person.

## 2.5 Language Translations

The IMI system provides machine translation of free text fields into all official European languages. You can either translate an individual free text field or you can use the 'translate all' button to translate all free text in a notification into the language in which the screen is displayed. Translation of attached documents is not currently available.

## 3 Notifying Prior consent

### 3.1 Legal context

When an authority grants a dealer or an individual prior consent to acquire a firearm from another Member State, it must notify the other Member State by sending an IMI 'Notification of Prior Consent'.

This notification includes the information listed in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2019/686 and a copy of the issued prior consent document.



The Member State issuing prior consent must send the IMI notification, to the Member State in which the firearms are located within **7 calendar days** of issuing the prior consent.

### 3.2 How to create and send a Notification of Prior Consent

1. From the menu on the left side, click on **Alerts & Notifications** ▶ **Create notification** ▶ **Firearms – Prior consent**.
2. Fill in the fields in the **Prior Consent** tab:
  - **Country in which firearms are located:** this country will receive the IMI notification.
  - **Scanned copy of prior consent:** here you will have to upload a copy of the prior consent document (usually a PDF).  
To do this, click **Upload File** and select your document.
  - **Date issued:** this is the date on which the prior consent document was issued.
  - **Expiry date:** this is the date on which the prior consent expires. The IMI notification will close on this date.
  - **National reference of prior consent:** this is the unique identifier attributed to the document by the issuing country.
  - **Issued by sending authority?:** if the authority sending the IMI notification is the same as the authority that issued the prior consent, select yes, otherwise, select no and provide the contact details of the issuing authority.
  - **Details about the purchaser / acquirer of firearms**
  - **Details about the seller / holder of firearms.** First indicate whether the seller or holder of the firearms is known and therefore specified in the prior consent. This is the case in nearly all Member States. If the seller or holder of the firearms is known, the details must be provided in the IMI form.
  - **Additional information:** here you can provide supplementary information about the prior consent.



All mandatory fields are marked by red asterisks (\*) and have to be completed before you can save your draft notification.

3. When ready, click **Create** in the top right-hand corner of the page to create the notification.
4. The status of the Notification is now **Draft**.



When the notification is in draft status, it is possible to:

- **Edit** any information
- Check the **Management Information** tab to keep track of the main data about the entry, such as links to other notifications.
- Add comments and attachments in the relevant tab.

5. Click on **Submit**

6. Click **Approve & Broadcast** and your notification will be sent to the central authority in the other country.

The status of the Notification is now **Open for comments** until it reaches its expiry date. While in this status, both sender and recipients will be able to **provide comments** and **attach documents** to the notification. Each new comment and attachment added will trigger an automatic email notification to all parties involved.



When the notification is open for comments:

- a Central Authority can transmit the notification to a regional or local authority by clicking the **Disseminate** button on the toolbar;
- all parties can check the **Recipients** tab to see which authorities received the notification;
- all parties to **add comments and attach additional documents** to the notification.
- The content of the notification cannot be modified

Once a notification has been sent out, it is no longer possible to update the content.



If you need **to correct information** provided in the notification :

- Open the notification and click on the 'Withdraw' button. When prompted for a justification, state that you will send a corrected version of the notification.
- Click on **Reuse data ▶ Firearms ▶ Prior consent** to create a new notification with the same information.
- Modify the incorrect elements and resend the notification'.

### 3.3 Issuing prior consent for the same dealers or individuals

If you regularly issue a prior consent authorisation for the same two dealers or individuals, you can avoid re-entering their details in an IMI notification by:

- searching for a previous notification of prior consent between the same parties, by using **Search by form** as described in section 2.4.
- Open the notification and click on the '**Reuse**' button and select '**Firearms - Prior Consent**' to create a new notification of prior consent.
- All the details of the previous prior consent notification will be copied to the new notification, you just need to upload a copy of the new prior consent document and update the issuance details section.

## 4 Notifying an Authorisation to Transfer

### 4.1 Legal context

When an authority issues an ‘authorisation to transfer’ firearms to another EU Member State or, issues an ‘accompanying document’ in the case of a dealer-to-dealer transfer under Article 11(3) of the Firearms Directive (see explanation below), it must inform the Member State to which the firearms are to be transferred and any EU transit Member States, by sending a ‘Notification of Authorisation to Transfer Firearms’ through IMI.

The IMI notification includes the information listed in **Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2019/686** as well as a copy of the issued transfer authorisation or accompanying document.

Before issuing such documents, the authority concerned should **first verify that it has received an IMI notification of prior consent** from the Member State to which the firearms are to be transferred.

There are three possible outcomes, prior consent:

- has been received **through IMI**: see section 4.2
- has been received **through other means** and not through IMI: see section 4.3
- is **not required** for the firearms concerned<sup>3</sup>: see section 4.4



The Member State issuing the authorisation to transfer **must send the IMI notification before the firearms are transferred** to the first transit Member State or, if there are no transit Member States, to the Member State of destination.

Article 11(2) of the Firearms Directive (Council Directive 91/477/EEC) sets out the procedure for issuing an ‘**authorisation to transfer**’ firearms to another Member State.

By way of derogation, Article 11(3) allows a Member State to issue an authorisation to a dealer to effect transfers to dealer in another Member State without obtaining the ‘authorisation to transfer’ stipulated under Article 11(2). In such cases, when a dealer informs the relevant authority that he/she intends to effect a transfer, the authority issues a document to accompany the firearms, referred to as ‘**an accompanying document**’.

<sup>3</sup> As set out in Council Directive 91/477/EEC Article 11(4)

## 4.2 Notifying an Authorisation to transfer when you have received prior consent through IMI

If you received the prior consent through IMI, you should reuse the IMI notification of prior consent as a base to create the notification of authorisation to transfer. In this way, the relevant details are copied from the existing notification and you will not have to re-enter them.

1. Search for the related prior consent notification in IMI.
  - From the menu, click on **Alerts & Notifications** ▶ **Search by form** ▶ **Firearms – Prior consent**.
  - Specify some search criteria such as the issuing country, reference of the prior consent or the name of the seller or purchaser.
  - A list of the notifications that match the specified criteria will be presented. Double click on the relevant prior consent notification to open it.
2. Click **Reuse data** on the top right hand of the toolbar and select **Firearms – Authorisation to transfer Art. 11(2) & 11(3)**.



**Reusing data** means creating a new notification from an existing one, copying all the relevant information into the new notification.

3. The creation of the **new draft notification** is launched with many fields already populated with the available information from the prior consent notification (e.g. details of the purchaser and seller).

However, you will still have to provide additional information:

- **Are there any transit countries?:** select **yes** or **no** accordingly. If yes, you will have to select one or more EU Countries and, optionally, the relevant non-EU Countries from the provided list.  
Each of the selected EU countries will also receive the notification.
- **This notification concerns a firearms transfer based on:** select Article 11(2) or Article 11(3), see section 4.1 Legal context for more details.



If the authorisation is issued under Article 11(2) of Council Directive 91/477/EEC you will need to upload the ‘authorisation to transfer’ if it concerns Article 11(3) you will upload the ‘accompanying document’.

- This notification concerns a **Dealer-to-Dealer transfer:** select yes or no.
- **Departure date** and **Estimated arrival date:** these fields are optional for transfers between dealers, otherwise they are mandatory.
- **Date issued:** this is the date the authorisation was issued.
- **Expiry date:** this is the expiry date of the authorisation to transfer or accompanying document. The IMI notification will close on this date.
- **National reference of the transfer authorisation:** this is the unique identifier attributed to the document by the issuing country.

- **Issued by sending authority?:** if the authority sending the IMI notification is the same as the authority that issued the transfer authorisation, select yes, otherwise, select no and provide the contact details of the issuing authority.
  - **Number of firearms:** this is the number of firearms for which authorisation has been granted in the attached document
  - **Number of essential components:** this separate field is provided for the number of essential components that may be transferred.
  - **Prior consent:** in this case, select **received through IMI**. The prior consent document included in the original IMI notification will be automatically included in this notification.
4. When ready, click **Create** in the top right-hand corner of the page to create the notification.
  5. The status of the Notification is now **Draft**.



When the procedure is in draft status, it is possible to:

- **Edit** all information
- Check the **Management Information** for information such as the **link to the original prior consent notification**.
- Add comments and attachments in the relevant tab.

6. Click on **Submit**.
7. Click **Approve & Broadcast** and your notification will be sent to the central authorities in **the destination and EU transit countries**.

The status of the Notification is now **Open for comments** until it reaches its expiry date.



When the notification is open for comments:

- a Central Authority can transmit the notification to a regional or local authority by clicking the **Disseminate** button on the toolbar;
- all parties can check the **Recipients** tab to see which authorities received the notification;
- all parties to **add comments and attach additional** documents to the notification.

Once a notification has been sent out, it is no longer possible to update the content.



If you need **to correct information** provided in the notification :

- Open the notification and click on the **Withdraw** button. When prompted for a justification, state that you will send a corrected version of the notification.
- Click on '**Reuse data**' -> '**Firearms - Firearms - Authorisation to transfer Art. 11(2) & 11(3)**' to create a new notification with the same information.
- Modify the incorrect elements and resend the notification.

### 4.3 Notifying an Authorisation to transfer when you have not received prior consent through IMI

Member States are obliged to notify prior consent through IMI within 7 calendar days of issuance. If you receive prior consent through other means, such as in paper form, and have not received an IMI notification with a copy of the prior consent attached, you should **contact the authorities in the other Member State and ask them to notify through IMI.**

When IMI is first launched for information exchange, you may need to issue transfer authorisations where the prior consent was issued before the obligation to notify through IMI applied, that is, prior to 3 September 2019. In these cases, you will issue the transfer authorisation based on a prior consent received through means other than IMI, in which case follow the steps below to create the notification and upload a copy of the prior consent along with the transfer authorisation or accompanying document.

1. From the menu on the left side, click on **Alerts & Notifications ▶ Create notification ▶ Firearms – Authorisation to transfer Art. 11(2) & 11(3).**
2. Continue from step 3 in section 4.2 above, filling in all the fields in the notification. In addition, you will need to:
  - select the **issuing country** (your country) and the **country of destination**;
  - select **received by other means** for the **Prior Consent** field
  - upload your prior consent document;
  - provide details about the **purchaser / acquirer of firearms**;
  - provide details about the **seller / holder of firearms.**

### 4.4 Notifying an Authorisation to transfer when prior consent is not required

You can consult the IMI repository of ‘Lists of firearms for which prior consent is not required’ to establish whether certain firearms can be transferred to the territory of another Member State without its prior consent.

When transferring firearms for which prior consent is not required by the destination Member State, proceed as follows:

1. From the menu, click on **Alerts & Notifications ▶ Create notification ▶ Firearms – Authorisation to transfer Art. 11(2) & 11(3).**
2. Continue from step 3 in section 4.2 above, filling in all the fields in the notification. In addition, you will need to:
  - select the **issuing country** (your country) and the **country of destination**;
  - select **‘not required for these firearms as notified under Council Directive 91/477/EEC Article 11(4)’** for the **Prior Consent** field. The box for uploading the prior consent will not be presented.
  - provide details about the **purchaser / acquirer of firearms**;
  - provide details about the **seller / holder of firearms.**

## 5 List of firearms for which prior consent is not required

### 5.1 Legal context

Article 11(4) of the Firearms Directive states that each Member State shall supply other Member States with a **list of firearms that may be transferred to its territory without a prior consent**.

To provide a convenient and central place in which to store and consults these lists, a repository is provided in IMI, as set out in Article 5 of Regulation 2019/686.

Each Member State should record a **single entry** in the repository.



Each Member State should record an entry in the repository in advance of the information exchange launch on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019**.

### 5.2 How to create your entry in the repository

1. From the menu, click on **Repositories & Directories ▶ Create entry**.
2. Fill in the mandatory **Member State** field selecting your own country.
3. If there are firearms that may be transferred to your member state without prior consent you can:
  - **enter the list of firearms manually** one line at a time, by clicking 'add' and entering the details of each type of firearm; or
  - **attach a document** listing the firearms.Otherwise, indicate that **all firearms are subject to prior consent**.
4. When ready, click **Create** in the top right-hand corner of the page to create the entry in draft status. At this point, you can still edit the information.
5. When you are satisfied that the information provided is complete and correct, click **Activate**. Your entry will become visible to all Member States.

## 6 Resources

**IMI WEBSITE:**

[https://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/imi-net/](https://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/imi-net/)

**NATIONAL IMI COORDINATORS:**

[https://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/imi-net/contact/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/imi-net/contact/index_en.htm)

**IMI HELPDESK:**

[imi-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu](mailto:imi-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu)