

VIS: Operational Training – Advanced Level (L3)

On 21-22 March, the first cycle of eu-LISA VIS Operational Training was concluded with the “Operational Training – Advanced Level (L3)” training course that took place in Strasbourg, France. The 3-part cycle started in 2017 with Entry Level (L1) and continued with Intermediate Level (L2) in January 2018.

The aim of the training was to improve the participants’ general usage of the VIS system by providing updated information on VIS technical and business topics. Over the two-day course the following subjects were touched upon:

- Overview of the Change Management Procedure,
- Incident Management,
- VIS testing,
- VIS in operation,
- BMS,
- VIS business aspects
- Data quality,
- VIS Mail,
- The future of VIS and NIST.

Seventeen participants from fifteen different countries took part in the training that was targeted at national IT operators, Single Point of Contact (SPoC) managers and senior operational staff. The course ended with an assessment test and many participants were awarded the eu-LISA “VIS Expert” certificate.

The course satisfaction rate was 82% with the average score given by participants being 4.1 out of 5. The participants described the course as ‘going in-depth’. The topics particularly liked were: data quality, BMS and the future of VIS.



This training session was the last, for now, in the line of VIS Operational Training courses delivered in the context of eu-LISA Development Training Program for IT Operators (DTPITO). IT operators can progress further by obtaining the appropriate instruction skills and methodologies to be able to train their national peers. For this purpose eu-LISA offers a “Train the Trainer – SIS II, VIS, Eurodac for IT Operators” which gathers national IT Operators from all three systems. The next scheduled course will take place on 13-14 June in Tallinn, Estonia.

A new cycle of VIS DTPITO is scheduled to start in November 2018 with “Operational Training -Entry Level (L1)”.

[Vacancy notice – Senior Policy Officer – Corporate Finance and Reporting profile \(extended deadline: 23/04/2018\)](#)

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April 2018

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Overview of the main subjects to be discussed at meetings of the Council of the EU over the next two weeks.

General Affairs Council (cohesion policy), Thursday 12 April

The Council will discuss the future of Cohesion Policy post-2020. It will also be informed on action taken to strengthen the communication of cohesion policy and adopt conclusions on the delivery and implementation of cohesion policy post-2020.

Foreign Affairs, Monday 16 April

The Foreign Affairs Council will discuss Russia, the Western Balkans, Iran (including on the Iran nuclear deal, the JCPOA) and the future of external financing instruments. The Council is expected to adopt a number of decisions and conclusions without debate, including Council conclusions on Syria, ahead of the second Brussels conference on Supporting the future of Syria and the region (24-25 April 2018).

Agriculture and Fisheries, Monday 16 April

The Council will discuss ways to **reduce food waste** in the EU and a new plan for the management of **fish stocks in the Western Waters**.

It will also hear a presentation on a draft directive to fight **unfair trading practices in the food supply chain**.

General Affairs, Tuesday 17 April

The Council will discuss amendments to the 1976 Electoral Act and the state of play regarding the rule of law in Poland. The Commission will present its enlargement package to the ministers.

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EU supports South Africa to boost job creation, small business development and improved governance with €62 million

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica** is visiting South Africa, where he is meeting the Minister of Finance, Mr Nhlanhla Nene, and the Minister for Small Business Development, Ms Lindiwe Zulu.

On the occasion, Commissioner **Mimica** said: *“Ten years after the establishment of a strategic partnership with South Africa, the European Union remains very much engaged with the country as a crucial regional and global player. We are looking forward to enhancing our relations with President Ramaphosa and his administration. The fight against unemployment, poverty and inequality are at the heart of our common agenda and I am happy to launch two programmes, worth a total €62 million, in line with those priorities, during my visit. We look forward to continuing our joint work beyond 2020 with new and innovative approaches.”*

The new EU programme ‘Employment Promotion through small, micro and medium enterprises Support Programme for South Africa’, worth €52 million, will help to boost job creation in South Africa by supporting the country’s National Development Plan 2030, which foresees that 90% of new jobs in the country should come from small and emerging business by 2030. Implemented by the South African Department for Small Business Development, the new programme will help reduce the cost of doing business for small enterprises, improve business, production and marketing skills, increase access to funding by de-risking enterprise development lending and keeping the interest rate at reasonable levels.

The new Enhancing Legislature Oversight Programme of €10 million will strengthen democracy and good governance through effective execution of the core mandate of the National Parliament and the Provincial Legislatures to legislate, exercise oversight and ensure public participation.

Commissioner **Mimica**’s visit takes place a month after President Ramaphosa’s new Government was nominated. As well as meeting Ministers Nene and Zulu, Commissioner **Mimica** will also meet with EU Member States representatives and development stakeholders. He will visit an EU-funded project that develops unemployed mothers’ skills in retailing, as well as the historical site of Liliesleaf that played an important role in the life of Nelson Mandela whose centenary is celebrated this year.

Background

The EU is a longstanding partner of South Africa, and has long supported the

anti-apartheid cause. Governmental cooperation then started with the advent of democracy in 1994 and it rapidly intensified, leading to the establishment of a Strategic Partnership in 2007.

Currently, bilateral cooperation with South Africa (2014-2020) focuses on 3 focal sectors: employment creation, education, training and innovation, as well as building a capable and developmental State. The total EU allocation for this period is €268 million.

For More Information

[DEVCO – South Africa](#)

[EU Delegation to South Africa](#)