How is personal data protected?

Asylum seekers are one of the most vulnerable groups of people and so eu-LISA makes data protection an absolute priority.

Data is safeguarded at every step. Countries sending data to Eurodac ensure that fingerprints are lawfully processed, transmitted, stored or deleted.

Both national authorities and the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) oversee the protection of personal data.

Fast facts

- **32 countries participate in Eurodac**
- **50 seconds to compare a set of fingerprints against all Eurodac records**
- **300 000 transactions, approximately, (e.g. fingerprint submission, data modification, etc.) related to asylum seekers in 2013**
- **24 % increase in transactions between 2012 and 2013**
- **2.8 million digital fingerprint sets can be stored on Eurodac and its capacity will be increased in 2015**

eu-LISA: supporting safe free movement

eu-LISA is the European Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. We manage large-scale IT systems that help make free and safe movement of people in the EU a reality.

The agency provides 24/7 operational management not only for **Eurodac,** the database that collects and processes the digitalised fingerprints of asylum seekers Europe-wide, but also for:

- the **Schengen Information System** (SIS II) — the largest information system for public security and law enforcement cooperation in Europe; and

- the **Visa Information System** (VIS) — a system that allows Schengen states to share visa data for those who visit or move throughout the Schengen area.

eu-LISA has offices in Tallinn, Estonia and Strasbourg, France.

Find out more

Visit: *www.eulisa.europa.eu*

Eurodac

eu-LISA: helping to manage asylum applications

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What is Eurodac?

Eurodac is a centralised EU database that collects and processes the digitalised fingerprints of asylum seekers. Set up in 2003, it is currently used by all EU-28 countries as well as Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Eurodac stands for the EUROpean Asylum DACtyloscopy database.

How it works is simple. When a person applies for asylum in one of the participating countries, their fingerprints are sent to and stored on Eurodac. In this way, the system helps to identify new asylum applications against those already registered in the database.

What eu-LISA does

eu-LISA is the European agency that manages large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice. The agency provides the technical and operational expertise to ensure that European citizens and non-EU citizens have the freedom to live, work and travel across the EU.

The agency keeps Eurodac fully operational and in service 24/7, allowing national authorities to constantly exchange and share information. In 2013, Eurodac was available to its users 99.99% of the year. Part of eu-LISA's success lies in the fact that it uses only the best tools, technology and techniques.
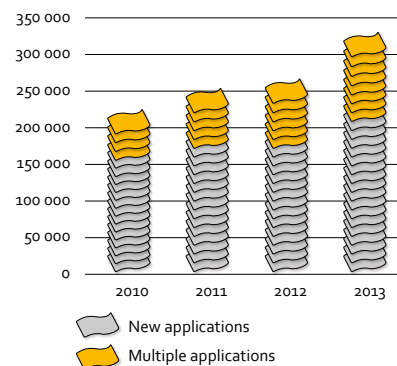
eu-LISA provides training and statistical reports on the technical use of Eurodac.

Eurodac's added value

Eurodac offers two main benefits:

- it supports the processing of applications for those asylum seekers who need protection in Europe;

- it detects multiple asylum applications and therefore reduces abuse, such as 'asylum shopping', where individual applicants apply for asylum in several countries.

New applications vs. multiple applications since 2010

Source: eu-LISA, 2014

Who can access it?

Only asylum authorities have access to Eurodac in order to add new fingerprints and compare existing records.

From July 2015, with the entry into force of the new Eurodac legislation (Recast Regulation), law enforcement authorities will also have limited access to Eurodac but only under very strict conditions in order to prevent, detect and investigate serious crime and terrorism.

What information is stored?

Eurodac holds a range of information on asylum applicants and irregular immigrants. This includes their gender, fingerprints as well as date and place of apprehension or asylum application. It is anonymous in the sense that the names are left unregistered.

Eurodac processes, stores and/or compares the fingerprints of third country nationals or stateless persons who are at least 14 years old and who:

- have **applied for asylum** in one of the Eurodac participating countries; or

- have been apprehended in connection with an **irregular crossing** of a concerned external border; or

- have been found to be **illegally present** within a Eurodac country.

In the first case, the person's data is stored for 10 years and can be compared against future asylum applications. In the case of an irregular crossing, data is stored for only 2 years and is compared only against future asylum applications; as of July 2015, the 2 years will be reduced to 18 months. In the last instance, the person's fingerprints are checked against existing asylum applications but are not recorded.

Eurodac in action

Jo (18) and Lucas (23) are brothers. Due to the political situation in their home country they decide to flee to Europe. When arriving in Croatia with fake passports, they submit an application for asylum. The receiving authority checks their fingerprints against Eurodac data to determine whether they have already requested asylum in any Member State. This helps the Croatian authorities to determine which country is responsible for processing the request for asylum as well as look after Jo and Lucas. Several criteria are used to identify which country is responsible for an asylum seeker; Eurodac is one of them.