



## New EU Member States sign SISone4ALL protocol with Portuguese Government

The software application makes it possible for 9 more countries to join the Schengen Zone from December 2007.

The protocol for the official delivery by the Portuguese government of the SISone4all information system to the new Member States of the European Union, was signed, in March 2007. This software application, which was developed in Portugal, will make it possible to integrate these countries, which have been EU members since 2004, into the Schengen on 31<sup>st</sup> December of this year.

With this solution, developed by the Portuguese Immigration Service (SEF) and Portuguese company Critical Software, the citizens of **Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland** and the **Czech Republic** will be able to travel freely within the EU Zone.

Since October 2006, the plan of action for developing the SISone4ALL, proposed by Portugal, was led by experienced teams, from both Portugal and all the other countries involved directly in extending the SIS 1+, which is considered to be the most appropriate for fulfilling the Hague Program objectives.

SISone4ALL is a simple solution and a project with reduced costs and risk. It is a way of opening up the borders of the States that do not yet belong to the Schengen Zone, with the main objective of allowing freedom of movement and a high level of security in the European Union zone.



## **Signing of SIS Protocols**

### **SISone4ALL**

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Council of Europe and the Hague Program set the deadline for the integration of new Member States of the European Union (joined in 2004), into the Schengen Zone as October 2007.

One of the conditions for the free circulation of people, in those countries, with the abolition of internal border controls, is the exchange of information via the Schengen Information System (SIS), an police cooperation instrument that makes it possible to boost alternative checks on people and goods.

Designed in the 1990's, the SIS did not allow for connection with new Member States and therefore the European Union decided to move ahead with a new system, which was more technologically advanced and had new functions: SIS II.

Its implementation was subject to delays however, which made it impossible to be implemented by 2007. The abolition of border controls with new Member States was postponed, which held back the implementation of the principle of free circulation of people and goods.

It was in this context that, in September 2006, at the Informal Council of Tampere (Finland), António Costa at the time, the Portuguese Minister of State and Internal Administration, proposed to the European Council of Justice and Internal Affairs (JAI) the integration of the new Member States

- Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and the Czech Republic
- into the current Schengen Information System (SIS 1+).

Portugal thus went ahead with a proposal that would make it possible to do away with the obstacle created by the delay in implementing SIS II. The proposal consisted of "cloning" the Portuguese N-SIS, which was adapted when the Scandinavian states were integrated into Schengen, the organisation of its installation into the systems of the new Member States and connection to the current C-8IS. This proposal was given the designation SISone4ALL.



#### Signing of SIS Protocols- SISone4ALL- BACKGROUND INFORMATION (Cont.)

The JAI Council, in October 2006, praised the Portuguese initiative and supported it faced with the need to decide between moving ahead immediately with the SISone4ALL solution, making it possible to open land and sea borders on 31.Dec.07 and air borders in March, 2008, or to wait for SIS II, whose operation in 2008 is not guaranteed.

Lat December, the JAI Council, Portugal's position became very clear to its European partners as they showed their total availability to invest in the resolution of this problem. An investment, not only in human resources, but also total political support. The Portuguese proposal was accepted, leading to great enthusiasm from the representatives of the new Member States, who did not tire of praising Portugal's initiative, and the deadline for expansion of the Schengen zone was set as 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2007.

The plan of action for developing the SISone4ALL was led by experienced teams, from both Portugal and all the other countries involved directly in extending the SIS 1+, which is considered to be the most appropriate for fulfilling the Hague Program objectives.

SISone4ALL is a simple solution and a project of reduced cost and risk, which makes it possible to open up the borders of the States that do not yet belong to the Schengen Zone, ensuring the maintenance of a high level of security in the European Union.

The results of these evaluations will be approved by the Council of Europe, by the end of 2007, in order for internal borders to be abolished on 31<sup>st</sup> December this year, in a truly historical moment for the new Member States and for the rest of the European Union and a significant mark for the Portuguese Presidency in the second half of this year.



## SISone4ALL INTEGRATION TIMETABLE

MAY.04	Entry of new Member States - Cyprus, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and the Czech Republic. The Council of Europe and the Hague Program set the deadline for their integration into the Schengen Zone as October 2007.
SEPT.06	European Commission announces the unlikelihood of SIS 11 being operational by October 2007. Portugal announces that it is developing a transitional technical solution: SISone4ALL.
16.OCT.06	JAI (Justice and Internal Administration) Council gives the green light to preliminary technical work to test viability of SISone4ALL.
5.DEC.06	Final approval of SISone4ALL and definition, at JAI Council, of the deadline to abolish borders: 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2007.
02.MAR.07	SISone4ALL tested and validated by C-SIS
27.MAR.07	Signing of protocol between Portugal and nine Member States that are to apply the SISone4ALL system.
01.MAY.07	PT NSIS tested and validated by C-SIS
26.JUN.07	Validation of SISone4ALL of new Member States
14. AUG.07	Validation of SISone4ALL of Member States already in Schengen Area
31. AUG.07	SISone4ALL technically ready.
SEPT./DEC.07	Last phase of evaluation of new Member States
NOV./DEC.07	Decision of the Council to lift all internal border controls, under the assumption that SISone4ALL is evaluated positively.
31.DEC.07	Abolition of land and sea borders control
29.MAR.08	Abolition of air borders control

# FREEDOM AND SECURITY IN EUROPE

