

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003488/21  
to the Commission  
Gabriele Bischoff (S&D)  
(7 July 2021)**

*Subject:* Concerns about the future of the Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI) project and the Commission's handover of the Reference Implementation for a National Application (RINA) tool

In January 2019, the first electronic message was exchanged between the social security institutions of two Member States using the Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI) system — seven years after it was supposed to be fully operational following the last revision of the regulations on the coordination of social security systems in 2010.

Even though there are still problems with the exchange of information between Member States and not all social security institutions are connected, the Commission announced in 2020 that it would hand over the development and maintenance of the Reference Implementation for a National Application (RINA) tool to Member States by June 2021.

The continued existence of digital obstacles when it comes to managing labour mobility could negatively affect the freedom of movement of workers and the freedom to provide services.

1. Could the Commission provide information on how many of the 15 000 social security institutions in the EU are already connected to EESSI?
2. Given that the Commission has repeatedly reiterated its commitment to work further on the digitisation of processes in relation to EU labour mobility, has it carried out, or does it intend to carry out, an impact assessment to evaluate the consequences of the RINA handover in terms of costs and IT infrastructure, and ultimately the consequences for the functioning of EESSI?

**Answer given by Mr Schmit on behalf of the European Commission  
(27 August 2021)**

In the early stages of planning and development of the Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI), Member States foresaw that 15 000 of their institutions were to be connected to it. In 2020, Member States indicated that the actual number of institutions to be connected to EESSI is around 5 000. Out of these, to date, around 3 000 have been exchanging electronic messages via EESSI.

The development of national applications for all institutions to connect to international EESSI exchanges is part of the implementation work of each Member State — as it is the case also for other large-scale IT projects. In order to temporarily help the countries that have not yet developed their own applications to start their national implementation, the Commission agreed to provide them with the reference application RINA <sup>(1)</sup>.

However, the Commission is not in the position to cater for the specific requirements of the institutions concerned and to intervene in the national domain of 32 participating countries, which would raise not only technical and financial, but also subsidiarity concerns. In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of EESSI, the Commission announced in January 2020 the handover of RINA to Member States that wish to continue using it.

The Commission actively supported experts from the Member States in the analysis of the organisational, legal, technical and financial impact of the handover.

The Commission has provided a new version of RINA, which Member States and their institutions have been deploying in the course of 2021 and will be able to continue using after the handover. The Commission is closely monitoring the progress of the handover, which will be completed at the end of 2021.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Reference Implementation of a National Application.