

Brussels, 2.12.2013 COM(2013) 777 final

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

LAST PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECOND GENERATION SCHENGEN INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS II)

January 2013 - May 2013

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INTRODUCTION

This progress report is the last report presented to the European Parliament and the Council in accordance with Article 18 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1104/2008 of 24 October 2008¹ and of Council Decision 2008/839/JHA of 24 October 2008² on migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the SIS II as recast (so called migration instruments).

It describes the work carried out from January 2013 until the expiry of the abovementioned migration instruments on 8 May 2013 concerning the development of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) and the migration from SIS 1+ to SIS II.

1. PROJECT STATUS

1.1. Overview of progress during the period under review

Building on the steady progress made in the development of the central system and the national systems, all the preparatory steps leading up to the actual migration of data from SIS1+ to SIS II were finalised during this reporting period. The migration process was successfully completed with the switch-over to the new system on 9 April 2013 and the smooth operation of the system during the subsequent intensive monitoring period.

1.2. Testing activities

As a follow up to the series of tests executed in the course of 2012 in order to ascertain the proper functioning, performance and interaction of the national systems and the central system, a handful of Member States, due to insufficient results in some of the tests, executed the remaining necessary re-runs in January 2013. As explained in the previous report, Finland faced a major technical set-back in the development of its national system and opted for a plan B based on an alternative technical solution. In order to catch up with the other Member States for the start of the live migration process, Finland rerun all final tests including the comprehensive test. The support of Global Project Management Board consisting of the representatives of the Commission, the Member States and the main contractors proved to be instrumental in the success of this additional exercise.

(a) Compliance Test Extended (CTE)

As the last Member State achieving readiness, Finland successfully executed this test of the compliance of the national systems with the SIS II specifications at the beginning of 2013 and joined the other Member States which had to re-run the comprehensive test.

(b) Comprehensive test

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Council Regulation (EC) No 1104/2008 of 24 October 2008 on migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) (OJ L 299, 8.11.2008, p. 1).

² Council Decision 2008/839/JHA of 24 October 2008 on migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) (OJ L 299, 8.11.2008, p. 43).

The Comprehensive test represented both a technical and a legal precondition for the SIS II entry into operation³ and therefore involved the testing of all the key SIS II components – the Central System, all the national systems and the network.

The majority of the Member States had already completed this final testing campaign successfully in the second half of 2012 as originally scheduled. However, due to problems faced at national level by five Member States, additional re-runs beyond the dedicated time-slot were necessary. Concretely, Poland and Switzerland needed to rerun one test case and Denmark and Finland the entire test phase. In order to lift a reservation placed on its test verdict Belgium asked to partially re-execute the Comprehensive test campaign.

Eventually, all the Member States concerned managed to pass the remaining re-runs in the second week of January 2013. The SIS II Central System as well as the communication infrastructure demonstrated good, stable performance throughout these reruns of the Comprehensive test.

(c) SIRENE⁴ functional test

Four Member States including Finland had to repeat the test on supplementary information exchange (SIRENE functional test) in the week commencing on 28 January 2013. Whilst this test lies within the responsibility of the Member States, the Commission provided the Central system and the communication infrastructure for the execution of the test. Belgium, the Czech Republic, Sweden and Finland ultimately met the test exit criteria and the Working Party on Schengen Matters (SIS/SIRENE formation) formally endorsed the test results on 15 February 2013.

(d) SIRENE form exchange test

In addition to the SIRENE functional test which was required by the migration legal instruments, Member States decided to run an informal SIRENE form exchange test whereby all Member States exchanged a full set of SIRENE forms with the other Member States. The test campaign took place in March 2013 and was completed with positive results.

Last but not least, the functional SIRENE mail boxes were also tested with success in the course of March.

(e) Other tests

Tests were also conducted with Member States on the correct functioning of two complementary tools that would be used for the operational management of the SIS II:

• The first tool is used by the operators of the national systems to open service tickets to the operator of the central system. The tool's purpose is to identify and follow-up any technical issue raised with the use of SIS II.

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Article 55(3)(c) of Regulation (EC) 1987/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council on the establishment, operation and use of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) (OJ L 381/4, 28.12.2006) and Article 71(3)(c) of Council Decision 2007/533/JHA of 12 June 2007 on the establishment, operation and use of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) (OJ L 205/63, 7.8.2007).

SIRENE — Supplementary Information Request at the National Entries

• The second tool is a web-based message exchange system between operators. As an example, when maintenance is carried out on the central system, the operator informs all national system operators using this tool.

Neither tool is used for exchanging SIS II messages. They are designed to exchange information for keeping the system working.

The tests of both tools were successfully conducted from the end of February until early April 2013.

1.3. SIS II network security

For operational purposes, Member States have both main and back-up interfaces with the wide area communication network, enabling secure communication between the central and national systems.

Building on its successful testing, as endorsed by SIS-VIS Committee, the technical solution for a second encryption layer to further strengthen SIS II network security was successfully rolled-out at the end of February 2013.

1.4. Migration from SIS 1+ to SIS II

1.4.1. Legal framework

The legal framework established for the final stage of the SIS II project was consolidated at the end of the previous reporting period by the recast of the migration instruments applicable as of 30 December 2012. This ensured a legally sound and technically optimised migration process and a possibility of extra financial support to the national projects in relation to migration activities.

1.4.2. Prerequisites for the entry into operation

The SIS II legal basis stipulates a certain number of prerequisites prior to the decision on the SIS II entry into operation. Indeed the date of entry into operation could only be set once:

- the necessary implementing measures have been adopted;
 - The last pending implementing measure was the Commission implementing Decision on the SIRENE Manual and other implementing measures for the second generation Schengen Information System5, which was adopted on 26 February as mentioned above.
- all Member States fully participating in SIS 1+ have notified the Commission that they have made the necessary technical and legal arrangements to process SIS II data and exchange supplementary information;
 - Following the completion of the SIRENE functional test, all Member States participating in SIS 1+ notified the Commission that they had made the necessary technical and legal arrangements to process SIS II data and exchange supplementary information.
- the Commission has declared the successful completion of a comprehensive test of SIS II, which shall be conducted by the Commission together with the Member States, and the preparatory bodies of the Council have validated the proposed test result and

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⁵ (OJ L 71/1, 14.3. 2013) (OJ L 359/32, 29.12. 2012)

confirmed that the level of performance of SIS II is at least equivalent to that achieved with SIS 1+;

Following the validation of the proposed "passed" verdict for the Central system, the s-Testa network and the national systems by the Working Party on Schengen Matters (SIS-TECH formation) on 6 February, the Commission declared at Coreper of 20 February that the objectives of the comprehensive test had been met, notably that:

- The Commission and the Member States participating in SIS 1+ had completed the necessary technical arrangements to process SIS II data and
- The level of performance of SIS II is at least equivalent to that achieved with SIS 1+;
- the Commission has made the necessary technical arrangements for allowing Central SIS II to be connected to the N.SIS II of the Member States concerned.
- The N.SIS II in all the Member States were connected to the Central SIS II from 25 January 2013.

All prerequisites stipulated by the SIS II legal basis being met, the JHA Council (7-8 March 2013) adopted two Council Decisions fixing the date of application of the SIS II legal basis for 9 April 2013, meaning in practice the SIS II go-live date.

1.4.3. Technical migration of data

The last test of the converter provided by the Commission as the core of the interim migration architecture was successfully executed in January 2013, on time to allow the live data migration from SIS 1+ to SIS II. Following the migration rehearsals and the data cleansing activities, respectively organised and supported by the Commission, the live data migration started on 22 January 2013.

The first step of the migration consisted in transforming the 46,7 million alerts of the SIS 1+ database into data consistent with the SIS II data model via the converter. During this operation, which took place between 22 January and 6 February 2013, all new create / update / delete operations performed on the SIS1+ database were temporarily stored in the converter queues. The SIS II Central System was then uploaded with the converted data. When this task was completed all the SIS 1+ messages that had accumulated in the queue were also converted and updated in the SIS II central database. At the end of this process, any new operation performed on the SIS1+ database was being mirrored on the SIS II database, thereby meaning that both central SIS 1+ and central SIS II were synchronised.

As of 7 March 2013, Member States had the possibility to carry out queries on the Central SIS II database (which at that moment was only populated with SIS 1+ database content) using the SIS II central query facility.

The next phase of the migration consisted in 'populating' the SIS II national copies to ensure that Member States with a SIS II national copy had the same data as in the SIS II central database. This process is not necessary for the six Member States which had decided not to implement a national copy and perform all queries on the central system, which is a new functionality introduced by SIS II.

The actual download of the complete SIS II database took an elapsed time of sixteen hours per Member State. The entire phase ended on 28 March. At that point in time, all SIS II

national copies were synchronised with the SIS II Central System, which itself was synchronised via the Converter with the SIS 1+ Central System.

1.4.4. Switch-over

The switch-over was fixed by the Council for 9 April 2013.

Between 28 March (end of technical migration – see above) and 9 April, the SIS 1+ and SIS II system, including all national copies, were kept perfectly synchronised: any new SIS 1+ message would update the SIS 1+ central database, be converted, then update the SIS II database and the national copies.

For the switch-over, the process was coordinated centrally by the Commission's project team with the support of the GPMB members and went as follows:

- All Member States stopped traffic on the SIS 1+ side at the same moment at 08:00 and waited until all alerts were processed in the SIS 1+ central system and in the SIS 1+ national copies.
- On the central side the last SIS 1+ messages were converted to SIS II format. Once this was ascertained, the bidirectional convertor was switched into its 'reverse mode' in order to convert SIS II alerts back into SIS 1+ format (as from the switch-over the SIS II becomes the "Master System").
- On the Member State side, national end-user applications (e.g.: the national systems used by the border guards) were disconnected from the SIS 1+ national system and reconnected to the SIS II national system. As a result, all new messages started to be sent from the SIS II National System under the SIS II format.
- Member State had to notify their readiness to start sending SIS II messages to the
 coordination team, before being authorised to upload their messages to the Central
 SIS II system. This process took place one Member State at a time to make sure that
 all update mechanisms were working as expected.
- Portugal was the first Member State being ready to send a SIS II alert at 10:51 local time, more than one hour ahead of schedule. At that very moment, the SIS II legal basis entered into force.

At the end of the day a dedicated Migration Steering Group involving the Commission SIS II team, the GPMB and the Presidency could conclude that:

- all Member States could send SIS II alerts,
- all national copies were updated with the messages coming from the central system,
- queries were possible either on the central database or on an updated national copy.

In conclusion all migrating Member States had successfully switched over.

1.4.5. Intensive Monitoring Period

From the moment the first alert was sent to SIS II, the role of the converter was to keep the SIS 1+ central system synchronised with the SIS II central system. The SIS 1+ national copies would however no longer be updated.

This was a contingency measure in case any of the SIS II national systems ran into serious problems and had to fall back to SIS 1+. In that event, upon request, the affected Member State would have downloaded the SIS 1+ database, switched-over its applications and restarted sending messages via SIS 1+. Once the problem on SIS II would have been resolved that same Member State would then have switched-over again to SIS II.

The intensive monitoring period lasted 30 days as laid down by the legal basis. During that complete period, the Commission SIS II project team kept an on-going control on the status of the system and made sure that the SIS 1+ database was kept synchronised with the SIS II database.

Since no Member State required a switch-back to SIS 1+ over that period of time, the convertor was disabled on 8 May 2013.

From that date onwards the SIS II system is operated by eu-LISA, the European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice.

2. MANAGEMENT

2.1. Financial aspects

2.1.1. SIS II budget

By the end of June 2013, the total budgetary commitments made by the Commission on the SIS II project since 2002, amounted to EUR 171 699 692. The corresponding contracts include feasibility studies, the development of the Central SIS II itself, support and quality assurance, the SIS II network, preparation for operational management, security, communication and experts' mission expenses and the information campaign.

Of this amount, EUR 136 567 137 had actually been paid between 2002 and the end of June 2013. The main expenditure items were development (EUR 73 566 165), the network (EUR 32 154 296), support and quality assurance (EUR 13 612 454) and preparation for operational management in Strasbourg and Sankt Johann im Pongau (EUR 9 376 235).

2.1.2. Additional financing for Member States' national development

The national development projects of the last eight Member States in need of extra co-financing through the European External Borders Fund (EBF) were completed in this reporting period. In addition and following up on the interest expressed by the Member States regarding the call for proposals launched by the Commission in accordance with the common Article 16 of the recast migration instruments at the beginning of 2013, the Commission has made available a further sum of EUR 13 million with an upper limit of EUR 715 000 per Member State (to be co-financed 25 % from national resources). Finally, nine Member States were granted a financial facility for their migration related activities for a total maximum amount of EUR 4 157 076.50.

2.2. Operational management

2.2.1. Transition to the C.SIS (Centre de Systèmes d'Information Schengen)

The operational management of the SIS II production environment was first transferred from the Main Development Contractor to the C.SIS (under a service contract between France and the Commission) before the start of the live migration from SIS 1+ towards SIS II since during the migration phase SIS 1+, the converter and SIS II had to be operated simultaneously

by the same entity. During the whole migration phase including the one month intensive monitoring period, the converter and the SIS II were operated by C.SIS.

2.2.2. The Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA)

The planned hand-over of SIS II to eu-LISA⁶ started at the beginning of 2013 and was completed by 9 May 2013. A hand-over document, accompanied by a full set of technical documents describing the SIS II and its operational aspects, was put at the disposal of eu-LISA.

eu-LISA took up its responsibilities, pursuant to the SIS II legal basis and the agency's own founding Regulation⁷, as of 9 May 2013, upon the termination of the intensive monitoring period and the expiry of the migration instruments.

Regarding the communication infrastructure, eu-LISA is also responsible for the supervision, security and the coordination of relations between the Member States and the service provider.

In addition, eu-LISA has been tasked by its founding Regulation with other tasks related to SIS II, such as training on the technical use of SIS II, in particular for SIRENE staff and the training of experts on the technical aspects of SIS II in the framework of Schengen evaluation.

Furthermore, eu-LISA is also responsible⁸ for publication in the Official Journal of the European Union of the lists of competent authorities entitled to search directly the data contained in SIS II, together with the list of Offices of the national systems of SIS II (N.SIS II) and SIRENE Bureaux. Before the hand-over of SIS II to eu-LISA, the Commission arranged the aforementioned publication on 9 April 2013.⁹

The SIS II advisory group providing the expertise to the Management Board of eu-LISA met three times (19/20 February, 23/24 April and 4/5 June) in this reporting period.

In light of the financial independence of eu-LISA obtained on 22 May 2013 and the gradual finalisation of negotiations on required agreements with host Member States, the support of the Commission provided to eu-LISA during its establishment phase has gradually decreased in this reporting period and the working relations between the two will be governed by two Memoranda of Understanding (i.e. on operational working arrangements still to be signed and on financial transfers signed on 17 May 2013).

⁶ Common Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1987/2006 (OJ L 381, 28.12.2006) and of Council Decision 2007/533/JHA (OJ L 205, 7.8.2007).

Regulation (EU) No 1077/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011establishing a European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (OJ L 286/1,1.11.2011)

Article 12(1)(y) of Regulation (EU) No 1077/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011establishing a European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (OJ L 286/1,1.11.2011)

⁹ OJ C 103, 9.04.2013, p. 1

2.3. Project management

2.3.1. Global Programme Management Board (GPMB)

The GPMB has fulfilled its mandate and focused in particular on the remaining test re-runs and the migration phase.

There were seventeen GPMB plenary meetings during this period and the very last meeting took place on 7 May 2013. With the exiry of the migration instruments, the GPMB ceased to exist.

2.3.2. SIS-VIS Committee (SIS II)

Several key documents on migration and testing were approved at the five meetings of the SIS-VIS Committee on SIS II technical matters in the period January – May 2013. Detailed issues arising from specific project deliverables such change requests and migration have been further handled by dedicated sub-groups – the Change Management Board and the Migration Expert Group which met three and 17 times respectively.

2.3.3. National planning and coordination

The last meeting of the Member States' national project managers (NPM), organised regularly by the Commission to allow the detailed exchange of information on all activities with relevance to the global project status, took place on 30 May 2013. Meeting five times in this this reporting period, it dealt again in particular with the global schedule, testing, migration, the transition to the SIS II, the SIS II operational handbook and the SIS II Task Force reports.

2.3.4. Council

With a focus on the remaining technical and legal tasks linked to the final period before the SIS II go-live, the Commission continued to keep all relevant Council bodies informed about the SIS II state of play, including the timetable and budgetary aspects. All issues regarding the migration and switch-over phase in particular have been clarified at preparatory levels. As mentioned before, all legally binding preconditions for the decision of the Council on the date of the entry of SIS II into operation were met on time. This thorough preparatory work resulted in the said decision taken by the first JHA Council held under the Irish presidency of the Council on 7 March 2013 which unanimously adopted the two Decisions on the entry of the SIS II into operation on 9 April 2013 (one for each ex-pillar)¹⁰. The SIS II go-live has been accompanied by the information campaign as described below in section 3.3.6.

The Commission continued to circulate a weekly flash report to colleagues involved in the project at national level until the end of the intensive monitoring period/hand-over to eu-LISA summarising technical developments.

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Council Decision of 7 March 2013 fixing the date of application of Regulation 1987/2006 JHA on the establishment, operation and use of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) (OJ L87/10, 27.3.2013) and Council Decision of 7 March 2013 fixing the date of application of Decision 2007/533/JHA on the establishment, operation and use of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) (OJ L87/8, 27.3.2013)

2.3.5. The European Parliament

The European Parliament continued to be supportive of the SIS II. In a spirit of transparency and loyal inter-institutional cooperation, the Commission has kept the European Parliament fully informed on the whole range of aspects of SIS II development until the very end of the project – two letters (on the successful accomplishment of the comprehensive test and the hand-over of the SIS II to eu-LISA) were sent by the Commission to the LIBE Committee. In addition, a presentation of the state of play was provided to the LIBE Committee by the Commission at the hearing on 21 March 2013, i.e. shortly before SIS II has entered into operation.

2.3.6. SIS II information campaign

In accordance with the SIS II legal basis, to accompany the entry into operation of SIS II, the Commission organised, in cooperation with the national data protection authorities and the European Data Protection Supervisor, an information campaign informing the public about its objectives, the data stored, the authorities having access and the rights of persons.¹¹

Under the framework contract for the main deliverables concluded at the end of 2012, the leaflet, poster and a short video animation were finalised and provided by the Commission to Member States' designated authorities for further dissemination at national level (at border crossings, police stations, consulates etc.). The information campaign shall be repeated regularly.

2.3.7. Risk management

The Commission closely monitored the risks in the SIS II project with the support of its quality assurance contractor and followed up on them on a weekly basis in the framework of the well-established procedure, involving also on monthly basis the Global Programme Management Board.

In this reporting period, the COM had to concentrate on the following risks:

- the readiness of the Member States (end-user applications) and notably the timely implementation of "Plan B" in Finland;
- the limited time remaining for contingency in the migration schedule.

3. FUTURE PRIORITIES

Following the SIS II entry into operation, the core priority is to keep it fully operational, in particular by:

- ensuring the necessary infrastructure for the system and its operation,
- allowing the evolution of the national components in line with the evolutions agreed for the central system,

¹¹ Common Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 1987/2006 (OJ L 381, 28.12.2006) and of Council Decision 2007/533/JHA (OJ L 205, 7.8.2007).

- treating the SIRENE offices as a high priority, both in terms of adequate staffing and appropriate technical support,
- putting in place a full disaster recovery/business continuity plan,
- ensuring the resilience of the SIS II to potential security breaches.

4. CONCLUSION

The Schengen Information System is at the heart of Schengen cooperation. Being a state-of-the-art IT system offering many enhanced functionalities as well as new data categories compared to its predecessor, SIS II is a key tool for the functioning of the Schengen area in terms of security and free movement of persons.

It therefore has represented a flagship project for the Commission since its very start.

The overall development of the SIS II was undeniably very demanding. Building such complex system whilst meeting the high expectations of its users and satisfying evolving requirements proved to be both technically and politically very challenging and consequently more time-consuming that initially foreseen.

In 2009 a major evaluation exercise took place. As a result, in 2010 an enhanced management structure, upgraded technical specifications, a new roadmap as well as a revised budgetary framework for the completion of the project were all put in place. Despite various challenges the SIS II project remained henceforth on track both time-wise and budget-wise. The successful performance of the two Milestone tests confirmed the robustness and performance of the Central System as well as the underlying key architectural and technical choices. This was then followed by the final phases of testing and the actual migration of data from SIS 1 to SIS II, all of which were completed successfully.

Accordingly, thanks to a renewed commitment of all stakeholders towards the finalisation of the project, the SIS II was accomplished in this reporting period and entered into operation on 9 April as determined by the JHA Council in March 2013. The SIS II has since been functioning smoothly.

Finally, the lessons learned in the SIS II project will serve as a valuable experience for the development of the new relevant large-scale IT systems in the field, notably the Entry/Exit System and the Registered Traveller Programme foreseen under the Smart Borders initiative.

Budget execution				
	From 2002 to June 2013		From January to June 2013	
(EUR)	<u>Commitments</u>	<u>Payments</u>	Commitments	Payments
Development HP/Steria)	<u>85 882 789</u>	<u>73 566 165</u>	<u>35 121</u>	<u>2 773 328</u>
Development (Atos)	3 921 248	<u>3 548 261</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>247 219</u>
Support & quality assurance	<u>16 063 293</u>	13 612 454	210 379	1 000 068
<u>Network</u>	45 335 129	32 154 296	<u>0</u>	1 778 679
Operational management preparation	<u>12 986 242</u>	9 376 235	<u>0</u>	<u>66 901</u>
<u>Security</u>	1 358 310	386 914	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Studies / Consultancy	1 086 628	<u>985 020</u>	<u>22 217</u>	<u>21 813</u>
Information Campaign	<u>183 943</u>	<u>108 846</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>75 473</u>
Experts Mission Expenses	4 867 236	<u>2 814 072</u>	<u>3 482 456</u>	2 231 362
<u>Others</u>	14 874	14 874	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL:	171 699 692	136 567 137	4 067 173	8 194 842

SIS-VIS Committee (SIS II) and Working Group Meetings

a) Meetings held during this reporting period

JANUARY 2013		
9, 16, 23, 30	SIS II Global Programme Management Board	
24	SIS-VIS Committee (SIS II Technical Formation Meeting)	
24	SIS II National Project Managers' Meeting	
10, 17, 25, 31	SIS II MEG meeting	
29	SIS II CMB meeting	

FEBRUARY 2013		
5, 13, 21, 27	SIS II Global Programme Management Board	
26	SIS-VIS Committee (SIS II Technical Formation Meeting)	
26	SIS II National Project Managers' Meeting	
7, 14, 21, 28	SIS II MEG meeting	
6	SIS II CMB meeting	

MARCH 2013		
5, 14, 20, 26	SIS II Global Programme Management Board	
22	SIS-VIS Committee (SIS II Technical Formation Meeting)	
22	SIS II National Project Managers' Meeting	
7,14,21	SIS II MEG meeting	
21	SIS II CMB meeting	

	APRIL 2013		
3, 17, 25	SIS II Global Programme Management Board		
26	SIS-VIS Committee (SIS II Technical Formation Meeting)		

26	SIS II National Project Managers' Meeting
4, 11, 18, 25	SIS II MEG meeting

MAY 2013		
2,7	SIS II Global Programme Management Board	
30	SIS-VIS Committee (SIS II Technical Formation Meeting)	
30	SIS II National Project Managers' Meeting	
2, 16	SIS II MEG meeting	