



DEBATING EUROPE
PROVIDING EXPERTISE

Ready for Schengen?

An indulgent pass

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1. CONTEXT

The President of Romania said whilst meeting with Romanian ambassadors at Cotroceni Palace on 1st September 2010 that the country's top current priority was its accession to the Schengen Area. Various government representatives had previously reiterated this several times. The target date set by the Executive for Romania's accession to Schengen is 27th March 2011, but this could be delayed if the requirements of the accession agreement are not met. Recently, extra pressure has emerged on Romania to solve two acute problems that exist nowadays: the issue of social non-inclusion of Roma population and the anti-corruption issue. Thus, seen as a last instrument of pressure on Romania and Bulgaria many voices at European level have asked for these issues to be linked to Romania's accession to the Schengen Area..

For Bucharest and Sofia, accession to the Schengen Area in 2011 represents more of a political question with a psychological impact rather than being an economic or social one. The quality of life of Romanians and Bulgarians will not improve after their accession to the Schengen Area, but the fact that they will cross the land border without having to stop the car will remove some of the complexes and the impression of being second-rate European citizens.

The Schengen Zone is an area of free movement in Europe, originally based on an intergovernmental agreement between five states (France, West Germany and Benelux) signed on June 14th, 1985 in the town of Schengen in Luxembourg. The member states of this Area removed internal border controls so that it is possible to cross the border between any two such states without ID documents and without being stopped for inspection (border checkpoints are semi-removed). The Schengen Agreement, together with its implementation Convention signed 5 years later, were incorporated into EU law under the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997). At present, the Schengen Area includes 22 EU states plus 3 non-member states: Switzerland, Norway and Iceland. As for the United Kingdom and Ireland, they benefit from a special clause that allows them to remain outside the Schengen Area indefinitely.

Since 2007, Romania has had to implement provisions concerning the protection of personal data, the Schengen Information System (SIS), air, land and sea borders as well as concerning police cooperation and visa requirements. All these chapters of the "Schengen package" are being exhaustively analysed and only when it is considered that all criteria have been met will a favourable opinion of the evaluation group be provided. It is said that the analysis of Romania's compliance with remaining chapters is lagging behind, but that its final conclusions are to generally be favourable to say the least.

Should its candidacy be accepted, Romania would be the second largest land border in the entire Schengen Area (2,070 km long) after the border between Finland and Sweden and Russia, as well as being the most difficult to protect against migration and illegal trafficking, according to our assessment. There will be no checks on the border with Hungary and Bulgaria

and the borders with Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine will become external borders of the EU. Romania will have to ensure the security of all 500 million citizens of the European Union. Thus, the pressure put on the Romanian institutions responsible for security will be increased. For this purpose, the European Union has created a financial instrument of temporary support to finance “operations on the new EU external borders to implement the Schengen acquis and border control”. This financial instrument, called the *Schengen Facility*, accounts for EUR 602,469,345. The objectives envisaged and the procurement necessary for the operations are extremely complex and are dealt with further on in this report.

The Romanian Centre for European Policies monitored for 6 months the activity of the Romanian authorities related to the preparation of Romania’s accession to the Schengen scheduled to take place in March 2011. The civic monitoring was aimed at achieving the official commitments assumed by Romania in the working documents named *Schengen Action Plans* and are carried out on an annual basis by the Schengen Self-Assessment Commission, which operates within the Ministry of Administration and Interior.

The purpose of this civic monitoring is to bring the status of Romania's preparedness to join the Schengen Area at the specified date to the attention of the European public in general and the Romanian public in particular.

The civic monitoring projects are being conducted in Romania and Bulgaria (both candidate states having 2010 as accession target to the Schengen Area). An almost „mirror” research is being conducted at the same time by the Open Society Institute in Sofia.

The main subject of monitoring should have been the implementation/achievement of the measures included in the **Schengen Action Plan** for adopting the Schengen acquis communautaire for **2010**. Since the Schengen Action Plan- revised in 2010- was and is still strictly guarded by the Ministry of Administration and Interior (for unexplainable reasons), we followed up on the progress of the activities in the revised 2009 Plan. Furthermore, following this plan enables us to see if the self-assumed deadlines last year were met or not, because the 2010 plan certainly has other deadlines than those originally set. This will therefore give us an idea of the effectiveness of the public administration with responsibilities in this field.

2. METHODOLOGY

The civic monitoring was focused on two aspects:

1. Romania’s progress (status) with a view to the preparedness in the following fields:
 - a. Borders (air, land, sea)
 - b. Visas
 - c. Immigration
 - d. Police cooperation

- e. Judicial cooperation
 - f. Schengen Information System
 - g. Data protection
2. Absorption of funds allocated through the Schengen Facility:
- a. Analysis of the objectives funded from the Schengen Facility;
 - b. Level of absorption of allocated funds;

We evaluated the activities/measures included in the Schengen Action Plan based on a four-level scope which we find to be appropriate for this approach:

minus (-)		plus +	
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented

Whereupon:

Not implemented = the measures/activities are not implemented and have no chance of being finalized on time in the assumed form, agreed upon with the European partners;

Rather not implemented = the measures/activities have begun, but we estimate that they will not be finalized on time;

Rather implemented= the measures/activities are almost implemented and have a good chance of being finalized on time (most of them have already missed their implementation deadline at least once);

Implemented = the measures/activities have been finalized in a timely manner, or respecting the time frameworks (until September).

The expert evaluation was based on:

- The compliance of the Romanian legislation with the Schengen *acquis* (normative acts/norms for application etc.);
- The existence of the necessary infrastructure for the fulfilment of the responsibilities assumed and the implementation of Schengen *acquis*;
- The construction of the necessary administrative capacity (especially in professional training);
- The financing necessary for the implementation of the Schengen requirements (Schengen Facility, national co-financing and other EU financing instruments) having been ensured

Methodology applied throughout the 5 monitoring months consisted in:

1. Review of documents: identification of secondary data, reports, statements, strategic documents issued by the relevant institutions, including European institutions [Annex I – contains the list of documents under review].
2. Review of content (unclassified information) concerning the legislative and institutional framework, evaluation reports, information published by the Schengen (institutional) self-assessment Commission and the institutions with prerogatives in the field of accession to the Schengen Area, as well as statements made at administrative and/or political level.
3. Monitoring of the activity of the political and administrative authorities with responsibilities for the Schengen accession depending on indicators such as: institutional framework, coordination, procedures, and effectiveness in carrying out the tasks, transparency and accountability related to primary activities (unclassified information) and the achievement of objectives.
4. In-depth interviews with representatives of political and administrative experts in the field.
5. Requests for public information based on Law no. 544/2001 on free access to the information of public interest. [Annex III – contains the list of institutions which were requested to provide information].

The collection of primary data (from official sources) for civic monitoring has generally been difficult; therefore secondary sources were predominantly used. The initial methodology involved the development of a partnership agreement with MIA under which the experts within the project can assist in the self-assessment Schengen Commission meetings, thereby granting access to primary sources. MAI refused to reach an agreement despite its Bulgarian counterpart allowing members of civil society to access the work of the intergovernmental commission with responsibilities for the accession to the Schengen Area in Bulgaria.

Specialised literature outlines three situations in which public institutions choose not to report: (1) When they come under great political pressure –thus neglecting steps taken by civil society when it comes to transparency and accountability, (2) when they fail to comply with the obligations assumed towards its own citizens in due time– when hiding information or tergiversate communication if things go wrong and (3) when the information they are working with is classified.

In our approach we have come across all three communication barriers, especially where the measures and actions were not included within the chart provided by the planning documents. Institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (where the work largely carried out) or the Ministry of Justice (with a lesser degree of responsibility but fulfilled on time) responded promptly and in full to our approach.

For relevance, we chose to monitor key aspects of the accession process which, by their default, can have major negative effects on the achievement of the final objective: accession to the Schengen Area in March 2011. Therefore, we did not unnecessarily over-burden the report with measures such as the signature of cooperation agreements between the various local institutions and appointments or various delegations, which can easily be achieved.

3. SCHENGEN EVALUATION PROCESS

Romania set the date of 27 March 2011 as a deadline for its entrance into the Schengen Area. To this end, Romania has to undergo an evaluation process, entailing a number of steps. Up until now, our country has finalised two of the mentioned steps:

- Sending the *Declarations of Readiness* with regard to the accession to the Schengen Area;
- Filling in and sending the Schengen questionnaire.

We are now at the point of finalizing **the third and most important step**: the evaluation visits, which verify the Schengen acquis implementation status on site.

During 2009 and 2010 the following Schengen evaluation visits were organised: Police Cooperation (29 23-29 March 2009); Protection of Personal Data (29 April – 1 May 2009); Visas (2-11 June 2009); Sea Borders (3-7 September 2009), Air Borders (15-18 November 2009) and Land Borders (26 March – 1 April 2010).

The last evaluation visit in Romania will be the Schengen Information System/ SIRENE which will take place between November and December 2010.

The Schengen evaluation rapports corresponding to the missions undergone up until now have been approved by the *Schengen Evaluation* work group in Brussels. Romania has reached an advanced status with regard to the implementation of the Schengen acquis and is for the most part ready to adhere to the Schengen Area.

The evaluation reports contain recommendations in the fields of legislation, procedure and infrastructure, which Romania has to implement before its adherence to the Schengen space.

From the moment each evaluation report is approved, the Schengen Department of MIA monitors the implementation of these recommendations and reports on their implementation status to the Schengen Evaluation Group in Brussels on a monthly basis.

4. SENSITIVE ISSUES

Technical Issues

1. Schengen Information System (SIS)

The Schengen Information System (SIS) was established as one of the main compensatory measures for the removal of border control, prevention and prosecution of crimes, as well as the issuance of visas and residence permits. SIS is a joint database for law enforcement, which currently contains over 32 million records made available by the 25 participating countries. The number of alerts increases by about 3% each month. The SIS is made up of a national system (N. SIS) in each Schengen Member State and a central system (C. SIS). All national systems are connected online to the central system via an online secure communications network.

SIS has quickly begun to play an important role in fighting crime in Europe and in external border controls due to the modern technology of the information they receive, the accessibility for law enforcement authorities and close cooperation between the national SIRENE offices (Supplementary Information Request at the National Entry). These represent a unique contact point for the national law enforcement authorities in SIS and also in the Schengen Area police cooperation. Their main task is to process the “alerts”.

The participating countries enter data called “alerts” concerning wanted or missing persons, lost or stolen goods, as well as prohibitions on entry. This is immediately and directly accessible to all police officers carrying out street interventions as well as other officials and law enforcement authorities needing that information to carry out their tasks of law and order enforcement and fighting crime.

The Schengen Information System is not without controversy. It is estimated that approximately 500,000 computers may access the (private) information in the system safely. However, the large number of computers that may get infected with *Trojan horse* viruses and the large number of operators (police staff) make it vulnerable. The National Authority for the Surveillance of Personal Data Processing (NASPDP) has played an important role in the process of auditing this informational system.

In this context, the Romanian authorities have had to manage a complex process that involved the development of software applications, hardware procurement and preparation of national alerts that should be entered into the system (selection, translation, validation and insertion of data) as well as the setting up of the infrastructure necessary for the SIRENE Office.

In essence, these alerts come from every corner of Europe and should reach far and wide in Romania wherever there are police stations. **However, MAI and STS - the institutions responsible for the acquisition and implementation of the system - are late in putting it into**

operation. From the data collected by CRPE for August, it appears that computer equipment was only purchased for big cities. It's hard to believe that the computer system will be ready by the set date or the expected date of accession to the Schengen Area – 27th March 2011.

The Ministry of Administration and Interior is aware of this and has proposed SISone4ALL as an alternative solution to connect to the central SIS system. This is a previous version of the SIS II system (a change made by Portugal SIS 1 +), which Romania intended to join “directly”. Therefore, Romania's proposal is to repeat the experience of other countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and others) which connected to the SIS via the solution provided by Portugal.

Nevertheless, Romania has successfully completed one step in the accession process. Council Decision no. 356/29.06.2010 adopted in Brussels stipulates the application of the Schengen acquis referring to the SIS for Romania and Bulgaria, which allows Romania to have access to and provide SIS data.

The last evaluation visit which our country will be subject to is the visit intended for the Schengen Information System/SIRENE and is scheduled for November / December 2010. SIS is essential for the accession to the Schengen Area in March 2011. The decision to set up a new visit to re-evaluate this Area would, most probably, postpone the deadline to the end of 2011.

2. Air borders: Bucharest, Henri Coanda and Timisoara, Traian Vuia

The physical separation of passenger flow order checkpoints with heavy traffic was one of the requirements laid down in the Chapter on air borders. International airports must have terminals to clearly separate passenger flows for Schengen and non-Schengen flights respectively. Everything related to border security requires major investment in infrastructure. The airports assessed on the occasion of the Schengen evaluation on air borders were Otopeni and Timisoara.

The most important measure to be achieved in terms of infrastructure up until the moment of the accession is the completion of the construction works necessary for the separation of the Schengen and non-Schengen passenger flows and for ensuring the appropriate facilities for the task of border control. In the two airports concerned, or at least at Henri Coanda airport, there is sufficient space for the development and separation of the passenger flows. The “wrong” decision was taken in 2008 (PNL government) when it was decided to build new terminals largely than to refurbish the existing space. It was thought that 3 years would have been enough to add one new terminal to both airports (including Bucharest – Baneasa). It was not sufficient, however, for the Romanian government which, as it is known, is very slow when it comes to building something from the local public money not monitored by the European monitoring structures. The construction of the terminals is not carried out with funds from the

Schengen Facility but rather with national funds managed by the Ministry of Transport- the ministry supervising airports.

In addition to the infrastructure, the commissioning of new terminals also requires other measures which cannot be implemented slapdash: legislative measures, staff training, and the implementation of procedures. The certification of international airports (a prerogative of the Ministry of Transport) that have regular flights to third countries depends on all of these. Since joining the Schengen Area, only certified airports will be able to operate extra-Schengen flights.

At present, it is unlikely that at least the new terminal of the Henri Coanda airport will be completed, equipped and certified on time. The Prime Minister evaluated work undertaken for the implementation of the Schengen standards at the Henri Coanda International Airport and concluded that the work had been 75% completed.

The only report that recommends that our country re-evaluate the situation is that on air borders. The re-evaluation is recommended only in areas where the international evaluators are not satisfied with the progress of the implemented measures. In re-evaluation a new chance is essentially given to the relevant country to take the necessary measures in rendering the infrastructure required for the implementation of the Schengen acquis operational. In case the evaluators are not satisfied with the progress of the measures / work / implementation of the acquis, the deadline at which a country joins the Schengen Area may be postponed.

The evaluation mission will take place in Romania in the period 15-17 November 2010 in order to verify if the technical standards are met; the works should therefore be finalised by that date.

3. Use of „Schengen priority” for unjustified spending of the public money

During the period of pre-accession to the European Union, Romanian politicians acquired the bad habit of justifying each measure they take, well-grounded or not, good or bad, with arguments like “this is an EU requirement” or “for European integration” etc. In the same manner, it was also used in order to justify the unwise spending of public money was also used the process of accession to Schengen. The Institute for Public Policies (IPP) requested that the Ministry of Administration and Interior to withdraw the draft Government Ordinance on the introduction of the electronic identity card, which had involved an “unnecessary” expenditure of at least EUR 30 million. The MAI reiterated the conditioning of the access to the Schengen Area on the adoption of these new cards (in the explanatory note), without any official document requiring the adoption of the new cards existing as a condition for access.

Political Issues

“I address you because I have some concerns about the future approaches concerning political considerations; I have concerns about the access to the Schengen Area” the Head of State said in July 2007.

Meanwhile, further burdened by domestic problems, President Basescu’s worries have grown.

1. Verification and Cooperation Mechanism in Justice

The Country Report in July criticises Romania for failing to comply with some of the benchmarks assumed under the Mechanism for Cooperation and Verification. Romania has been accused by the European Commission of failing to fulfil its obligations towards its European partners.

The European Commission reproached the Romanian authorities for the lack of political commitment in supporting the reform process. The EC invited Romania to take immediate steps and correct the law of the National Agency for Integrity’s legislation to be in line with the commitments made upon accession. Meanwhile, Romania has corrected the step back taken by reducing the responsibilities of ANI. The Commission also pointed out the lack of willingness to assume responsibilities for the benefit of reform at:

The level judicial review management;

Review of the competences of the High Court of Cassation and Justice for the purpose of unification of jurisprudence;

The need for in-depth reform of the judicial system concerning the organisation of the judicial inspections; issues related to human resources.

Both the President and the Prime Minister rejected the harsh statements according to which Romania fails to comply with its commitment in the Treaty of Accession.

Several European countries, including France, have declared through their representatives on several occasions that Romania's accession to the Schengen Area can be related to the Mechanism for Cooperation and Verification (MCV) on justice. Although there is no legal basis to make the connection between MCV and the Schengen accession, at a political level, the European Council can consequently postpone the entry into the Schengen Area both for Romania and Bulgaria.

2. The problem of social non-integration of the Roma

The 'Roma problem' re-emerged this year in France (after Italy and Spain in previous years). France went forward with the repatriation of the Roma illegal camps, offering them money in order to accept repatriation. Following the introduction of this policy, France was criticised by the European Commission, some members of the European Parliament and by some NGOs. In this context, the idea of connecting the issue of Roma social integration to the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen Area was put on the table. Pierre Lellouche, the French Secretary of State for External Affairs, mentioned the conditioning of Romania's accession to the Schengen Area with "a plan to integrate the Roma", an "emergency plan" in a number of public declarations. He did not specify, however, what such a plan should entail and how it should be carried out. The Romanian stance on the matter did not change: there is no link between the two issues – the Schengen accession process is an exclusively technical one, whereas the Roma issue is by nature a problem common to many states; a European problem.

Even if Romania is right in its argumentation, the accession process entails a calendar for fulfilling the technical requirements, as explained in this report. Therefore, surprises can appear at a political level. At the beginning of this process, there was no chapter referring to the Roma issue included in the accession requirements and the rules cannot at this point be changed based on the requests of one member state. But France can gather allies in the European Council and delay Romania's accession to the Schengen Area scheduled originally for March next year by emphasising Romania's delays in the implementation of the Schengen Action Plan measures or by drawing attention to the imperfections in its implementation of recommendations following each evaluation visit. In the governmental environment, the date mentioned for Romania's accession to the Schengen Area is around October 2010. In this equation, the European Parliament can only offer a consultative vote, since the decision is to be made by the Council.

3. The resignation of the Minister of Administration and Interior may lead to delays

Vasile Blaga, minister of Administration and Interior until September 2010, assumed the leadership position for the entire accession process. He personally undertook this target and put constant pressure on the other-twelve institutions with responsibilities in the Schengen process. The changes at the top of MAI may lead to delays inherent to any policy changes. The new minister needs time to understand what the Schengen accession is about and maybe even to understand the priority already assumed at a political level. At the moment, the completion of technical measures and our country's accession March 2010 depends on the maturity and administrative capacity of the line ministries involved and the progress of the process. After this political change, the Prime Minister immediately felt the need to insist on the subject, publicly declaring that if all the necessary technical measures would not be fully implemented on time, "heads would roll".

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Romania has reached an advanced stage in relation to its implementation of the Schengen acquis and is largely prepared to join the Schengen Area. The only report recommending the re-evaluation of our country is that on air borders.

The putting into operation of the Schengen Information System will not be completed on the originally-set deadline and in the original form. Romania proposes SISone4ALL as an alternative solution for the connection to the SIS central system. At this point, there is no confirmation as to whether the alternative proposed by Romania would be accepted or not.

There have been delays, with the deadlines set under various action plans having often been redefined and pushed ever closer to the expected date of accession. However, the process itself went well and Romania benefited from the experience and administrative skills developed in the (previous) process of joining the European Union.

There are delays related to the adoption of the legislation. Despite the adoption of the legislation required for the accession to the Schengen Area being easily motivated and justified, the legislation (already developed and completed) is still in the bureaucratic circuit of interministerial approvals. **However, Romania can complete the adoption of all normative acts which are still due on time - by the end of the year.**

In the first stage of the process, the MAI planned several activities, but failed in prioritising the actions in particular. Prioritisation became better once 2009 was drawing near and the Schengen evaluation visits began. We notice that there are many inconsistencies of the self-assumed deadlines in 2009.

Some of the delays are due to the instable character of the public sector: for example, MAI explained its refusal to provide us with the list of the public servants designated to be part of the Schengen Self-Assessment Commission, citing the argument that “the reorganization process currently affecting the institutions”.

Romania has reached an advanced stage in the implementation of the Schengen acquis and is largely prepared to join the Schengen Area.

In the current political context (justice problems/problem of Roma non-integration) it is likely that Brussels (Council of Europe) will pay great attention to the chapters that were not fulfilled and will be more demanding towards Romania than in the case of its accession to the European Union in 2007.

Political disorders at the level of the Ministry of Administration and Interior may lead to delays in the accession process.

To a large extent, Romania has 'done its homework' but is not worthy of a distinction. If, in this particular case, a pass equals a distinction, Romania will fail the Schengen exam. Romania depends on the backing of other European actors, as it also did in the case of the EU accession. At the time, the political context was favourable to its accession; today the political context may act detrimentally for Romania's interests.

5.2 Recommendations

For Romania:

- In order to avoid any political obstacles, Romania has to fulfil all the technical criteria which can still be finalised on time;
- The strict application of all recommendations following the evaluation visits. Even if six out of the seven evaluation visits have offered positive feedback, not implementing the recommendations made on these occasions can act as justification for the potential political decision of postponement. Romania does not only have to report the adoption of the required measures, but it also has to implement everything;
- It is paramount to make the Schengen accession process as transparent as possible. MAI has to communicate more and better. The larger the population segment aware of the efforts to join the Schengen Area, the bigger the pressure on all the other involved institutions (not just MAI) to respect the agreed terms;
- Swiftly unblock vacancies in the institutions where the EU Council recommended an enhanced administrative and control capacity; ensuring the necessary funds (from own budgetary resources) for public authorities in order to satisfy all the punctual recommendations following each of the evaluation visits;
- MAI and STS should focus on the timely finalisation of all the projects funded through the Schengen Facility which are currently underway and on making all the payments according to the set deadlines, so that these costs can be covered through the Schengen Facility.

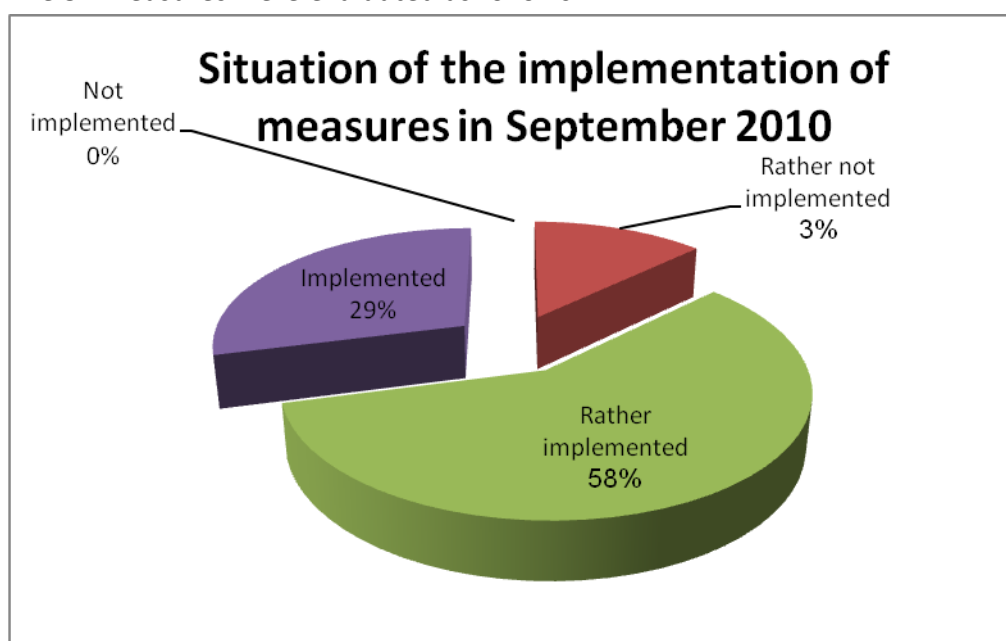
For the EU Council:

- Romania's (and Bulgaria's) evaluation should be made exclusively on the basis of their technical capabilities. If the safety of the citizens travelling inside the Schengen Area is not affected by the alternatives offered by the two countries, then these should be welcomed in the Schengen Area;
- The Schengen accession process should not be linked with adjacent (even if pressing) issues such as the Mechanism for Verification and Cooperation in the field of justice or the issue of Roma social integration;
- Reports issued after the monitoring visits (without the information which can endanger public safety) should be published in order to allow access to information which is, by nature, of public interest for both the citizens of the candidate countries and European citizens.

CURRENT STATUS OF ROMANIA'S ACCESSION PROCESS TO THE SCHENGEN AREA

CRPE has monitored 31 measures required under the Schengen Plan for Self-Assessment realised in 2009. (We have previously mentioned that MAI has classified the 2010 Plan. Moreover, MAI has sent it to the other relevant institutions under recorded delivery and under clear instructions not to make it public). A number of institutions have contributed to the creation of the Plan (and not only to the fulfilment of the measures included in it). This is visible from the non-unitary manner in which the Plan was conceived (both in terms of editing and structure). In order to ease our research, we have not monitored each operation and sub-operation presented in the Plan, but only the measures themselves.

The 31 measures were evaluated as follows:



I. BORDERS

The main institutions with responsibilities in this area are MAI and MFA.

Crossing internal borders

Measure: Carrying out the activities required for the removal of the checks on the future internal borders and removal of the obstacles restricting road traffic on the border checkpoints at the future internal border.			Deadline: At the date of the accession to the Schengen Area
Responsible institution: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: All measures required for the removal of checks on the future internal border and the			

removal of obstacles restricting the road traffic at the border checkpoints on the future internal border have been implemented.

Crossing external borders

Measure: Continuation of steps in order to conclude the small traffic agreements with third neighbouring countries.			Deadline: permanently
Responsible institution: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: Romania should have small traffic agreements with all non-UE neighbours: The Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Serbia. Although steps have been taken by the Romanian authorities, so far there has only been one such agreement signed- with the Republic of Moldova. The success of signing such agreements depends on the availability of neighbouring governments.			

Measure: The permanent evaluation and monitoring of the current status of actions provided in the documents for the implementation of the national Strategy for integrated management of the state border of Romania for 2007-2010 and the Action Plan respectively, as well as those for the Indicative Plan Schengen Facility 2007-2009			Deadline: permanently, until 31.12.2010
Responsible institution: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: This is a measure implemented by the body responsible for the management and administration of the accession process to the Schengen Area, the Schengen Department of MAI. It's pointless to include it in the Action Plan.			

Measure: Implementation of the Schengen requirements at all external land border checkpoints.			Deadline: 31.03.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Public Finance – National Customs Authority, local councils.			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comment: The necessary measures for strengthening the security and effectiveness of border control have been taken.			

Provisions for ports and airports

Airports

Measure: The putting in place of the airport passenger information system	Deadline: 01.09.2009
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Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Public Finance – National Customs Authority, local councils			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
	x		
Comments: It is difficult to estimate whether this measure has been achieved. The Action Plan specifies that: „in international airports, arrangements were made to separate passenger flows“. However, there are 15 international airports and the most important ones – Traian Vuia, Timisoara; Aurel Vlaicu, Bucharest and Henri Coanda, Bucharest – still have infrastructure improvement projects under way and do not currently operate according to the Schengen requirements.			

Measure: Physical separation between intra and extra-Schengen passenger flows.			Deadline: 31.12.2009
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, local Councils			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
	x		
Comments: MAI stated that “The measures aimed at ensuring the specific infrastructure for the performance of control according to the Schengen Catalogue have been taken, including those aimed at the separation of the passenger flows.” The most important airports– Traian Vuia, Timisoara; Aurel Vlaicu, Bucharest Baneasa and Henri Coanda, Bucharest – have not completed infrastructure improvement projects and do not operate according to Schengen requirements to date..			

Sea and river ports

Measure: Separation of passenger flows in ports where there are border checkpoints open for intra and extra-Schengen, international traffic, according to the provisions of the Schengen Convention. This includes ensuring the infrastructure required for conducting the border checks according to the Schengen Catalogue.			Deadline: 31.12.2009
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		x	
Comment:			

Introduction of the biometric data in the travel documents

Measure: (1) Extension of the system for the issuing and management of biometric	Deadline: (1) 31.10.2009
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passports for the entire country. (2) Introduction of biometric data in travel documents issued to the beneficiaries of a form of protection in the country.			(2) 31.12.2009
Responsible institutions: National Printing House Company, Ministry of Administration and Interior.			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: The system for the issuing and management of biometric passports has been extended all over the country, including for foreign benefitting from a form of protection in Romania.			

II. VISAS

Common visa policy

Objective: The full harmonisation of Romanian national visa policy with EU policy.			Deadline: not specified
Responsible institutions:			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: The legislative steps aimed at the implementation of the Schengen acquis in this field are set to be completed – the related legislative package is in the process of ministerial approval.			

Measure: Introduction of a visa application form in the case of non-recognised travel documents.			Deadline: 01.08.2009
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Administration and Interior, National Printing House Company			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: The documents on which the Schengen acquis is based or which are otherwise related to it are binding and applicable in Bulgaria and Romania as from the date of accession. The technical specifications of the model form for the visa application form (classified as secret by the EU) were provided to the MFA by the European Commission. The manufacturing of the forms for the application of the loose-leaf visa is carried out on an exclusive basis by the National Printing House Company. The MFA sent the security features and the technical specifications given by the European Commission in order to produce the required forms to the National Printing House Company, which has already printed and distributed several copies to the consular offices.			

Measure: The Amendment of the law on foreigners so as to introduce the concept of a uniform visa valid in the Schengen Area (applicable after accession to Schengen).			Deadline: 30.06.2010
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Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Administration and Interior, National Printing House Company			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: In the process of completion. The draft laws exist but are currently awaiting ministerial approval.			

Common visa policy

Measure: Full implementation of the provisions of the Common Consular Instructions/Community Code on Visas.			Deadline: at the date of accession to Schengen Area
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comment: The MFA sent information related to the entry into force of the Community Code on Visas to the diplomatic missions and consular offices of Romania Information concerning the beginning of the talks between COM and SM for the preparation of the Manual of Procedures for the application of the Community Code. According to the Schengen General Department of the MFA – “Romania will comply, as soon as they become applicable, with the provisions of the Community Code on Visas adopted under the Regulation (CE) 810/2009”.			

Measure: The appropriate amendment of the legislation on foreigners in Romania in order to establish the requirement that upon applying for a visa, foreigners must have medical insurance covering any costs related to repatriation due to medical reasons, medical or emergency assistance and/or emergency treatment in hospital reasons costs.(Council Decision 2004/17/EC)			Deadline: 30.06.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: The MFA sent information related to the entry into force of the Community Code on Visas to the diplomatic missions and consular offices of Romania. Information was also sent concerning the beginning of the talks between COM and SM on preparing the Manual of Procedures for applying Community Code. According to the Schengen General Department of the MFA– “Romania will comply, as soon as they become applicable, with the provisions of the Community Code on Visas adopted under the Regulation (CE) 810/2009.”			

Measure: The amendment of legislation on foreigners in Romanian in order	Deadline: 30.06.2010
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to introduce the provisions related to the extension of uniform visas. Common principles of cancellation, revocation and shortening of the validity period of the uniform visa (Decision of the Executive Committee [SCH/Com-ex (93)21] and Decision of the Executive Committee [SCH/Com-ex (93)24]) are thus also introduced.			
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comment: The draft Law on the amendment and supplement of certain normative acts on foreigners in Romania was posted on the website of MAI with a view to achieving a preliminary institutional consultation.			

Measure: Adoption of a normative act concerning the establishment, organisation and operation of the National Visa Information System.			Deadline: 30.09.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: The Law on the establishment, organisation and operation of the National Visa Information System was published in the Official Gazette no. 498 of 19th July 2010.			

Measure: Providing all consular offices in countries with high migration risk with specific types of equipment for the detection of false and falsified documents that correspond to a high risk level; in accordance with the acquis in the field.			Deadline: 30.09.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs;			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: Contract RO FSCH 12.IV.3 „Detectors of false or falsified documents“: have been delivered to the diplomatic missions and consular offices of Romania abroad. Consular offices in states with high migration risk have been provided with specific equipment for the detection of false and falsified documents that correspond to a high risk level; in accordance with the acquis in the field.			

Measure: Implementation of the national component of the Visa Information System (VIS)			Deadline: 30.06.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs;			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented

Measure: Introduction of the concept of visa with limited territorial validity for foreigners into Romanian legislation.			Deadline: 30.06.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comment: The draft Law on the amendment and supplement of certain normative acts on foreigners in Romania was posted on the MAI website with a view to achieving the procedure of preliminary institutional consultation.			
		X	
Comments: For the contract RO FSCH 11.1 „VIS Implementation, VISION” was designated as the successful tenderer with whom the contract was signed. According to the contract, the implementation period of the contract lasts until 30.09.2010. The Schengen Division within the Ministry of Administration and Interior stated that “specific activities are carried out according to the schedule assumed together with the foreign experts”.			

Visa with limited territorial validity

Representation

Measure: The amendment of legislation on foreigners so that Romania will be able to issue visas for a Schengen state. Provisions will also be introduced to allow a Schengen state to issue visas on behalf of Romania under the terms laid down by the <i>acquis</i> .			Deadline: 30.06.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: The draft Law on the amendment and supplement of certain normative acts on foreigners in Romania was posted on the MAI website of MAI with a view to achieving preliminary institutional consultation.			

Cooperation, exchange of information and statistics

Measure: The amendment of the Agreement between the government of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the People’s Republic of China on mutual exemption of visas and visa fees to eliminate these facilities and only maintain the exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and service passports.	Deadline: 31.12.2009
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Responsible institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: Consultations were held with the Chinese party throughout 2009 and 2010. On the occasion of their visit to MFA HQ (DGAC) in May 2010, a verbal Note was handed to the Chinese party containing the amendments to the Agreement. The response of the Chinese party is pending.			

III. IMMIGRATION

Measure: The amendment and supplement of the government's Emergency Ordinance no. 194/2002 on foreigners in Romania, republished, further amended and supplemented in order to harmonise it with art. 19-21 of the Schengen Convention.			Deadline: 30.06.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
	X		
Comments: The draft to amend GEO no. 194/2002 was returned with comments and suggestions by the DJ as well as those of other MAI structures consulted. The comments should be urgently considered by the bodies involved in a working group formed of RIO, MFA, and Border Police Inspectorate representatives.. The final form of the draft does not yet exist and, following drafting, should be introduced in the legislation process. The MAI stated that "the legislative efforts aimed at the translation of the Schengen acquis in the field are underway – the legislative package is in the process of ministerial approval."			

Measure: Development and implementation into the Romanian Immigration Office's computer system of a virtual library containing specimens of identity, travel and marital status documents used by foreigners on Romanian territory, including a description of their security features.			Deadline: 30.09.2009
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
	X		

IV. POLICE COOPERATION

Measure: The amendment and supplement of the GEO 103/2006 concerning certain measures for facilitating international police cooperation according to			Deadline: 31.12.2009
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the provisions of Council Framework-Decision 2006/960			
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: The legislative steps for the implementation of the Schengen acquis in the field are to be completed – the related legislative package is undergoing parliamentary procedure.			

Measure:			Deadline: 31.12.2009
<p>(1) Organisation and implementation of practical-applicable training activities of the staff with competences in the Area of cross-border police cooperation.</p> <p>(2) Development of foreign language skills for the staff involved in the Schengen matters by the organization and implementation of training sessions/courses within the specialised institutions of MAI.</p>			
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: The MAI stated that practical- training activities for staff with competences in cross-border police cooperation have been carried out, as well as courses for the development of foreign language skills for staff involved in the Schengen matters. We do not have data on the scope of these courses, number of participants attending nor the competences gained.			

Evaluation visit of 23-29 March 2009 (first evaluation visit)

Conclusion of the evaluation team (selective):

- Flexible cooperation between police structures – TRIDENT is an example of effective inter-ministerial cooperation.
- There is an integrated concept concerning the training of the staff.
- The system of internal affairs attachés /liaison officers and their cooperation with the Centre for International Police Cooperation (CIPC).
- CIPC has access to the requests received from the Police Cooperation Centres or Contact Points in real time, as well as to the statistics provided on a monthly basis.

V. JUDICIAL COOPERATION

This chapter became the responsibility of the Justice Ministry (which follows-up of the evolution of the *acquis communautaire* in the field) and the National Institute for Magistracy (which trains judges and prosecutors in the Area of international judicial cooperation on criminal matters), measures which have been implemented. The objectives related to the application of the „non bis in idem” principle, the extradition and transfer of sentenced

persons, have also been achieved.

VI. SCHENGEN INFORMATION SYSTEM

Measure: Amendment of legislation on the National Information System for Alerts (NSIS) – GEO no. 128/2005, government ruling no. 1411/2006, government ruling no. 769/2006.			Deadline: 31.12.2009
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Not implemented	Rather not implemented	Rather implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: The Law no. 141 of 12 July 2010 on the establishment, organisation and operation of the National Information System for Alerts and Romania's participation in the Schengen Information System.			

Measure: The development of national working procedures for the introduction, amendment and deletion of national SIS alerts. Furthermore, the exchange of information conducted by the National Office SIRENE with the national law enforcement authorities and other SIRENE Offices, in accordance with the procedures provided by the SIRENE Manual.			Deadline: 30.03.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Unimplemented	Largely not implemented	Largely implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: The national working procedures are being completed. The deadline assumed in 2009 was missed, but we estimate that the procedures will be developed in due time.			

Measure: The bringing into operation of the National SIS Centre			Deadline: 30.04.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Unimplemented	Largely not implemented	Largely implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: As it is lagging behind in implementing this measure, Romania proposes an alternative intermediate solution: SISone4ALL - in order to connect to the central SIS system.			

Measure: The bringing into operation of the SIRENE Office			Deadline: 30.04.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			

Unimplemented	Largely not implemented	Largely implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments:			

Measure: The bringing into operation of the Multifunctional Schengen Training Centre			Deadline: 30.09.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Unimplemented	Largely not implemented	Largely implemented	Implemented
		X	
Comments: The operationalisation of the Multifunctional Schengen Training Centre is being completed. The deadline was not missed.			

The Schengen Action Plan – revised in 2009- provides a set of complex technical measures brought into fruition by the Ministry of Administration and Interior and the Special Telecommunications Service through a number of projects funded by the Schengen Facility and national budget. CRPE requested information (including evaluation reports related to the projects conducted by the above-mentioned institutions) concerning the progress of these projects, but both MAI and STS argued that these documents “are not intended for the public”. Moreover, STS considered our request concerning the progress of those projects as “abusive”, justifying that “the equipment, services or works necessary for the implementation which were acquired, internal working documents containing activities, information, resources, and network topologies” cannot be made public. If STS and MAI are to follow the reporting methodology for EU-funded projects, the requested reports cannot contain information and data (content) protected by national legislation. Such reports contain information on the progress of the implementation of the activities, indicators achieved and amounts of money spent within the projects. **In this case, CRPE cannot therefore directly assess the implementation of each of the various measures mentioned in this chapter.**

In this chapter we wish to draw attention to two issues: (1) by proposing the SISone4ALL intermediary solution for connection to SIS, the Romanian authorities admit that the assumed deadlines have been missed and (2) the activity conducted is complex and requires a large amount of infrastructure to be acquired (including IT and communications) and competence (know-how).

In the box below we present the list of measures required to be translated into reality:

Administrative/technical measures (I)

Responsibility: Ministry of Administration and Interior and Special Telecommunications Service

1. Activities related to the technical and administrative organisation of SIRENE Office, Romania
 - 1.1. Implementation of the SIRENE Office IT application and procurement of hardware by funding provided by the Schengen Facility
 - 1.2. Preparation of national alerts in compliance with art. 95, existing in NSIS, which will be integrated into the Schengen Information System (concerning the selection, translation, validation and insertion of data)
 - 1.3. Implementation of the infrastructure required for SIRENE Office in Building C5, elevation +66m, 9th floor Parliament Palace (furniture, office equipment, unauthorized access prevention systems, fire suppression systems etc.)
2. Implementation/modernisation of information systems of the state institutions authorized to introduce/access data in/from N.SIS
 - 2.1.1 Fulfilment of responsibilities established under the protocol concluded between STS and MAI for the development of telecommunications intended for state institutions, with a view to Romania's accession to Schengen Area.
 - 2.1.2. Update of the protocol concluded between STS and MAI, by an addendum. This would concern cooperation on the use of PKI infrastructure so as to correlate the duties of each institution with the interoperation of the systems subject to articles 4.2 and 16.1 of the Indicative Plan Schengen Facility for 2007-2009
 - 2.2.1 Extension of the WAN-ATM integrated communications network at national level to support the achievement of the objectives under points 2, 2.3, 3, 3.1, 4, 6, 8
 - 2.2.2. Implementation of a system to ensure confidentiality of telephone traffic through the National Voice Network via a ISDN protocol, required for the M.A.I. structures with duties in the Schengen Area,. These cooperated to protect voice communications through the European information cooperation environment in the field of internal affairs, in order to support the achievement of the objectives under points 2, 2.3, 3, 3.1, 4, 6, 8
 - 2.3. Ensuring the authorised public authorities' access to SINS.
 - 2.3.1. The installation and commissioning of broadband radio equipment so as to guarantee the public council and municipal authorities access to SINS.
 - 2.3.2. Broadband radio access equipment and services for their installation and commissioning so that the public authorities in rural Areas may access SINS.
 - 2.4. Modernisation of National Information Population Records to ensure the data flow with N.SIS
 - 2.5. Modernisation of the National Immigration Office IT system so as to be compatible with SIS II and VIS

Administrative/technical measures (I)

Responsibility: Ministry of Administration and Interior and Special Telecommunications Service

3. The implementation of the Romanian national section of SIS (N.SIS), made up of the National Information System for Alerts (SINS) and the national copy of the central system SIS (C.SIS) database.
 - 3.1. The putting in place of SINS with the necessary interfaces for updating and/or consultation
 - 3.1.1. Implementation of the SINS pilot phase.
 - 3.1.1.1. Acquisition of computing equipment and communications as well as of the related software in order to implement the SINS pilot phase.
 - 3.1.1.2. The bringing into operation of the pilot phase of SINS.
 - 3.1.2. Migration of the national data to SINS and their preparation to be submitted to C-SIS
 - 3.1.3. Testing and bringing into operation of SINS
 - 3.2. The putting in place of the national back-up of the database of the central system SIS and interconnection of the national section N.SIS to the central system.
 - 3.2.1. Achievement of the national back-up of the database of CS-SIS
 - 3.2.2. Implementation of the SISone4ALL alternative solution in order to connect to the central SIS system .
 - 3.2.3. Conducting the testing required for connecting N.SIS to C.SIS:
 - 3.2.3.1 Conducting network connectivity tests between N.SIS and C.SIS
 - 3.2.3.2 Conducting compliance tests between N.SIS and C.SIS based on the verification of the compliance conditions concerning N.SIS's connection in accordance with the technical specifications of SIS.
 - 3.2.4 The interconnection of the national component N.SIS with C.SIS
 - 3.3. National Centre SIS - building
 - Carrying out the construction work for the building designed for National SIS Centre
 - Setting up the utilities, the provision of equipment and refurbishment of the National SIS Centre building

Administrative/technical measures (II)**Responsibility: Ministry of Administration and Interior and Special Telecommunications Service**

4. . The making of the validation and pre-authentication interface for SINS users other than those of MAI for public key infrastructure, as well as their certification by electronic signature.

5.The putting in place of an extension of the Integrated Voice – Data Communication Network of MAI for ensuring communications support at access level, necessary for MAI structures involved in the establishment of the European information cooperation environment on matters of internal affairs as well as on Schengen matters.

5.1. Setting up a back-up connection of the Integrated Voice – Data Communication Network, required for the MAI structures involved in the establishment of the European information cooperation environment on matters of internal affairs

5.2. The upgrading of the MAI metropolitan communications network in the Bucharest municipality. This is a component of the Integrated Voice Data Communications Network for ensuring the availability and confidentiality of the SINS-circulated data.

6. Providing MAI structures with TETRA terminals. Also, the completion of the joint mobile communications platform in TETRA standard at national level, in cooperation with STS and SRI.

7. Extension of the implementation of TETRA-STs across all national territory in all not covered by the existing contract on ensuring state border security.

8. Extension of PKI at sectoral information system level within MAI

9. The 4th phase of modernisation and development of the voice and data communications network of the Ministry of Administration and Interior in 12 county municipalities. The putting in place of data communications for the MAI structures with duties in the SIS Area.

V. PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

Measure: Harmonisation of the legislation, regulations and practices with the Schengen acquis.			Deadline: 1.06.2010
Responsible institutions: Ministry of Administration and Interior			
Unimplemented	Largely not implemented	Largely implemented	Implemented
			X
Comments: The legal framework has largely been adopted.			

THE ABSORPTION OF SCHENGEN FACILITY FUNDS

The Schengen Facility is a temporary financial instrument aimed at supporting Bulgaria and Romania in the period between their accession to the EU and the end of 2009. The purpose of the Schengen Facility is to finance actions at new EU external borders in order to implement the Schengen acquis and frontier control.

For the period January 2007 – March 2010, Romania was allocated a total sum of EUR 602.469.345 (EUR 559.800.000 following article 32 of the Accession Treaty, in monthly instalments) for the Schengen and cash flows Facilities.

Within the indicative programme of the 2007-2009 Schengen Facility, 21 projects were created, coming to a total value of EUR 477.304.740. The projects addressed the following objectives:

- a) Strengthening controls and the surveillance perimeter at external frontiers, as well as strengthening the protection capacity against cross-border crime (4 projects);
- b) Intensifying control capacity by enhancing the capacity for data storage and access to data (17 projects).

The institutions (beneficiaries) which carry out projects within the framework of this financial instrument are:

- The Ministry of Administration and Interior through the following structures:
 - The General Direction Communication and Data Technology (7 projects);
 - The General Inspectorate of Romanian Police (1 project);
 - The General Inspectorate of Border Police (4 projects);
 - The Romanian Immigration Office (2 projects);
 - The Centre for Police Cooperation (1 project);
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2 projects);
- The Special Telecommunication Service (4 projects);

According to the Schengen Directorate of MAI, the contracted projects address the following objectives:

1. Expanding the implementation of SINS to the national level;
2. Providing the Ministry of Administration and Interior with TETRA terminals;
3. Expanding the Public Keys Infrastructure (PKI) to the informational systems (IT) sector within MAI;
4. Expanding the Integrated Voice-Data Communication Network of the Ministry of Administration and Interior in order to ensure communication support at access level, necessary for those MAI structures that contribute to the creation of the informational

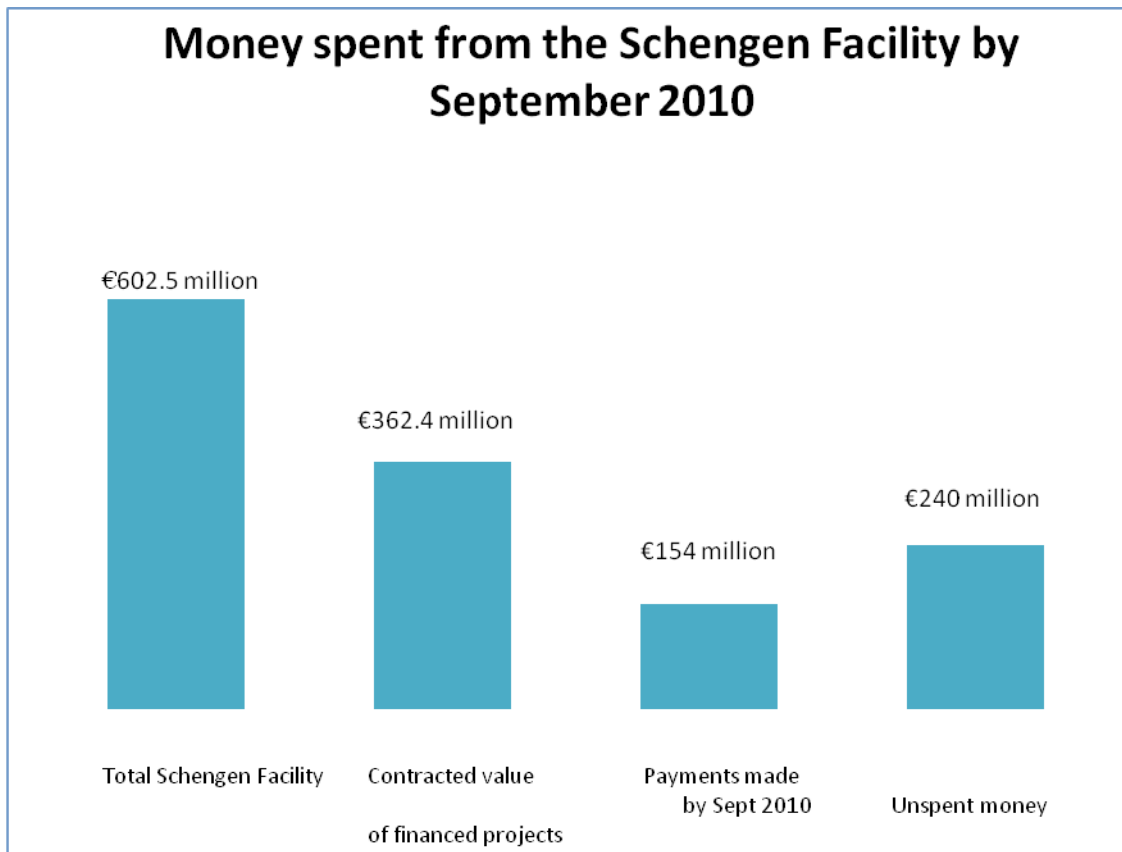
framework for European cooperation in the field of internal affairs in general as well as in the Schengen field;

5. Strengthening the Romanian Police's IT capacity, necessary for the implementation of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II);
6. The creation of the SIRENE application and infrastructure investments, purchasing of the technical and computational equipment necessary for the functioning of the SIRENE Office;
7. The Modernisation of the Romanian Immigration Office IT system, correlated with SIS II and the Visa Information System (VIS);
8. Creating and integrating a virtual library within the informational system of the Romanian Immigration Office of which should contain copies of identification, travel and marital status documentation used by foreigners travelling in Romania, including a description of the security elements of those documents;
9. Strengthening external border control by enhancing the mobility of the Romanian Border Control naval, river and land teams;
10. The modernisation and adjustment/ re-configuration of the property patrimony in order to comply with the new/future demands on surveillance and external borders control;
11. The modernisation of Consulates to the Schengen standards and creation of a Training Centre for consular personnel;
12. The development of the National Information System Regarding Visas (NS-VIS);
13. The expansion and consolidation of the integrated communications network WAN-ATM to Romanian towns in order to ensure the necessary information flux for public authorities, up to the level of territorial structures. This is to facilitate SINS access in accordance with legal requirements;
14. The creation of validation and pre-authentication interface for SINS users, other than MAI;

All actions encompassed in the Indicative Plan the Schengen Facility have been contracted for the interval April 2008- March 2010.

The contracted value of the projects financed through the Schengen Facility is of EUR 362.465.441. In September, the total value of the executed payments within the Schengen Facility projects was of EUR 154.039.602,12. According to Vasile Blaga, Minister of Administration and Interior (13 June 2010), Romania registered the highest rate of Community funds absorption in history, higher than any other country with regard to developing the capacity to adhere to the Schengen Area.

Total Schengen Facility	602.469,345
Contracted value of financed projects	362.465.441
Payments made by September 2010	154.039.602



Romania made use of other Community fund in order to prepare its accession to the Schengen Area as well. With regard to the absorption of other external funds and taking into consideration the year of 2009 only, 21 projects were created and approved, totalling EUR 1.977.813,51; including the following 3 funds:

- The European Fund for Integration – EUR 614.302,06 for 7 projects;
- The European Fund for Returns – EUR 576.597 for 4 projects;
- The European Fund for Refugees – EUR 786.914,45 for 8 projects.

Substantial sums from the national budget and external credits were also used. For instance, the Integrated System for Romanian State Border Security was granted funds starting from 2005, and in 2009 alone, 440 mil were allocated to the system.

Another instance where national funds have been used is in the case of airports, where Schengen terminals are being put into place. The Ministry of Transportation has invested 60 mil EUR for this in the Henri Coanda International Airport alone.

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Web pages :

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