

ORAL QUESTION H-0822/06

for Question Time at the part-session in October 2006
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Zita Pleštinšká
to the Council

Subject: Postponement of the accession of the new Member States to the Schengen area

In 2004, the Commission declared that the enlargement of the Schengen area to include the new Member States would be possible after the adoption of vital measures to secure the area's external borders. The provisional date of accession was set for October 2007.

During an informal meeting of justice and interior ministers, the Finnish Presidency announced on 21 September 2006 that the date of accession would probably be put back because of technical and legal problems relating to the creation and launch of the Schengen Information System (SIS) II.

Has the Council considered alternatives to introducing SIS II, such as temporarily including the new Member States in the current system (SIS I+)? If not, why not? If so, what conclusions were reached?

What does the Council intend to do to maintain the original timetable for the accession of the new Member States to the Schengen area?

Boosting public confidence in the EU is vital. The free movement of persons is a practical fulfilment of the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Treaties. When, in the near future, will citizens from the new Member States also be able to travel without border controls?

Tabled: 27.09.2006

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