



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 3 April 2007**

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REV 1**

**SIRIS 44  
COMIX 224**

**NOTE**

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from : SIS/SIRENE Working Party  
to : Article 36 Committee

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No. prev. docs 7729/07 SIRIS 62 COMIX 229  
7062/07 SIRIS 51 COMIX 230  
5076/07 SIRIS 5 COMIX 15

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Subject : Website on Schengen cooperation  
– SIS/SIRENE

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- 1 At their informal meeting held in Edinburgh on 28 and 29 October 2005, the Heads of SIRENE felt that Schengen cooperation regarding the Schengen Information System and the proceedings of the SIRENE Bureaux ought to enjoy a higher public profile. The Heads of SIRENE felt that a website could be an appropriate way to make SIS/SIRENE cooperation more transparent, accessible and well-known to the public.
  
2. At its meeting on 18 and 19 January 2006, the SIS/SIRENE Working Party agreed to set up an informal task force to study this subject, with a view to the submission of a proposal for a website.  
  
To this end, delegations to the SIS/SIRENE WP established appropriate contacts with Directorates-General F (Unit 2 – Internet Service) and H (Unit 3B – Schengen) of the General Secretariat of the Council.

3. At its meeting on 6 March 2007, the SIS/SIRENE WP agreed on the text to be published on the website of the Council of the European Union (see Annex 1) and on the logo for these web pages (see Annex 2).
  
4. **The Article 36 Committee is therefore invited to adopt the pages on SIS/SIRENE cooperation for the Council website (see Annex) and to forward this Note to COREPER and the Council for approval as a "I/A item".**

**SIS – Schengen Information System - SIRENE**

"Protecting a Europe without borders"

**Introduction**

Welcome to Schengen, the website on a new form of law enforcement cooperation in a "Europe Without Borders"!

What's what

**SIRENE**

- SIRENE stands for **S**upplementary **I**nformation **R**equest at the **N**ational **E**ntry and outlines the main task of the "SIRENE Bureaux" established in all Schengen Member States;
- It provides supplementary information and coordinates measures in relation to so-called alerts in the Schengen Information System (SIS), and ensures that appropriate action is taken if a wanted person is arrested, a missing person found, a stolen car or ID document seized, etc.;
- It exchanges data, conducts database queries, coordinates cross-border operations, etc.
- [further information ... >>](#)

**SIS - Schengen Information System**

- The SIS is the largest shared police database in Europe, to which the Member States provide entries on wanted and missing persons, lost and stolen property, and entry bans. It is immediately accessible to all police officers at street level. It covers most of the EU, together with Norway and Iceland, and in the near future it will encompass Switzerland as well.
- [further information ... >>](#)

**Schengen Cooperation**

- This involves enhanced cooperation between the law enforcement authorities of all Member States, rendering possible the abolition of internal borders. As a consequence, citizens can enjoy the right to move freely within the Schengen Area.
- [further information ... >>](#)

## Historical Overview–The History of Schengen

### **1985 The Schengen Agreement**

**Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany and France sign an agreement on the gradual abolition of checks at their common borders to support the free movement of persons. This agreement is signed in the Luxembourgish village of Schengen.**

**1990 The Schengen Convention** is signed, implementing the Schengen Agreement of 1985.

**1990 Italy** joins.

**1991 Spain and Portugal** join.

**1992 Greece** joins.

**1995 The Schengen Convention** comes into effect, abolishing checks at the internal borders of the signatory states and creating a single external border where immigration checks for the Schengen area are carried out in accordance with a single set of rules. "Compensatory" measures (such as improved police and judicial cooperation and the Schengen Information System) are put in place.

**Austria** joins.

**1996 Denmark, Finland and Sweden** join.

Despite not being in the EU, Iceland and Norway join Schengen by virtue of prior agreements with the Nordic countries on border controls.

**1999 The Treaty of Amsterdam - Entry into force** (the Treaty is agreed in June 1997 but does not come into force until May 1999).

The Schengen acquis is integrated into the European Union by means of a Protocol to the Treaty of Amsterdam. The Protocol also specifies that the United Kingdom and Ireland may take part in all or part of the Schengen arrangements, subject to unanimous approval by the Council.

**2000** The UK's application for "partial yet significant" participation in Schengen is approved.

**2002 Ireland's** application for partial participation in Schengen is approved.

**2004 Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia** join Schengen.

**2004 Switzerland** joins Schengen.

## Legal Basis

The Schengen Agreement, incorporated into the Treaty on European Union under the Amsterdam Treaty in May 1999, sets out a range of compensatory measures agreed between those European countries that allow free movement of persons across shared borders.

The Schengen Information System is one such measure. It was developed as one of the main ways to facilitate police and judicial cooperation and exchange a common set of information in order to protect the lawful movement of people while sharing information on people who may commit a crime within the EU travel area.

This agreement is supported by Regulations and Council Decisions, which together form a legal framework for use of the Schengen Information System.

Each Member State must uphold the principles of the agreement and the legal framework by introducing national legislation which allows people involved in border control, law enforcement and national security to work effectively.

### Further information:

- [Amsterdam Treaty 1999](#)
- [Schengen Implementing Convention](#)

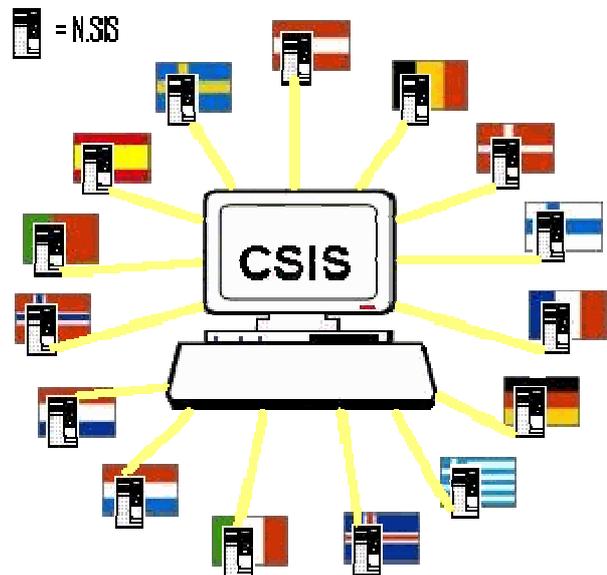
## SIS - Schengen Information System

The Schengen Information System (SIS) was set up as one of the most important compensatory measures in the fight against cross-border crime to make up for the abolition of the internal border controls.

The SIS is a police database, containing at present 15 million entries provided by the 15 Member States.

It consists of a national system (N.SIS) in each Schengen Member State and a central system (C.SIS). All national systems are connected on-line with the central system.

The SIS quickly began to play an important role in crime fighting in Europe, thanks to its modern information technology and close cooperation among the [national SIRENE Bureaux](#).



Alerts on persons can be created in the following instances:

- if wanted for arrest for extradition purposes (Schengen Convention, Art. 95);
- for the purposes of refusing entry to aliens at the Schengen external border, or for deportation, if located in the Schengen territory (Art. 96);
- as part of a search for missing persons (Art. 97);
- to establish a person's whereabouts on behalf of judicial authorities (Art. 98); and
- for the purposes of discreet surveillance (Art. 99).

Alerts on property to be seized or presented as evidence in criminal proceedings can be created in the following categories:

- motor vehicles,
- firearms,
- issued documents and blank documents,
- visas (visa stickers),
- vehicle registration documents and number plates,
- banknotes.

## SIRENE

**SIRENE** stands for "Supplementary Information Request at the National Entry".

The SIRENE Bureaux of the Schengen Member States communicate via secure data line, by phone or by fax. Special procedures have been developed for transmitting pre-defined forms via the secure lines.

SIRENE communications are subject to very stringent data protection provisions. Consequently, SIRENE officers also have to undergo a strict recruitment procedure.

SIRENE Bureaux are on duty round the clock. Their principal tasks are entering so-called "alerts" in the [Schengen Information System](#) and enforcing them. Furthermore, they are an important pivotal point in cross-border [police and judicial cooperation](#).

### **Most important tasks:**

- handling data on wanted persons and stolen property as stipulated in Articles 95 to 100 of the Schengen Convention, by coordinating measures, transmitting additional information and processing hits,
- providing international mutual legal assistance as outlined in Articles 36 and 45 of the Schengen Convention (police cooperation to combat and solve criminal offences),
- assisting the justice authorities in connection with extradition cases and the repatriation of suspects by air from Schengen countries,
- providing information about entries stored in the SIS and in the national police database in compliance with data protection provisions,
- drawing up search provisions for subordinate authorities and services, organising training courses and participating in high impact operations,
- attending international events and meetings of various EU Council working parties (e.g. the SIS/SIRENE, Schengen Acquis and Schengen EVAL working parties), and
- assisting new EU Member States in establishing their respective national SIRENE units.

In view of the different structures and jurisdictions of law enforcement and justice authorities in the individual Schengen Member States, a/m tasks might be carried out differently.

### **Further information:**

- [National SIRENE Presentations](#)
- [European Arrest Warrant \(EAW\)](#)

## National SIRENE presentations



[Austria](#)



Belgium



[Cyprus](#)



[Czech Republic](#)



[Denmark](#)



Estonia



[Finland](#)



[France](#)



[Germany](#)



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Sweden



[Switzerland](#)



[United Kingdom](#)

## European Arrest Warrant (EAW)

The European Arrest Warrant (EAW) replaces the previous formal extradition procedures between Member States and greatly contributes to more effective prosecution of criminals moving within EU territory. It is based on the principle of mutual recognition of judicial decisions and maintaining common standards of human rights protection.

The EAW, introduced under a Framework Decision of the Council of the EU, has been implemented by all Member States.

### **The advantages of the EAW in comparison with the previous extradition system:**

- the EAW is issued and executed directly by judicial authorities – the role of the executive branch (ministries, etc.) has been abandoned;
- the EAW is issued on the same simple form in all Member States, so that it is easy to use and translate;
- the EAW lifts the requirement of double criminality for a number of expressly listed serious crimes, thereby overcoming the problems stemming from different criminal codes in Member States in such cases;
- the surrender of Member States' citizens is possible, meaning that criminals cannot hide in their home country to avoid criminal responsibility and procedures in other Member States;
- the time-limits for deciding on and executing an EAW are explicit, thus making the surrender procedure much faster (in some cases it takes a few days, rather than months or years);
- an SIS alert has the same status as the original EAW, thereby simplifying the distribution of the warrants.

### **Useful links concerning the EAW:**

- [European Commission](#)
- [Council of the EU](#)

## Schengen Cooperation

With Schengen cooperation facilitating the abolition of internal border checks between Member States, thereby allowing for the free movement of people, some compensatory measures have been established to protect Member States against criminal exploitation.

These measures have opened up entirely new avenues for cross-border cooperation between law enforcement authorities. A successful balance has been struck between the need for a swift reaction to crime and respect for national sovereignty.

The new tools established under the [Schengen Convention](#) have become a benchmark for international cooperation in police and criminal justice matters and have been copied in many bilateral and multilateral instruments as many countries have recognised their usefulness.

The main tools for tackling crime in the area of free movement are the [Schengen Information System](#) and the [SIRENE Bureaux](#), enabling cross-border searches to be made for wanted/missing persons and objects.

### Further information:

- [Other tools of police cooperation](#)
- [The Treaty of Prüm - Enhancing EU cooperation](#)

### Useful links concerning law enforcement cooperation:

#### European Commission

- [Police Cooperation](#)
- [Schengen](#)
- [Judicial Cooperation](#)

#### Council of the European Union

- [Police and Judicial Cooperation](#)
- [Schengen](#)

## Data protection

When the Schengen Information System (SIS) was set up a Joint Supervisory Authority was established, composed of members of data protection agencies from all Schengen States.

Apart from the technical control of the central data stock in Strasbourg, this supervisory authority is responsible for safeguarding the rights of individuals enshrined in the Schengen Convention (the [right to be informed](#) about personal data stored in the SIS, the [right to have incorrect data rectified](#) and the [right to have unlawfully stored data deleted](#)).

Furthermore, all national SIRENE Bureaux are evaluated at regular intervals by so-called "Schengen-Evaluation Teams" (composed of experts from all Member States), with special emphasis on adherence to all security provisions.

### Further information:

- [Data Protection - Personal Rights](#)
- [Data Protection - Misused Identity](#)

### Useful links concerning law enforcement cooperation:

- [Joint Data Protection Agency](#)

## Statistics

### List of records by type

<b>Banknotes</b>	244.841
<b>Blank documents</b>	413.925
<b>Firearms</b>	303.545
<b>Issued identity documents</b>	12.130.885
<b>Vehicles, lorries</b>	1.521.806
<b>Wanted persons</b>	1.243.035
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.858.037</b>

(as at 23/5/2006)

Projected figures for 2008, including new Member States (10 new EU Member States, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and the United Kingdom)

<b>Banknotes</b>	460.000
<b>Blank documents</b>	430.000
<b>Firearms</b>	450.000
<b>Issued identity documents</b>	13.500.000
<b>Vehicles, lorries</b>	3.400.000
<b>Wanted persons</b>	1.600.000
<b>Licence plates</b>	4.400.000
<b>Industrial equipment</b>	107.000
<b>Boats and engines</b>	29.000
<b>Aircraft</b>	100
<b>Securities</b>	2.100.000
<b>Additional blank and issued documents</b>	10.000.000
<b>Minors not leaving the EU</b>	1.000
<b>Containers</b>	1.100
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.478.200</b>

(study-based estimates)

### List of hits by type of record

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
<b>Arrest warrants</b>	1.357	2.004	2.416	2.696	2.841	3.280	3.183	3.813	3.887	4.296	<b>25.477</b>
<b>Residence bans</b>	14.806	23.909	21.711	21.170	26.363	35.856	32.856	21.957	21.090	21.836	<b>219.718</b>
<b>Missing persons</b>	1.302	1.758	1.595	1.717	1.779	1.798	1.835	1.984	2.289	2.701	<b>16.057</b>
<b>Whereabouts</b>	3.320	4.649	3.773	3.643	3.661	4.507	4.296	4.945	6.612	8.772	<b>39.406</b>
<b>Surveillance (persons)</b>	1.690	3.498	2.221	1.743	2.232	2.362	2.620	2.989	4.152	5.983	<b>23.507</b>
<b>Surveillance (vehicles)</b>	244	194	244	343	261	401	475	551	594	539	<b>3.307</b>
<b>Stolen vehicles</b>	12.470	15.986	13.917	14.403	15.452	15.077	13.801	13.163	11.808	11.167	<b>126.077</b>
<b>Firearms</b>	114	80	149	313	344	303	299	281	265	196	<b>2.148</b>
<b>Blank documents</b>	633	2.037	4.775	4.890	5.139	3.602	3.011	3.053	2.887	2.222	<b>30.027</b>
<b>Issued documents</b>	1.009	2.090	4.228	4.276	5.109	5.256	4.680	5.746	6.442	6.455	<b>38.836</b>
<b>Banknotes</b>	4	4	1	61	3	15	13	14	10	20	<b>125</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.949</b>	<b>56.209</b>	<b>55.030</b>	<b>55.255</b>	<b>63.184</b>	<b>72.457</b>	<b>67.069</b>	<b>58.496</b>	<b>60.036</b>	<b>64.187</b>	

(Source: Table of hits recorded by the SIRENE Bureaux)

## Services

- [Overview of terms used](#)
- [Questions and answers so far](#)

