Schengen: migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II). Regulation

2008/0078(CNS) - 02/12/2013

This report presented to the European Parliament and the Council in accordance with Article 18 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1104/2008 and of Council Decision 2008/839/JHA on migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the SIS II as recast (so called migration instruments). This is the **last report** of this kind and it describes the work carried out from January 2013 until May 2013 concerning the development of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) and the migration from SIS 1+ to SIS II.

Overview of progress during the period under review: building on the steady progress made in the development of the central system and the national systems, all the preparatory steps leading up to the actual migration of data from SIS1+ to SIS II were finalised during this reporting period. **The migration process was successfully completed with the switch-over to the new system on 9 April 2013** and the smooth operation of the system during the subsequent intensive monitoring period.

Testing activities: as a follow up to the series of tests executed in the course of 2012 in order to ascertain the proper functioning, performance and interaction of the national systems and the central system, a handful of Member States, due to insufficient results in some of the tests, executed the remaining necessary re-runs in January 2013. Finland faced a major technical set-back in the development of its national system and opted for a plan B based on an alternative technical solution.

Comprehensive test: the Comprehensive test represented both a technical and a legal precondition for the SIS II entry into operation3 and therefore involved the testing of all the key SIS II components – the Central System, all the national systems and the network. The majority of the Member States had already completed this final testing campaign successfully in the second half of 2012 as originally scheduled. However, due to problems faced at national level by five Member States, additional re-runs beyond the dedicated timeslot were necessary. Eventually, **all the Member States concerned managed to pass the remaining re-runs** in the second week of January 2013. The SIS II Central System as well as the communication infrastructure demonstrated good, stable performance throughout these reruns of the Comprehensive test.

Migration from SIS 1+ to SIS II: the report recalls that the Commission proposed to amend the legal framework concerning the migration of information (migration instruments (2012/0033A (NLE) and 2012/0033B (NLE)). The legal framework established for the final stage of the SIS II project was consolidated at the end of the previous reporting period by the recast of the migration instruments applicable as of 30 December 2012. This ensured a legally sound and technically optimised migration process and a possibility of extra financial support to the national projects in relation to migration activities.

Following the completion of the SIRENE functional test, the Commission declared the successful completion of a comprehensive test of SIS II, which shall be conducted by the Commission together with the Member States, and the preparatory bodies of the Council validated the proposed test result and confirmed that the level of performance of SIS II is at least equivalent to that achieved with SIS 1+ and that the Working Party on Schengen Matters on 6 February 2013 declared, with the Commission, that the

objectives of the comprehensive test had been met. All prerequisites stipulated by the SIS II legal basis being met, the Justice and Home Affairs Council of March 2013 adopted **two Council Decisions fixing the date of application of the SIS II legal basis for 9 April 2013**, meaning in practice the SIS II go-live date.

Switch-over from SIS 1 to SIS II: between 28 March and 9 April, the SIS 1+ and SIS II system, including all national copies, were kept perfectly synchronised: any new SIS 1+ message would update the SIS 1+ central database, be converted, then update the SIS II database and the national copies.

Portugal was the first Member State being ready to send a SIS II alert at 10:51 local time, more than one hour ahead of schedule. At that very moment, **the SIS II legal basis entered into force**.

SIS II budget: by the end of June 2013, the total budgetary commitments made by the Commission on the SIS II project since 2002, amounted to **EUR 171.2 million**. Of this amount, EUR 136.5 million had actually been paid between 2002 and the end of June 2013. The main expenditure items were development, the network, support and quality assurance and preparation for operational management in Strasbourg and Sankt Johann im Pongau.

Additional financing for Member States' national development: the national development projects of the last eight Member States in need of extra cofinancing through the European External Borders Fund (EBF) were completed in this reporting period. In addition, the Commission has made available a further sum of EUR 13 million with an upper limit of EUR 715 000 per Member State (to be co-financed 25 % from national resources). Finally, nine Member States were granted a financial facility for their migration related activities for a total maximum amount of EUR 4 million.

Future priorities: following the SIS II entry into operation, the core priority is to keep it fully operational, in particular by treating the SIRENE offices as a high priority, both in terms of adequate staffing and appropriate technical support and ensuring the resilience of the SIS II to potential security breaches.

Conclusions of the different implementing reports since 2009: the SIS is at the heart of Schengen cooperation. Being a state-of-the-art IT system, SIS II is a key tool for the functioning of the Schengen area in terms of security and free movement of persons.

It overall development was undeniably very demanding. Building such complex system whilst meeting the high expectations of its users and satisfying evolving requirements proved to be both technically and politically very challenging and consequently **more time-consuming that initially foreseen**.

Despite various challenges the SIS II project remained henceforth on track both time-wise and budget-wise. The successful performance of the two Milestone tests confirmed the robustness and performance of the Central System as well as the underlying key architectural and technical choices. This was then followed by the final phases of testing and the actual migration of data from SIS 1 to SIS II, all of which were completed successfully.

Accordingly, the SIS II was accomplished in this reporting period and entered into operation on 9 April 2013 and has since been functioning smoothly.