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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
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Subject:	Summary of the 46th meeting of the Eurodac Advisory Group

Delegations will find attached a summary of the 46th meeting of eu-LISA's Eurodac Advisory Group.

Summary of the
46th meeting of the Eurodac Advisory
Group
19 September 2023

European Union Agency for the Operational Management
of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom,
Security and Justice (eu-LISA)

Summary of the

46th meeting of the Eurodac Advisory Group of eu-LISA

19 September 2023, Strasbourg (hybrid meeting)

At the meeting of the **Eurodac Advisory Group (EAG) of eu-LISA, held on 19 September 2023**, eu-LISA provided an update of Eurodac operations and statistics, presented the implementation status of the ongoing Eurodac projects and informed the EAG about the Member States' readiness for DubliNet stronger encryption keys. The Agency presented the strategic approach for the implementation of the Interoperability (IO) roadmap on which EAG gave its positive opinion. Further, the EAG adopted a positive opinion on the updated versions of the Eurodac Business Continuity and Security Plans. The European Commission provided a status update on negotiations over recast Eurodac Regulation, on the use of the Temporary Protection Directive as well as on the Eurodac Contact Committee meeting. eu-LISA briefed the EAG about the progress for resolving a backlog on records to be marked, informed about the status of the Eurodac certificate renewal and reported on the thematic expert meeting on DubliNet and Dublin Technical Systems. Further, the Agency provided an overview of activities related to the removal of unused domain names and presented the updated Eurodac Operator Manual and the planning for 2025.

Under the first discussion point, eu-LISA provided an **Eurodac operations and capacity status update** from May to August 2023. It was noted that the registrations of new CAT1 (asylum seekers) and CAT2 (third-country nationals irregularly crossing the external borders of the Schengen Area) records in the recent months show that the European Union faces another migration crisis. The number of records has crossed the barrier of 100 000 registrations per month bringing along more than 7.03 million records in the Eurodac database by the end of August 2023. Despite the peak in registrations, the new capacity limit of Eurodac will not be reached in the coming years as due to the expiration of the retention period a significant volume of records from 2015-2016 will be deleted. The figures of the daily incoming traffic have increased from 5,000 on average in the previous reporting period to 8,000 on average between May and August; in September, peaks between 10,000 and 12,000 transactions have been observed.

Next, the Agency presented the implementation status of the Eurodac Capacity Upgrade project, provided information on the Eurodac Minimal Upgrade project and gave information on the Eurodac Migration project to the Transversal Engineering and Operations Frameworks. For the Eurodac Capacity Upgrade project, all technical activities to increase the system's capacity from 7 million to 9 million records are being finished and the project will be completed in October 2023. For the Minimal Upgrade project, the pre-production completion is planned in October 2023, the Entry into Operation completion for the core technical activities is scheduled for the end of 2023, and the final acceptance and project completion is expected in the end of Q1 2024. Handover to the Transversal Engineering Framework (TEF) and the Transversal Operations Framework (TOF) is scheduled to end by January 2024. TEF covers all contractors involved in evolutions and TOF contractors in maintenance of Eurodac.

eu-LISA also presented the **strategic approach for the implementation of the IO roadmap** (waves approach) to which the EAG gave its positive opinion. As regards the future evolution of the Eurodac, the Agency reminded that as a precondition, the scope of Eurodac Recast shall be defined, with clear requirements and business use cases.

Further, the Agency presented the most important updates to the **Eurodac Security Plan and the Eurodac Business Continuity Plan**. eu-LISA explained the triggers prompting these updates of the plans ahead of the regular three-year interval of update; these included *i.a.* the upgrade of the Oracle database, the storage expansion, and implementation of a new technological tool by the Agency. The EAG adopted a positive opinion on the updated plans, which will further be submitted to the eu-LISA Management Board for their approval.

The European Commission provided a status **update on negotiations over the Eurodac recast regulation and the Temporary Protection Directive**. In the Eurodac trilogues that have been ongoing since December 2022 there are some major issues on which the co-legislators have divergent views. The next trilogue is planned for October 2023, while technical matters are discussed at policy-officer level. The Commission's aim is to conclude most of the major discussions before the end of 2023. EAG was also briefed about the last **Eurodac Contact Committee meeting** that took place in Brussels on 19 July 2023 and discussed the implementation of the current Eurodac regulation, in particular the challenges of Member States to fulfil some obligations stemming from the regulation.

eu-LISA and Germany provided an update on the progress of backlog consumption of **German Eurodac records to be marked**. The backlog of markings of data accumulated due to a functional restriction of German internal interface that persisted in the period 2016-2021. In the first phase of the solution, Germany has developed a script for German linked records that was running from the beginning of May until mid-July 2023. In the second phase, Germany started sending broadcasts for linking to other Member States, and by 10 September 2023, more than 98% of the entire backlog (from the total of around 305,000 records under scrutiny) was processed. According to the schedule, script will be running until 18 October 2023 when the entire backlog is expected to be consumed.

Under the agenda point on the **DubliNet stronger encryption readiness**, eu-LISA informed the EAG that 30 participating countries have successfully completed the tests and submitted the Test Reports with no issues detected or reported. Migration of the strong certificates to production will take place in January 2024, before the expiration of the existing certificates.

Next, eu-LISA provided EAG an overview of the **Thematic Expert Meeting on DubliNet and Dublin Technical Systems** held in Tallinn on 31 May 2023. The Agency also informed the EAG about the **state of play of the Eurodac certificate renewal campaign**. The renewals were done in three phases during the summer of 2023, having all certificates renewed with a validity of 26 months. The next renewals will start in June 2025 for the Member States in the first phase.

The Agency briefed EAG on the **feedback received from Member States on the removal of unused domain names or domain names with outdated configuration**. By the time of the meeting, feedback was still expected from some Member States who were urged to send information, as this is important for the management of EuroDomain mail relays.

The EAG adopted a positive opinion on the **updated Eurodac Operator Manual**. eu-LISA highlighted the main changes to the manual, that included *i.a.* a data protection statement, underlining that it is strictly prohibited to use data from the Production environment for testing and/or training purposes. Member States requested to receive more information from eu-LISA whenever the Eurodac central system is unavailable.

The Agency presented to the EAG also its planning work and invited its members to contribute to the **draft Single Programming Document 2025-2027** to be distributed in October. The Annual Work Programme 2025 has four Eurodac-related activities: business as usual (maintenance, including DubliNet) and three projects. Legislation regarding Eurodac Recast implementation and DubliNet Recast implementation is pending.

The next EAG meeting will take place as a hybrid one on **28 November 2023** in Strasbourg.
