

The EU information systems and their interoperability

The **Schengen Information System (SIS)** is the most used and largest governmental database for security and border management in Europe, created in 1990, in line with the Schengen Convention. It is used by the MS authorities to preserve internal security in the absence of internal border checks, by entering or consulting alerts about wanted or missing people and objects (vehicles). In November 2018, the EU adopted new rules to upgrade the system and to introduce new categories of alerts. In December 2020, a proposal was tabled to enable Europol to make third-country data available to frontline officers.

Indicative time to be fully upgraded: 2022.

The **Entry/Exit System (EES)** was set-up in November 2017 to register entry and exit data and refusal of entry data of third-country nationals crossing the external borders of the Member States. Data stored in the EES can also be accessed for law enforcement purposes. The EES will enable the automation of border checks on third-country nationals, assisting in the identification of third-country nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry to, or for short stay on, the territory of the Member States. In general terms, it will combat the identity fraud and the misuse of travel documents and will support the evidence-based Union migration policy making. In the overall EU IT architecture, EES support the objectives of the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS).

Indicative time for its start of operation: 2022.

The **European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)** was established in September 2018, and it will be used to carry out advance checks at the external borders on the visa-exempt third country nationals travelling to the Schengen area. It will allow the identification and, subject to the findings, the travel ban of those who may pose a security, illegal migration or high epidemic threat, before those persons reach the EU. ETIAS builds on the EES and supports the objectives of SIS related to alerts on third-country nationals subject to a refusal of entry and stay, alerts on persons wanted for arrest for surrender purposes or extradition purposes, alerts on missing persons, alerts on persons sought to assist with a judicial procedure, alerts on persons for discreet checks or specific checks and alerts on third-country nationals subject to a return decision. The relevant provisions with financial impact are attached.

Indicative time for its start of operation: 2023.

The **Visa Information System (VIS)** is since 2011 the database to facilitate the short-stay visa procedure. It helps visa, border, asylum and migration authorities to check third-country nationals who need a short-stay visa to travel to the Schengen area. Authorities can use the VIS to prevent identity theft or fraud. In July 2021, a new EU regulation was adopted to improve the system, so to strengthen the security of the short-stay visa procedure, to include long-stay visas and residence permits in the same database and to ensure its interoperability with other relevant EU systems and databases.

Indicative time to be fully upgraded: 2023.

The **European Dactyloscopy database (Eurodac)** helps, since 2003, the management of European asylum applications by storing and processing the digitalised fingerprints of asylum seekers and irregular migrants who have entered a European country. It serves the implementation of the Dublin Regulation.

Indicative time to be fully upgraded: by 2023, subject to negotiations.

The **European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS)**, set up in 2012, enables EU member states to easily **share information on criminal convictions** of EU nationals from the Member State of that person's nationality. In April 2019, it was decided that the system will include a centralised database with information on convictions of third-country nationals and stateless persons – ECRIS - TCN. This system is part of the interoperability framework, however it is funded under Justice Programme (JUST).

Indicative time to be fully upgraded: 2023.

Interoperability - in May 2019, the Council adopted two regulations¹ establishing a **framework for interoperability between the EU information systems** that help manage borders, security and migration. It will improve border checks, will allow to better combat the identity fraud and detect security threats, preventing information gaps on the persons crossing the external borders. For this purpose, in addition to the upgraded (SIS, VIS, EURODAC, ECRIS-TCN) and new IT systems to be developed (EES, ETIAS), four other components are needed, notably:

- a **European search portal (ESP)** to allow authorities to search multiple information systems simultaneously (SIS, Eurodac, VIS, EES, ETIAS and ECRIS-TCN systems, as well as relevant Interpol systems and Europol data);
- a **shared biometric matching service (BMS)**, storing the identifying data of non-EU citizens (fingerprints and facial images) and enables querying with biometric data across several EU information systems (in particular SIS, Eurodac, VIS, EES and ECRIS-TCN)
- a **common identity repository (CIR)**, creating an individual file for each person that is registered in the EES, VIS, ETIAS, Eurodac or ECRIS-TCN.
- a **multiple identity detector (MID)** will check whether queried identity data exists in more than one EU information systems connected to it that will alert authorities when biometric data indicates identity fraud.

Member States will need to cover the changes to their national systems in order to use the interoperability components mentioned above, the updated national uniform interface (NUI) delivered to them by eu-LISA and to foresee a budget for the training of the substantial number of end-users of the interoperable EU information systems.

The start of operation of each interoperability component will be achieved step by step and the accomplishment of the interoperability as a whole is foreseen for the end of 2023.

¹ Interoperability to be funded with the BMVI's support encompasses the actions linked to the implementation of the two specific regulations (*Regulation (EU) 2019/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2019 on establishing a framework for interoperability between EU information systems in the field of borders and visa* AND *the Regulation (EU) 2019/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2019 on establishing a framework for interoperability between EU information systems in the field of police and judicial cooperation, asylum and migration*).

In addition, BMVI may support the Member States' actions for reaching AMIF and ISF objectives, in particular ICT systems required for effective and secure border control (Article 13(14) BMVI).