

European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice

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This Commission report to the European Parliament and the Council deals with the functioning of the European Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale Information Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA).

Objectives of the report: the Agency was set up in 2011 and is currently managing the Visa Information System (VIS), the Schengen Information System (SIS) and Eurodac, which are **essential instruments for the protection of the Schengen area, border management and the implementation of asylum and visa policies**.

The eu-LISA agency may also be responsible for the design, development and operational management of other large-scale information systems.

It began operations on 1 December 2012.

The purpose of this report is to assess the overall functioning of the Agency. It is based on the findings of the external evaluation of the Agency's action for the period from December 2012 to September 2015. The Commission, after consulting the Management Board, issues recommendations regarding changes to the Regulation and forwards them together with the opinion of the Management Board, as well as appropriate proposals to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Data Protection Supervisor.

This report focuses on recommendations for changes to the Regulation governing the Agency. On 21 March 2017, the eu-LISA Management Board adopted an action plan to follow up on the findings of the evaluation, which did not require amendments to the Regulation establishing the Agency.

Lastly, the report places the evaluation and the role of the Agency in a broader perspective and takes into account the evolving factual, legal and political developments in its field of competence.

Evaluation context: the evaluation of the eu-LISA Agency began just before the publication of the [European Agenda on Security](#) and the [European agenda on migration](#) in April and May 2015 respectively. These papers laid down the way forward for the design and implementation of the Union's strategy to tackle the parallel challenges of managing migration and combating terrorism, organised crime and cybercrime.

Both programmes refer directly to the systems that the eu-LISA operates.

The evaluation was also carried out in the context of unprecedented migratory flows and new threats to security (terrorist attacks) faced by Member States.

Key findings: the Agency's first evaluation confirmed that, like the systems it operates and which are vital for the functioning of a constantly evolving Schengen area, **eu-LISA is an efficient agency and becoming increasingly important**.

The evaluation also confirmed that the functioning of the Agency is a long-term task. Although it is unrealistic to expect the Agency to reach full maturity during its first three years of existence, eu-LISA has established itself as a **reliable provider of operational management of the SIS, VIS and Eurodac**, as well as its additional tasks. It is also an important partner for the European institutions and other agencies in the field of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA).

The evaluation also led to **suggestions for improvements in the implementation of the current mandate** and to indicate the limits of the expansion of the mandate.

A recurring problem of resources: the eu-LISA agency would not be able to manage new tools with the resources at its disposal. In the difficult context of migration and security, it is clear that in the years to come the eu-LISA agency will continue to be extremely busy with its core mission (i.e. the operational management of SIS II, VIS and Eurodac, their envisaged evolution and their interoperability). Thus, the main concern must be to ensure that the Agency has the **capacity to manage its core business**. In order to reduce this risk, the Agency should communicate more with its partners, first of all the Member States and the Commission. The board of directors and the advisory groups will be the main platforms for this purpose. Prioritisation of core tasks as well as continuous improvements in economic efficiency should be the keys to success.

Next steps: in addition to this report, the Commission is presenting, on the same date, a proposal to **amend the Regulation establishing the Agency** and the instruments relating to systems where necessary. The proposed amendments aim, among other things, to transfer to the Agency the responsibilities of the Commission relating to the communication infrastructure and to align the Agency Regulation on the updated instruments applicable to the operation of Union agencies.

Other changes include a further specific extension of the scope of the Agency's mandate, for example **the possibility of providing *ad hoc* support to Member States** as well as changes arising from technical developments where warranted.

Lastly, in addition to the changes made necessary by the forthcoming adoption of the SEA proposal, the Regulation establishing the Agency should also be amended as a result of other proposals which include tasks related to the development or the operational management for the eu-LISA agency.

For the most part, these are technical changes.