

# ECA: Use of Information Systems for Border Control Can be More Efficient

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## News

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ISSN: 1862-6947

<https://eu crim.eu>

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The EU's information systems in the field of internal security supporting border controls are well designed; however, more efforts are needed to ensure completeness and timely entry of the data. This is the main outcome of the [European Court of Auditor's special report No 20/2019](#). The report examined whether the design and use of the major information systems utilised to perform border checks in the Schengen area are efficient. The systems at issue are:

- The Schengen Information System (SIS);
- The Visa Information System (VIS);
- Eurodac (European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database – fingerprint comparison system);
- The European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur);
- The Passenger Name Record systems (PNR).

The auditors found that border guards increasingly use and rely on these systems. The efficiency of border checks, however, is hampered because some data is currently not included in the systems, while other data is either incomplete or not entered in a timely manner.

Furthermore, it was found that the systems are not used in a uniform way – including a discrepancy between the number of Schengen visas issues and the number of visa checks – which indicates that use of the information in the systems is not systematic.

Regarding the completeness of data, one problem is that officers often receive hundreds of results – mainly false positives – when they check names. This not only impacts efficiency, but also increases the risk of overlooking real hits.

Long delays in putting IT solutions for surveillance and passenger records into practice are another critical point, preventing border authorities from sharing important information efficiently.

The ECA made the following recommendations to the Commission:

- Promote further trainings, especially as regards the use of SIS II and VIS;
- Shorten the time to correct weaknesses identified during Schengen evaluations;
- Analyse discrepancies in visa checks;
- Improve data quality control procedures;
- Reduce delays in data entry.

The Commission provided statements to the ECA's findings and recommendations. The response is annexed to the report.

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**Co-funded by  
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