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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Working Party on Information Exchange and Data Protection (DAPIX)
Subject:	Further development of the fingerprint functionality in SIS II - Discussion paper

At the DAPIX meeting of 23 September 2014, the Italian delegation asked the Commission about the plans to extend the existing fingerprints functionality in SIS II presented by the Commission to the SIS VIS Committee (SIRENE Formation) on 4 February 2014.

SIS II should allow for the processing of biometric data for the purpose of reliable identification of individuals. The extension of the fingerprints functionality refers to Art. 22(c) of both Council Decision 2007/533/JHA and Regulation (EC) No 1987/2006, the latter with special regard to third-country nationals for the purpose of refusing their entry or stay, particularly in the framework of asylum, immigration and return policies. The extension provides for fingerprints to be used not only to confirm the result of an alphanumeric identity search in SIS II (see Art. 22(b)) but also to identify a person on the basis of the biometric data alone. Before the latter functionality is implemented in SIS II, the Commission shall present a report on the availability and readiness of the required technology.

The idea presented to the above mentioned SIS VIS Committee is to implement a central Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) integrated in the SIS II central system in order to store fingerprints attached to SIS II alerts on persons, particularly for refusal of entry or law enforcement purposes.

According to the concept, the new SIS II - AFIS would function as a 10-print identification AFIS behind the Central SIS II¹. The national competent authorities would then be able to perform fingerprint searches, using fingerprints only, against either all records or a subset of the new central AFIS database.

Two questionnaires have been distributed so far by the Commission in order to identify useful functional requirements and the way Member States would intend to use the new SIS II fingerprints functionality.

Moreover, the second Commission's questionnaire identifies a number of typical scenarios for the possible check of fingerprints in SIS II, such as fingerprint checks at airports/seaports/land borders, fingerprint checks of asylum-seekers against SIS II, fingerprint checks of unidentified bodies to establish the identity, to perform latent print checks, to carry out fingerprint checks of visa applicants at the consulate against fingerprints attached to SIS II alert (refusal of entry), etc.

¹ The SIS II technical architecture is composed of the Central SIS II and a national system N.SIS II in each of the Member States. SIS II data are entered, updated, deleted and searched by the various N.SIS II systems. An N.SIS II may contain a “national copy” (a data file), which contains a complete or partial copy of the SIS II database, for the purpose of carrying out automated searches in the territory of each of the Member States using such a copy. It shall not be possible to search the data files of other Member States' N.SIS II.

The Presidency invites the Commission to present the details of the planned extension of the SIS II fingerprints functionality to DAPIX and suggests that delegations discuss the project in relation with the topics set out below:

1. scope and limits of the project;
 2. business cases of the system for identification purposes;
 3. comparison between a possible centralised SIS II - AFIS architecture and the decentralised Prüm model;
 4. implications of the possibility to have national copies of all SIS II dactyloscopic data;
 5. impacts of the project on Member States;
 6. data protection requirements.
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