

Eurodac system for the comparison of the fingerprints of applicants for asylum and certain other aliens for the effective application of the Dublin Convention

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To recall, Council Regulation 2725/2000 of 11 December 2000 concerning the establishment of 'EURODAC' for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of the Dublin Convention stipulates that one year after the EURODAC starts operations, the Commission shall produce an evaluation report on the Central Unit, focusing on the level of demand compared with expectation and on operational and management issues in the light of experience. This is the aim of this report.

The present report will therefore be limited to an objective evaluation of the activities of the EURODAC Central Unit. Following a detailed description of the established system, the factual data produced during the first year of activity will be highlighted and analysed. The Central Unit will be evaluated, in the light of its cost-effectiveness, the quality of its service and its respect for data protection regulations.

The report states that Dublin Regulation and the application of the EURODAC system constitute an important building block in the construction of a Common European Asylum system. The EURODAC Central Unit is not only an essential tool for a faster and more efficient application of the Dublin II Regulation, but also a good indicator of the phenomenon of multiple asylum applications. Its impact should gradually be to discourage those who are tempted by "asylum shopping" in the EU. This should lead to a more orderly and cost-effective management of asylum flows in Member States.

The produced statistics are proof enough to show the efficiency of the EURODAC Central Unit. However, one of the most important criteria for the evaluation of the EURODAC system is its application within the frame of the Dublin Convention and the Dublin II Regulation. In a second stage, the Commission services will therefore analyse statistics gathered by Member States in the application of the Dublin Regulation, in order to draw conclusions concerning the added value of EURODAC.

Some issues, such as the excessive delay in transmission of fingerprints to the Central Unit and the too high of rejection of transactions rate due to insufficient quality need to be addressed in certain Member States. The Commission services are aware that the Member States concerned are working on finding satisfactory solutions.

Also the amount of "category 2" transactions – fingerprints of illegal border-crossers – will hopefully become more realistic once all Member States have equipped themselves with the necessary resources for carrying out their legal obligations.