

# AFIS for SIS II to be deployed this month

The Schengen Information System (SIS II) is a highly efficient large-scale information system that supports law enforcement cooperation and external border control throughout the Member States of the European Union (and Schengen Associated Countries).

The SIS II enables competent authorities, for example police officers and border guards, to enter and consult alerts on specific categories of wanted or missing persons and objects.

SIS II acts as an information sharing system between all the countries that use it and holds information in the form of "alerts". Each *Person alert* can contain biographical information such as, name, date of birth, gender and nationality. In addition to this, SIS II can also store fingerprints and photographs of the person an alert is related to.

Although the legal basis of SIS II permits the storage of fingerprints, they have only been used so far to confirm the identity of a person who has been identified following a check on his/her name and/or date of birth. Though this feature has been useful, the real added value of fingerprints is to be able to identify a person from his/her fingerprints alone.

In order for this to occur, an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) is necessary and is now ready to go live.

## **How is an AFIS used?**

Many people, sought after by the police, can be evasive about their identity and tend to use multiple aliases. Some subjects of SIS II alerts for "refusal of entry" have even sought to legally change their identity to avoid detection. AFIS provides the technology to identify a person on the basis of fingerprints held in SIS II.

## **What is the purpose?**

The SIS II central system database already contains many thousands of fingerprint records, but there was no fingerprint search capability at the central level. The SIS II AFIS allows all Member States to leverage on a centralized policing-oriented database. As such, it will strengthen the fight against crime within Europe.

## **Who is part of the AFIS Project?**

The Project Management Forum (PMF) is responsible for managing technical implementation at both national and central system levels. Its members are:

- The eu-LISA AFIS team,

- National Project Managers of all the SIS II Member States,
- Representatives of the European Commission,
- SIS II contractor – responsible for the design and delivery of the AFIS to eu-LISA.

The first PMF meeting took place in June 2016, followed by 15 further regular meetings, that gathered the end-users from the Member States and Associated Countries. Training sessions for the Member States has already been delivered in Strasbourg and via web-based seminars.

#### **When will it be implemented?**

The Phase 1 Go-live will take place on 5 March 2018. It will introduce the biometric search capability into SIS II. Ten Member States (AT, CH, DE, LI, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT & SI) have confirmed that they will be ready to use the biometric queries from day 1. Within 2018, it is expected that other Member States will also use this functionality offered by the Central System.

Further work will take place to develop the AFIS' capabilities in Phase 2 which will be implemented in 2019.

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## [Recording of the week: being uncouth at drama school](#)

*This week's selection comes from Holly Gilbert, Cataloguer of Digital Multimedia Collections.*

Mother and son, Radhika and Omar, talk about Omar's experience of attending a drama course at LAMDA – The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. Omar describes the assumptions that he feels people at LAMDA have made about him as a mixed-race East Londoner and they discuss the experiences of some of his fellow students as well as one of the teachers on his course. They emphasise the importance of learning from people who are different to us and not making judgments based on stereotypes. They also discuss the difference in attitudes towards career choices between Omar, who is a second generation immigrant, and Radhika, who moved to England from Sri Lanka when she was 8 years old.

[The Listening Project\\_Radhika and Omar](#)



This recording is part of [The Listening Project](#), an audio archive of conversations recorded by the BBC and archived at the British Library. The full conversation between Radhika and Omar can be found [here](#).

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## [The twin deficits](#)

For several years the UK economic debate has been fixated by the state deficit and borrowing requirement, and has largely ignored the balance of payments deficit. I presume this is because of official adherence to all EU rules and guidance, so they have been trying to get our budget deficit back down to Maastricht compliance levels at under 3% of GDP. There is celebration this month because at last we have got there thanks to a further surge in tax revenues that outperform the usual Treasury pessimistic forecasts that delight in getting it wrong.

I have not been worried about the state deficit for sometime, ever since Mr

Brown found out that the UK state can literally print money to pay its bills. Mr Osborne, originally a critic of this in opposition, then discovered its charms in office as well. It turned out to have no adverse consequences on shop price inflation, though of course it caused massive price inflation in government bonds, because it was accompanied by severe pressure against bank lending to the private sector to avoid an inflationary blow off. I always adjust the outstanding debt by the £435 bn the state has bought up, as this is in no sense a debt we owe. So our government borrowing level (excluding future state pensions which some here worry about and which have always been pay as you go out of taxation) is modest by world standards at around 65% of GDP, and at current interest rates is affordable.

Most of the state debt we owe to each other anyway. The government owes it to taxpayers who own the debt in their pension funds and insurance policies. The state can always raise enough money to pay the domestic bills backed by the huge powers to tax, and as we have just seen when credit expansion and inflation are low it can also use liquidity created by the monetary authorities.

The deficit I worry about much more is our external deficit. That is the one where we have to buy foreign currencies to pay for it. It is the reason why we keep selling some of our best property and business assets to foreigners, and why we have to borrow abroad. Running at around 5% of GDP it is high by world standards, and means we gradually get into more debt or sell more assets to keep up with it. When you owe money to foreigners they may not accept money created to pay them off but will need real assets.

One quarter of the payments deficit is the government's payments abroad for EU contributions and overseas aid. Stopping the EU payments halves that, and spending more of our overseas aid on the refugees who come to the UK here in the UK would help as well. Under overseas aid rules you can include the first year costs of refugees and migrants in your own country, and supplies and capital items you need to provide aid abroad. So lets make sure where appropriate we do spend the aid money at home or in the country we are helping, rather than buying imports from other advanced countries with it. One of the big wins from Brexit should be the opportunity to slash the big deficit in fish and food which is an important part of the burden of this overseas drag on our finances. I want the Treasury to take the balance of payments deficit more seriously and to act as a counter to those who want us to give more money away to the EU to perpetuate this large imbalance.

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**[Green Party calls on Government to ring fence funding for women's refuges](#)**



# Green Party

4 March 2018

**\* Amelia Womack, Green deputy leader, makes after first speaking out about her own experience of domestic abuse last year**

**\* Womack: "The Government is removing women's final safety net in their hour of greatest need"**

The Green Party has criticised the Government for "placing women's lives in danger" with its plans to change funding for refuges [1].

Amelia Womack, deputy leader of the Green Party, will call on the Government to ring-fence funding for refuges and other forms of short-term supported housing in the welfare system.

Womack will make the call in her speech to Green Party Spring Conference in Bournemouth today [2], after first speaking out about her own experiences of domestic abuse in June last year [3].

Amelia Womack, deputy leader of the Green Party, is expected to say:

"This Government claims to care about women – yet it's placing their lives in danger with plans to remove refuges from the welfare system. Removing women's final safety net when they are in their hour of greatest need.

"This is a matter of life and death. The Government must prove it is serious about women's safety and ring-fence funding for refuges."

At Autumn Conference in October last year Womack launched the Green Party's campaign to make misogyny a hate crime, which has since gathered cross-party support [4].

Womack is expected to say:

"When I shared my experience of domestic violence for the first time last year, I never imagined I'd be part of starting what quickly became such a defining and extraordinary moment in the story of women.

"From MeToo to TimesUp, it feels like we're hitting a tipping point that none of us saw coming this time last year. I'm so proud to have played a small part in giving other women the confidence to come forward and speak out about their experiences of misogyny.

"From the sweeping red walkways of Hollywood premieres to the corridors of

the House of Commons, the carpets things have been swept under are now well and truly being shaken out.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/nov/26/womens-lives-at-risk-funding-changes-refuges-charities>
2. Green Party Spring Conference  
The Green Party Spring Conference will see members from across the country come together to hear from the party’s leaders, vote on policy and take part in discussion and debate on topics from Brexit to climate change.  
\* Leaders’ speech by Jonathan Bartley and Caroline Lucas: Saturday 3 March, 2pm  
\* Deputy Leaders speech by Amelia Womack: Sunday 4th March, 3pm, via Facebook Live from March4Women in London  
\* Location: Bournemouth International Centre, Exeter Rd, Bournemouth, BH2 5BH
3. <https://www.stylist.co.uk/people/amelia-womack-green-party-manifesto-domestic-violence-abuse-interview/34153>
4. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/amber-rudd-misogyny-hate-crime-change-law-prejudice-women-home-secretary-greens-mps-charities-a8196786.html>

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