

# Schengen: second generation information system SIS II, development. Initiative Belgium and Sweden

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This is a progress report prepared by the Commission in the second semester of 2007 on the development of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II). To recall, the SIS II project was divided into three phases. Phase 1, now completed, concerned system design. Phase 2 concerns development and testing of the Central System – and forms part of the current work load. Phase 3 concerns the migration of data from SIS 1+ to the SIS II system. This report also assesses potential risks, financial operations and project management as well as certain implementing measures.

**Progress during the period under review:** the Central Unit (CU) and the Backup Central Unit (BCU) have been accessible since early July 2007. All Member States have had their main sites and the vast majority of back-up sites connected to the s-Testa network since November 2007. As of December 2007, 19 Member States managed to complete the basic tests for connection to the SIS II network, of which 14 have moved on to informally testing their national systems against the central system. Five of these Member States (IT, PT, SE, NL, HU) have volunteered to assist the Commission with further testing of the central system and are therefore at the most advanced to date in terms of testing the compliance of their national systems with the central system. Four Member States (UK, EE, BE, FR) and Europol are in the process of doing the basic tests. Four Member States and Eurojust are yet to start the basic tests (LV, IE, MT, PL).

One further, important development, during the period under review, has been preparing the migration of data from SIS 1+ to SIS II. The choice was between a high risk option – the “overnight option”, whereby the switch-over would take place within eight hours; and a low risk lengthier migration period of between one to two months. In December 2007, however, Member States’ experts agreed on the lower risk approach. Thus, at the start of operations, SIS 1+ will not be switched off but SIS 1+ and SIS II will operate in parallel for a limited period. This fall-back plan is needed in case any Member State experiences a problem during the planned eight hour switchover. A gradual migration, during a very short time period (1-2 months) can provide this fall back. On a separate note, Switzerland has indicated that it wishes to join SIS 1+ using the SISone4All solution. It may be “technically” ready by May 2008.

The French authorities have confirmed their commitment to the operational management of SIS II during the transitional period – representing the time between SIS II going live and the establishment of the management authority that will be entrusted with the long term management of SIS II. The first of a series of four service contracts was signalled in July 2007, covering the provision of serviced work space in prefabricated buildings within the Strasbourg complex as from November 2007. The Commission is covering the provision of staff at the central site that will be trained in SIS II operations as from 01/04 /2008.

**Management:** in accordance with best practice, monitoring potential risks is a continuous. The report gives an overview of the major risks identified at the end of this reporting period, which could have a potentially negative impact on the project’s schedule:

- insufficient number of Member States read to commence the test phase;

- delays in setting up the practical arrangements regarding operational management of the Central SIS II;
- uncertainties linked to the Test Decision;
- risk of delay of the go-live date as margins build into the SIS II project have been reduced;
- time for correction of issues being limited, especially after the major central SIS II tests and national compliance tests have been completed;
- unpredictable duration of SIS II final tests (global tests);
- uncertainty on how migration impacts on project schedule; and
- new SIS users close to the migration process.

**Financial Management:** the total appropriations for SIS II activities provided for in the 2007 General Budget amount to EUR 20 000 000 (of which EUR 5 000 000 were entered into reserve). A financing decision with a total budget of EUR 19 000 000 was adopted by the Commission on 22 February 2007. The main components of expenditure during 2007 were site preparation, working on the network, preparing for operations, external assistance for developing monitoring and quality control, security audit, studies, preparatory work for the SIS II information campaign and changes to SIS II due to the impact of SISone4All. 70.09% of the total SIS II appropriations have been committed and payments corresponding to 35.73% of payment appropriations have been made.

**Priorities for next reporting period:** for the next reporting period priority will be given to testing the Operational System Tests (OST), which tests the Central System with a set of connected national systems. The Commission is relying on a number of volunteer Member States to take part in the first testing of the central system against their national systems. Preparation for this phase commenced in mid December 2007 and the tests are scheduled to be completed by May 2008. Preparation for migration continues, with technical specifications of the identified migration approach having to be worked out.

**Conclusions:** the Central SIS II has completed the first phase of tests. Member States have begun testing their national systems. In spite of some initial difficulties (which have had some impact on planning) a stable network between the Member States and the two sites hosting the Central SIS II has been established. The first operational management contract with France has been signed and the second contract with Austria is due to be signed shortly. The project has, however, encountered certain set-back over the six months in question. Most significantly the negative opinion from the SIS II regulatory committee on the draft Commission Decision concerning tests.