

The setting up of an Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems proposed by the Commission

Following the request of the Council and the European Parliament, the Commission adopted today a legislative package proposing the setting up of an Agency for the long-term operational management of the Schengen Information System (SIS II), Visa Information System (VIS), EURODAC and other large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice.

Vice President Barrot, Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, said: "The legislative proposals adopted today aim to simplify the current situation by establishing a single management structure for several large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice. The establishment of a dedicated Agency for the operational management of these systems will allow their effective and secure operation, assuring quality of service for users, continuity and uninterrupted service. The gradual building up of expertise will allow the Agency to become a centre of excellence for the development and operational management of future large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice".

The legislative package adopted by the Commission is composed of a Regulation establishing the Agency, a Decision and a horizontal Communication providing a quick overview of the legislative proposals.

The core mission of the Agency would be to fulfil the operational management tasks for SIS II, VIS and EURODAC, keeping the systems functioning 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to these operational activities, the Agency will also be responsible for adopting the necessary security measures, reporting, publishing statistics, monitoring of research, SIS II and VIS related training and information issues. It will ensure data security and integrity as well as compliance with data protection rules.

A dedicated, specialised Agency will be able to achieve important synergies and economies of scale as all three existing IT systems will be housed in one location, under common management. As a centre of excellence, the Agency will have the potential to be entrusted with the development of new IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice.

The Agency will be set up in the form of a Regulatory Agency, an independent European body. The Commission and the participating States will be represented on the Management Board, which will be the Agency's governing body. The Agency will be assisted by advisory groups composed of national experts.

The Agency should become operational as of 2012 and be in a position to take over tasks related to the operational management of SIS II, VIS and EURODAC.

To find out more about Vice President Barrot's work please visit his website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/barrot/welcome/default_en.htm