



Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat

**Brussels, 26 June 2024**

**WK 9149/2024 INIT**

**LIMITE**

**VISA  
ASILE  
MIGR  
COMIX**

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## **MEETING DOCUMENT**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Visa Working Party

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Subject: Kick-off discussion on VIS statistics and asylum

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Delegations will find attached the presentations made by the Belgian delegation, the Swedish delegation and the Commission services at the Visa Working Party meeting on 21 June 2024 on the above-mentioned subject.

# Understanding the relation between visa and asylum using VIS hits

Immigration Office (Belgium) – Statistics Unit

21/06/2024

# Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Statistics Production Process
3. Statistical Reports
4. Case Studies
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# 1. Introduction

## Why VIS hits and related statistics matter?

- Lack of monitoring (e.g. the share of asylum applicants in possession of a visa)
- Provide analytical tools to support operational efforts (identification of migration patterns, monitoring of administrative practices, fight against fraud)

## Measurement focus

- People identified based on a VIS hit and not the number of computer exchanges
- Including both international protection and other contexts

## Distinction between

- Individuals who obtained a visa from BE
- Individuals who obtained a visa from another Member State

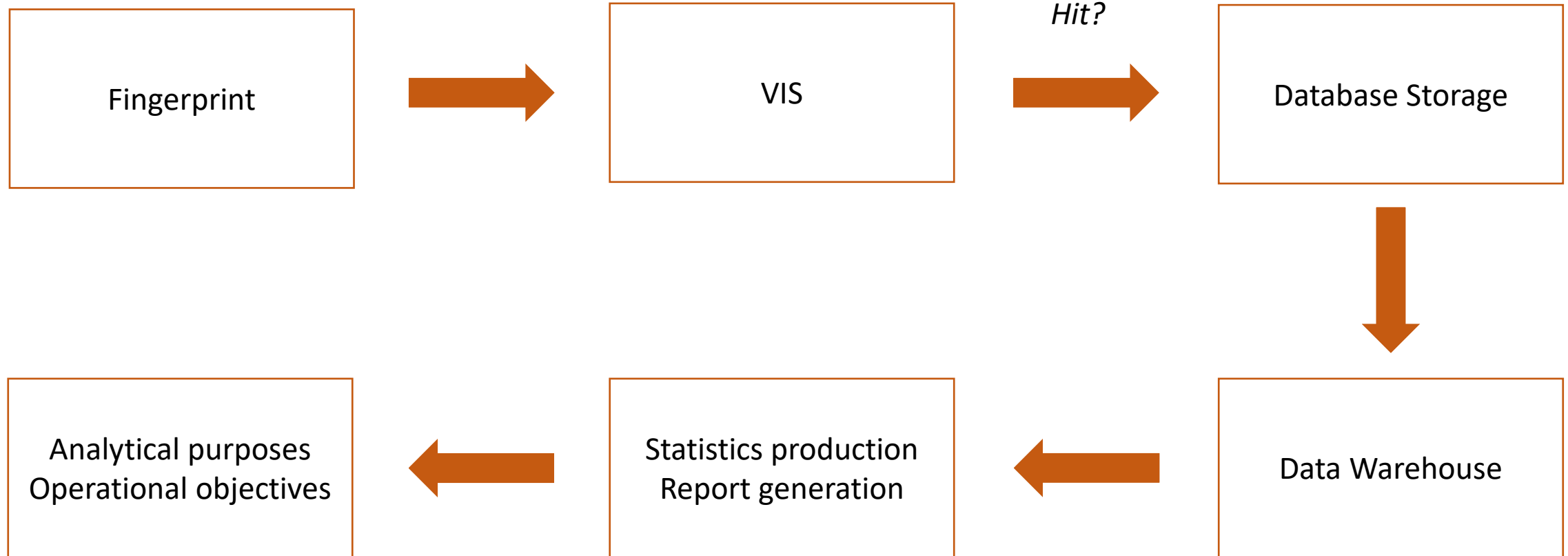


## 2. Statistics Production Process

Information derived from three fields:

1. Identity
  - Nationality, age, gender, etc.
2. Visa
  - Details about the visa itself (date, country of issuance, etc.)
3. Context
  - Identification on the territory
  - Examination of asylum applicants
  - Determination of the responsibility for asylum applicants

# Detailed Production Workflow



# Obstacles & Potential Improvements

## Current complexity

- Multiple hits possible from a single search query
- Same fingerprints used across diverse contexts
- Requires varied statistical perspectives

## What more can be done?

- Identifying niches and blind spots
- Achieving statistical success operationally
- Opportunities for enhancing data utility

### 3. Statistical Reports

Mois	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
01	449	1.180	1.443	475	855	1.152
02	869	939	1.148	502	689	947
03	1.092	1.105	670	547	895	920
04	1.163	912	118	381	788	852
05	998	1.052	353	416	920	886
06	896	596	485	512	899	1.001
07	1.158	1.184	670	551	786	950
08	1.073	1.052	793	546	1.227	1.090
09	1.164	1.138	661	728	1.145	842
10	1.004	1.421	662	636	1.198	1.107
11	915	1.256	548	712	1.061	962
12	602	1.251	607	796	889	899
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.383</b>	<b>13.086</b>	<b>8.158</b>	<b>6.802</b>	<b>11.352</b>	<b>11.608</b>

Table

Number of VIS hits across all contexts (2018-2023)

#### Relative statistical value without specific focus

- In distribution by research context;
- In distribution by citizenship/Member State
- In cross-referencing the data with other data source

How can it be improved?

# Statistical Reports

Table 1

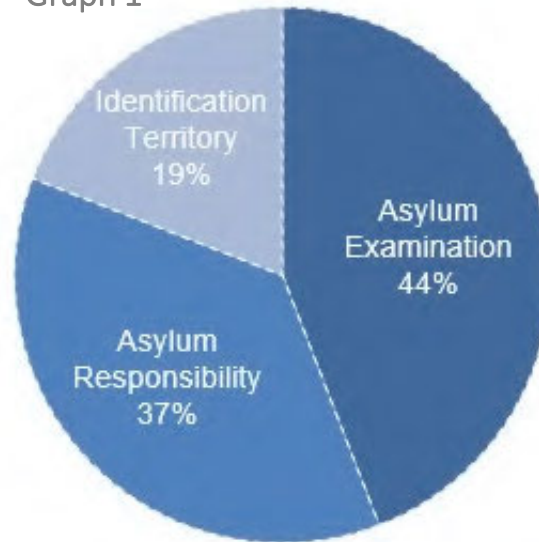
Number of VIS hits per search context (2018-2023)

Research context	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Asylum Examination	3.499	3.422	2.597	2.418	5.013	5.121
Asylum Responsibility	2.836	2.887	2.208	1.886	4.085	4.269
Identification Territory	5.048	6.777	3.353	2.498	2.254	2.218
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.383</b>	<b>13.086</b>	<b>8.158</b>	<b>6.802</b>	<b>11.352</b>	<b>11.608</b>

Graph 1

Number of VIS hits per search context (2023)

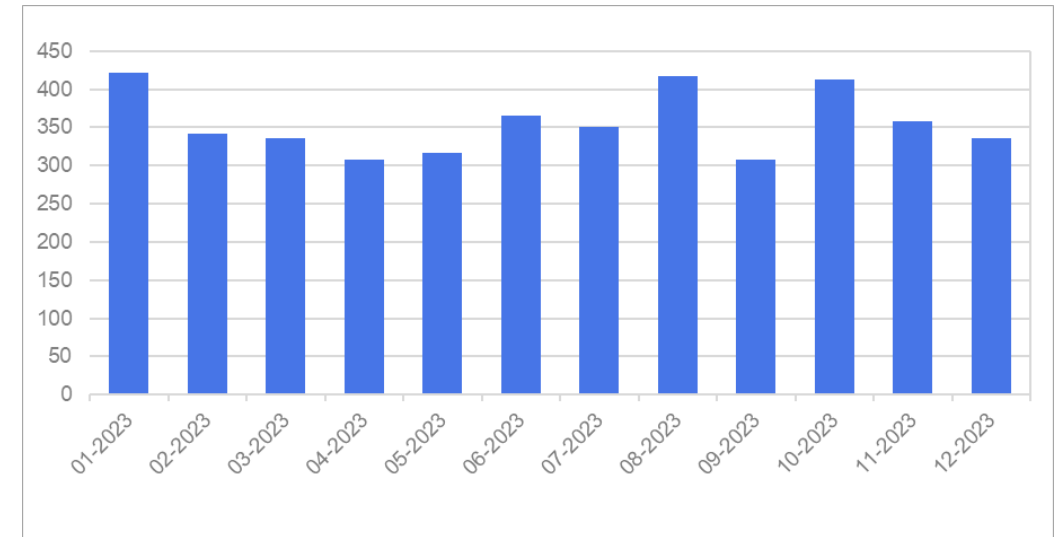
Graph 1



Graph 2

Number of VIS hits per search in the context of asylum responsibility (2023)

Graph 2



Statistical value increases but...

# Visual Data Representation

## Table

Searches resulting in a VIS hit:

- in the context of asylum responsibility
- by country of visa issue
- by country of nationality of the applicant
- by year

Statistical representation by volume

Country of issuance	Nationality	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Belgium	Congo (DR)	74	74	80	44	130	187
	Burundi	182	147	61	69	173	140
	Rwanda	67	80	67	85	131	123
	Burkina Faso	22	6	9	2	28	99
	Iran	62	57	16	19	64	64
	Cameroon	18	23	15	8	31	43
	Egypt	15	7	7	2	18	14
	Ethiopia	4	3	2	13	14	14
	Syria	6	6	6	9	9	14
	Turkey	19	18	11	5	20	13
	Cote d'Ivoire	1	4	2	1	2	12
	Cuba	2	7	3	4	11	12
	Iraq	13	6	8	1	5	12
	Unknown	19	5	8	6	16	12
	Others	137	93	69	65	128	149
<b>Total</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>908</b>	
Others	Palestina	258	221	110	109	302	335
	Armenia	81	55	55	89	206	287
	Iran	114	142	92	51	296	215
	Turkey	127	146	180	100	265	197
	Russia	98	104	93	87	259	169
	Congo (DR)	119	84	89	52	103	161
	Syria	49	113	73	54	126	154
	Niger	60	41	32	29	152	141
	Cameroon	45	67	80	39	75	128
	Guinea	114	92	75	56	93	107
	Others	1.347	1.492	1.158	1.075	1.819	1.734
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2.412</b>	<b>2.557</b>	<b>2.037</b>	<b>1.741</b>	<b>3.696</b>	<b>3.628</b>

# Visual Data Representation

## Table

Searches resulting in a VIS hit:

- in the context of asylum responsibility
- by country of visa issue
- by country of nationality of the applicant
- by year
- As a percentage of asylum applicants

Double interest

Highlighting anomalies

Ensuring no irregularities

Country of issuance	Nationality	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Belgium	Burkina Faso	31%	8%	30%	10%	31%	54%	
	Rwanda	32%	30%	34%	40%	38%	45%	
	Cuba	33%	39%	38%	57%	46%	28%	
	Burundi	44%	23%	18%	14%	6%	18%	
	Congo (DR)	14%	12%	19%	12%	15%	15%	
	Egypt	17%	7%	13%	3%	19%	12%	
	Iran	11%	7%	6%	6%	7%	10%	
	Ethiopia	5%	4%	5%	8%	5%	4%	
	Cameroon	4%	5%	4%	2%	4%	4%	
	Cote d'Ivoire	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	
	Iraq	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	
	Turkey	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	
	Syria	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
	Unknown	3%	1%	3%	1%	3%	3%	
	Others	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	
Others	Niger	63%	45%	52%	57%	79%	79%	
	Armenia	51%	32%	51%	47%	53%	58%	
	Iran	20%	18%	36%	15%	33%	33%	
	Russia	17%	19%	28%	28%	36%	18%	
	Congo (DR)	23%	14%	21%	14%	12%	13%	
	Cameroon	11%	15%	23%	8%	10%	11%	
	Palestine	10%	9%	14%	7%	11%	10%	
	Guinea	10%	9%	11%	8%	10%	8%	
	Turkey	15%	14%	27%	15%	15%	8%	
	Syria	1%	4%	4%	2%	4%	4%	
	Others	10%	9%	10%	6%	8%	9%	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>



## 4. Specific Case Studies

Table : Annex of searches resulting in a VIS hit in the context of asylum responsibility by country of visa issue (Belgium or other Member States)

Country of issuance	ISO Code	Nationality	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Belgium	BF	Burkina Faso	22	6	9	2	28	99
Others	AM	Armenia	81	55	55	89	206	287
Others	NE	Niger	60	41	32	29	152	141

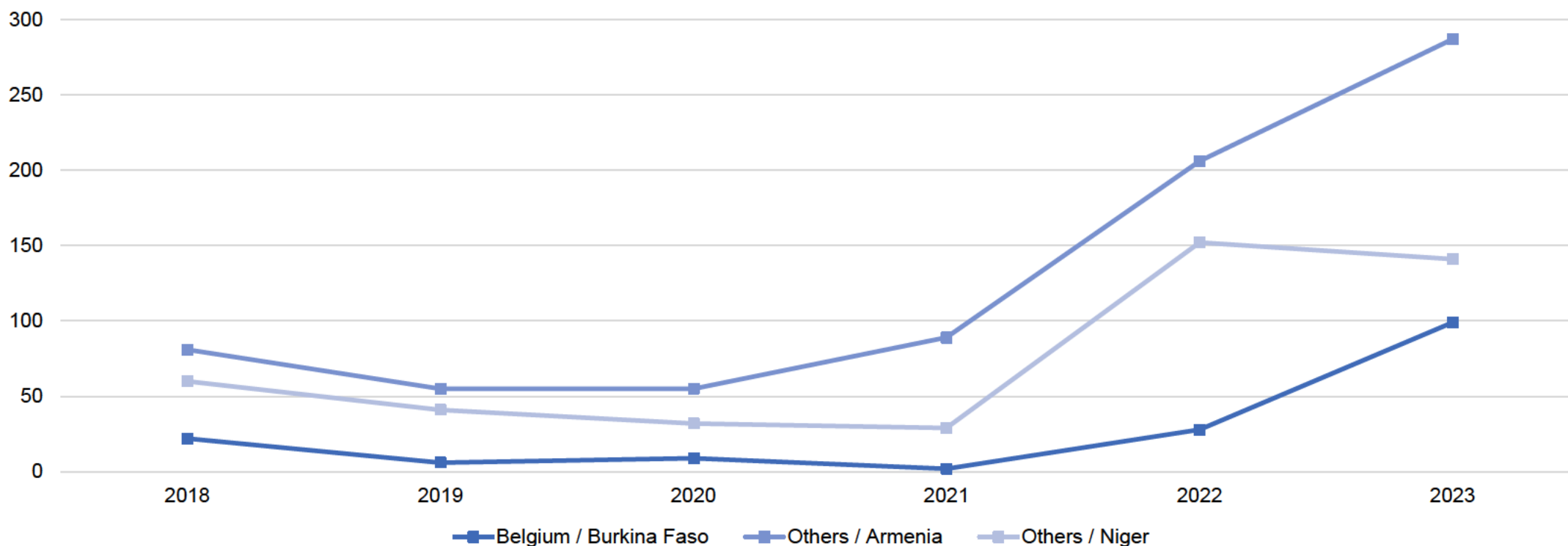
Table : Annex of searches resulting in a VIS hit in the context of asylum responsibility by country of visa issue (all Member States)

Country of issuance	ISO Code	Nationality	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Greece	AM	Armenia	23	16	16	30	108	188
Spain	NE	Niger	33	8	8	4	16	56
France	NE	Niger	27	33	24	25	135	85



# Evolutionary Graphs of the Data Presented

Graph : Annex of searches resulting in a VIS hit in the context of asylum responsibility by country of visa issue (Belgium or other Member States)

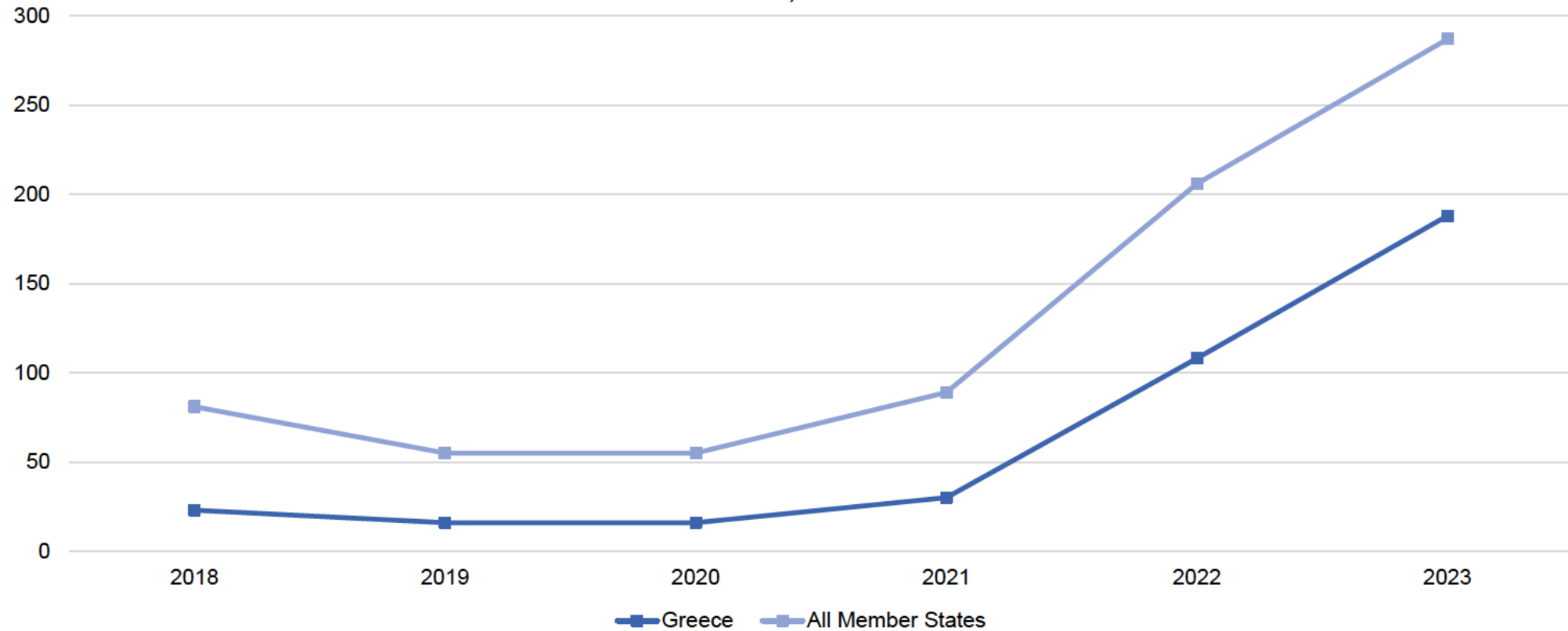


# Evolutionary Graphs of the Data Presented

Graph : Searches resulting in a VIS hit in the context of asylum responsibility

*Country of visa issue : Greece / All Member States*

*Nationality : Armenia*

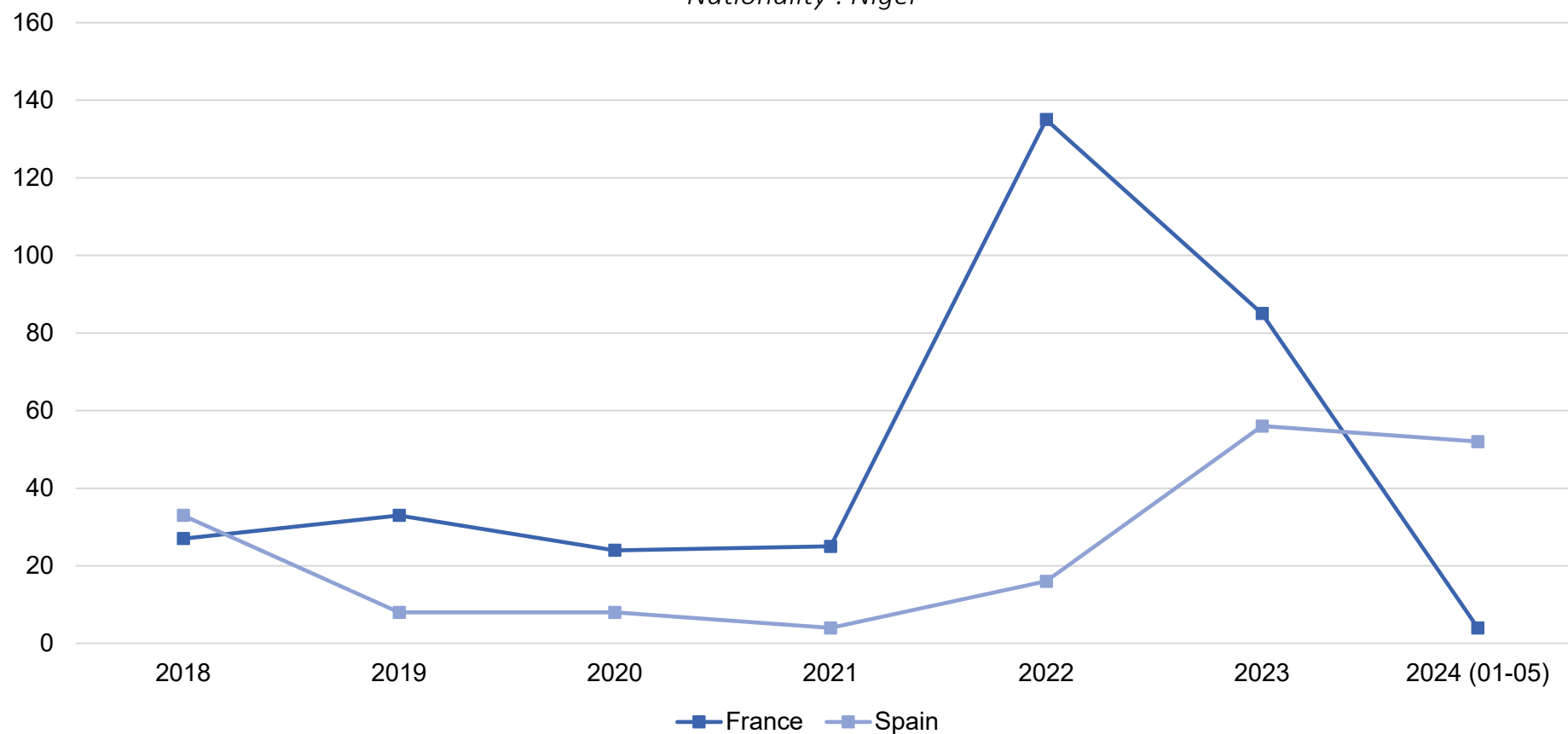


# Evolutionary Graphs of the Data Presented

Graph : Searches resulting in a VIS hit in the context of asylum responsibility

*Country of visa issue : France / Spain*

*Nationality : Niger*



# Detailed Case Studies

- Belgium and Burkina Faso

**Observed phenomenon** → Significant increase in asylum seekers holding Belgian visas in 2023

**Operational impact** → Necessary regularization of visa issuance methods at the diplomatic post in Ouagadougou

Visa issuance post	2022	2023	2024
Ouagadougou	29	109	5

- Armenia and Greece

**Observed phenomenon** → Increase in asylum seekers holding Greek visas in 2023

**Contextual insight** → Illustrates migratory patterns in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh geopolitical situation and the Eastern Mediterranean migration route

Armenia	2020	2021	2022	2023
Asylum applications	108	189	390	499
Holding a greek visa	16	30	108	188

- Niger, France and Spain

**Observed phenomenon** → Analysis of 2024 data

**Contextual insight** → Reflects current diplomatic developments, including the situation/activity of the French diplomatic post in Niger and the subsequent shift of visa application to Spain in 2024

Country of issuance	Nationality	2022	2023	2024
France	Niger	134	85	4
Spain	Niger	16	56	52

# Conclusion : Operational Control and Networking

## Next steps (?)

- Emphasis on the operational team(s) role
- Further steps: operational improvements and networking
- Ensuring data-driven decision-making

Statistical success enable us to provide information that can serve a genuine operational purpose

**Thank you for your attention!**

**Q&A?**



Migrationsverket

# Use of the VIS in the asylum process

THE SWEDISH EXAMPLE

# Organisational structure

- The Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) is the national authority that handles all migration issues in Sweden
  - *Visas, residence permits, asylum and citizenship*
- The SMA is a central visa authority and responsible for managing the processing IT-system, N-VIS is one subsystem, other subsystems handle other type of cases
- Data stored in the **central foreigner database** (CUD) and in C-VIS
  - *Complete history of all cases for a TCN in Sweden*
- The SMA is subject to the Ministry of Justice



# Tools available for follow up of misused visas

- In 2019, SMA produced a harmonized risk analysis web based template for reporting of misused visa (Schengen visas) issued by Sweden
  - “*Webropol*”
- Monthly and annual statistics is produced on Swedish asylum cases
  - Number of VIS hits
  - Date of issued visa
  - Nationality of the applicant
  - Member state (MS) and consulate that issued the visa
- “*Escalation staircase*” (also known as an information process) was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice

# Practical examples – visas issued by Swedish consulates

## - Monthly statistics (May 2024)

Consulate	Case number	Nationality	Date of decision
ADDIS ABABA	xxx	ETHIOPIA	20200102
BEIRUT	xxx	SYRIA	20211228
HAVANA	xxx	CUBA	20231112
	xxx	CUBA	20231020
	xxx	CUBA	20230307
ISTANBUL	xxx	STATELESS	20220111
	xxx	TÜRKIYE	20211201
	xxx	TÜRKIYE	20190808
	xxx	TÜRKIYE	20230928
	xxx	TÜRKIYE	20220628
CAIRO	xxx	EGYPT	20240404
MOSCOW	xxx	RUSSIA	20230207
	xxx	RUSSIA	20230314
NAIROBI	xxx	KENYA	20240408
	xxx	NIGERIA	20230301
	xxx	NIGERIA	20230306
	xxx	ETHIOPIA	20240223
	xxx	ETHIOPIA	20231106
NEW DELHI	xxx	INDIA	20240402
	xxx	INDIA	20240410
BEIJING	xxx	MONGOLIA	20230202
RABAT	xxx	MOROCCO	20240418

- Asylum application → the SMA takes the applicant's fingerprints and checks them against the VIS database
- The SMA produces the statistics and sends a list of the cases to the consulate
- Consulate reviews the cases and completes a *web based template* for reporting of misused visa
- All data is anonymised and applicant can not be identified
- A quarterly report is created automatically for each location → supporting tool for assessing migratory risk

# A quarterly report on visa misuse

- An example of content of the report (jan-mar 2024)
- 45 reported cases of visa misuse

	N	Procent of total
Tourism	16	35,60%
Business	4	8,90%
Family visit	21	46,70%
Culture	3	6,70%
Sports	1	2,20%
Studies	1	2,20%

The main purpose of travel

Time period	Procent of total
0-1 months	42,20%
1-6 months	37,80%
6-12 months	15,60%
12+ months	4,40%

Time between the expiry of visa issued and the asylum application

Nationality	Number	Procent of total
Bangladesh	1	2,20%
Ecuador	1	2,20%
Egypt	3	6,70%
Ethiopia	3	6,70%
Philippines	3	6,70%
India	5	11,10%
Jordan	3	6,70%
Morocco	6	13,30%
Nigeria	5	11,10%
Russia	6	13,30%
Sierra Leone	1	2,20%
Stateless	1	2,20%
South Africa	3	6,70%
Türkiye	3	6,70%
Zambia	1	2,20%

Information regarding applicant's nationality

Previous visa history	Procent of total
Yes	9,10%
No	90,90%

Previous visa history

# Annual statistics

- most frequent nationality with VIS hits, last 12 months

Nationality	Asylum claims	With issued visa	Percentage	Visa issued by SE	Percentage issued by SE
UZBEKISTAN	771	272	35%	0	0
UGANDA	225	150	67%	1	1%
IRAN	760	145	19%	8	6%
AZERBAIJAN	231	110	48%	0	0
NIGERIA	249	105	42%	20	19%
TÜRKIYE	523	104	20%	42	40%
RUSSIA	290	90	31%	35	39%
SYRIA	1069	86	8%	1	1%
ERITREA	408	81	20%	1	1%
KAZAKSTAN	157	68	43%	0	0
Other	6389	721	11%	151	21%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11072</b>	<b>1932</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>13%</b>

## Annual statistics

- Asylum applications vs VIS hits
- Issuing Member States, year 2023

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024 (maj)
Asylum applications	11419	16738	12498	4279
VIS hits	957	2248	1997	665
Percentage with issued visas	8%	13%	16%	15%

Issuing Member State	VIS hits
ITALY	280
SWEDEN	279
GERMANY	262
FRANCE	241
GREECE	206
SPAIN	130
POLEN	112
CZECH REPUBLIC	78
LATVIA	74
HUNGARY	72
NETHERLANDS	56
LITHUANIA	37
BELGIUM	29
PORTUGAL	21
FINLAND	20
AUSTRIA	20
ESTONIA	19
SWITZERLAND	18
NORWAY	18
DENMARK	12
SLOVENIA	6
CROATIA	4
MALTA	2
LUXEMBOURG	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1997</b>

# Schengenvisas issued by other Member States

## - "Escalation staircase"

- If high, trending numbers, SE initiates communication with concerned MS
- Communication through Ministry of Justice or Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (in case of representation agreement)
- Report with profile of cases and list of VIS-application numbers is shared with responsible MS
- Follow up after 6 months
- Drop in number of asylum cases during the pandemic: follow up of the method has not been possible

### An example of Uzbekistan, 2024

Nationality		Total number of VIS hits	
UZBEKISTAN		103	
Issuing Member State	Number of VIS hits	Issuing Consulate	
GERMANY	34	TASHKENT	73
LATVIA	16	MOSCOW	22
GREECE	15	ALMATY	7
CZECHIA	13	ASTANA	1
LITHUANIA	8		
POLEN	7		
SPAIN	5		
ITALY	3		
AUSTRIA	1		
FINLAND	1		
TOTAL	103		



# Thank you!







# VIS statistics and asylum

DG HOME.B.3 Digital Schengen Unit

21 June 2024





# Improved information position

Introduction to the interoperability framework

Upcoming queries for Visa authorities

Upcoming queries for Asylum authorities

Upcoming statistics to both authorities

# Introduction to the interoperability framework

# Interoperability Framework – overview legal acts

## INTEROPERABILITY FRAMEWORK

- Regulation (EU) 2019/817 (border)
- Regulation (EU) 2019/818 (police)

EES

**Entry Exit System**

- Regulation (EU) 2017/2226

ECRIS-TCN

**European Criminal Records Information System for third country nationals**

- Regulation (EU) 2019/816

ETIAS

**European Travel Information and Authorisation System**

- Regulation (EU) 2018/1240

VIS

**Visa Information System**

- Regulation (EC) 767/2008
- Council Decision 2008/633/JHA

(- Regulation (EU) 2021/1134 VIS Recast)

(- Regulation (EU) 2021/1133 VIS conseq. amendments.)

SIS

**Schengen Information System**

- Regulation (EU) 2018/1860 (return)
- Regulation (EU) 2018/1861 (border)
- Regulation (EU) 2018/1862 (police)

EURO DAC

**European Asylum Database**

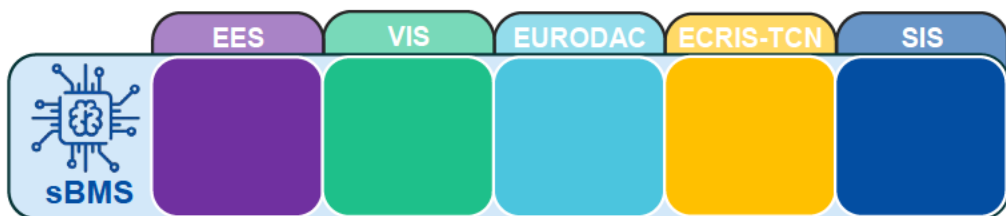
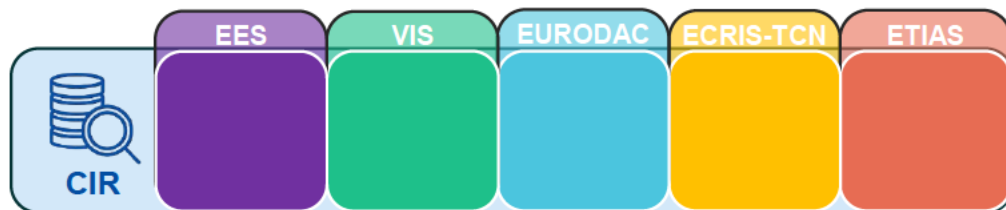
- Regulation (EC) 2024/1358

# What does Interoperability bring?

Interoperability is about the **smart reorganisation** of the EU information systems to allow the **information already present** to be better used.

Interoperability does this by introducing the following new **components** and **tool**:

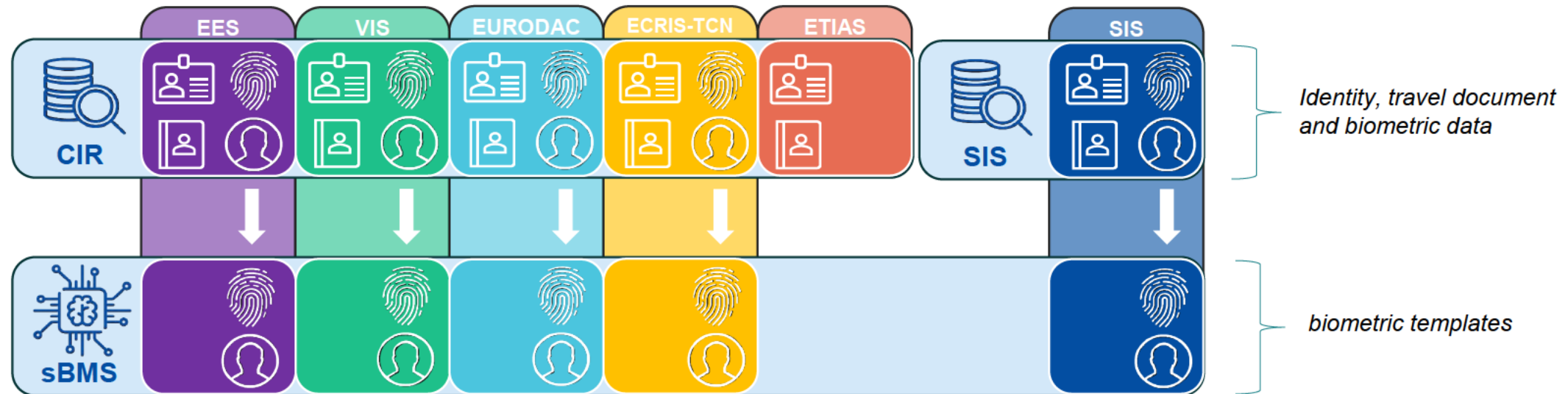
- European Search Portal
- Common Identity Repository
- Shared Biometric Matching Service
- Multiple-Identity Detector
- Central Repository for Reporting and Statistics



# Technical consequences

Interoperability introduces the **reorganisation of the data** that used to be stored into each and every central system. All VIS data used to be stored in the VIS and all Eurodac data into Eurodac. With the interoperability framework that is changing through the creation of two interoperability components:

- The **Common Identity Repository (CIR)**
- The **shared Biometric Matching Service (sBMS)**.



# Technical consequences

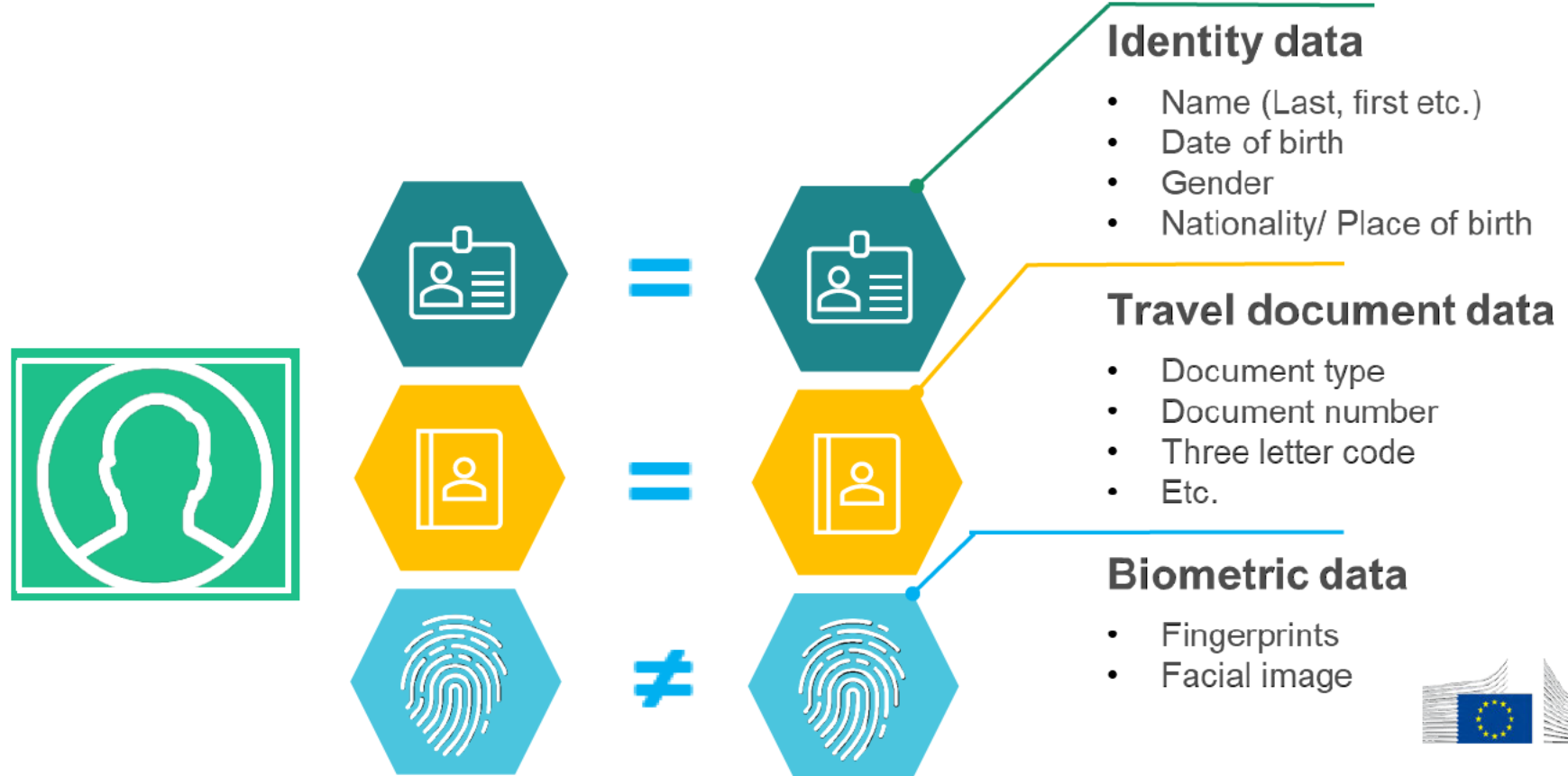


- Interoperability also establishes the **European Search Portal (ESP)**.
- A message broker that operates between the user and the central level, but it is also used by components at the central level to support search operations.
- For example, the ESP is used by the Visa Information System to perform a series of automated queries



# Multiple-identity detector (1.2)

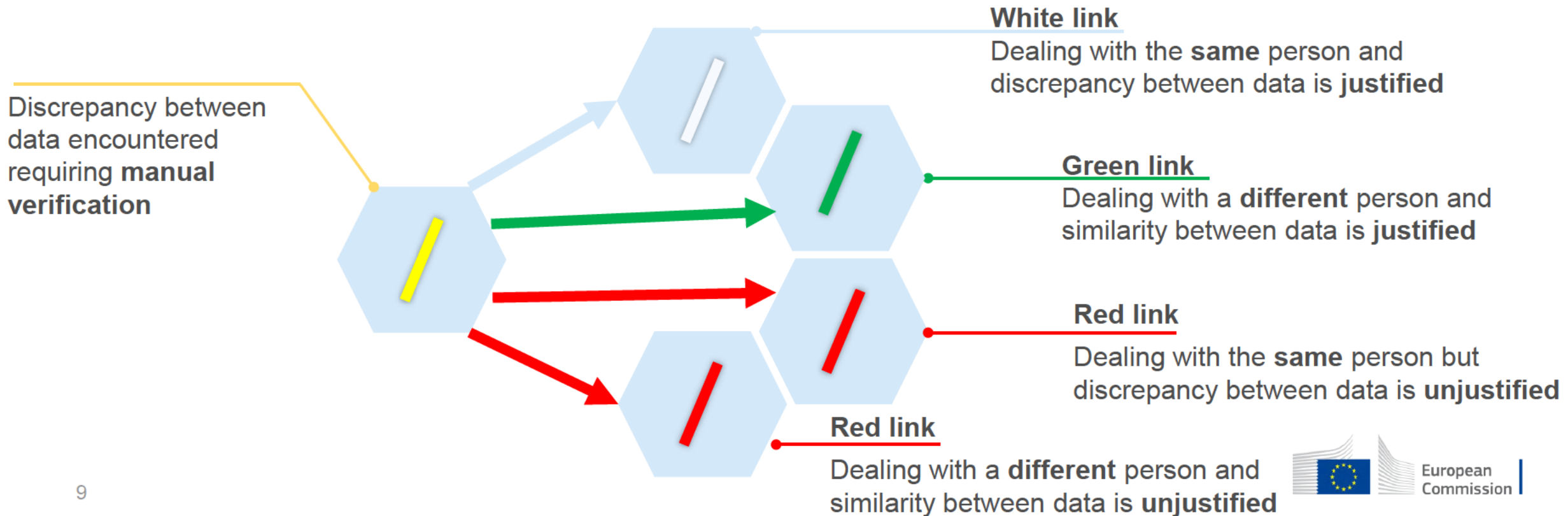
Multiple-identity detection is the comparison of newly inserted or updated **identity data, travel document data and biometric data** against all existing data.





# Multiple-identity detector (2.2)

**Manual verification** is the assessment whether the authorities are dealing with the **same** or a **different** person, and whether the discrepancy between the two datasets is **justified** or **not**.





# Upcoming queries for Visa authorities

*Focus on revised VIS and Interoperability Regulations*

# What is coming in second half 2026?

- **VIS automated queries** to support authorities in their analysis of the visa request.

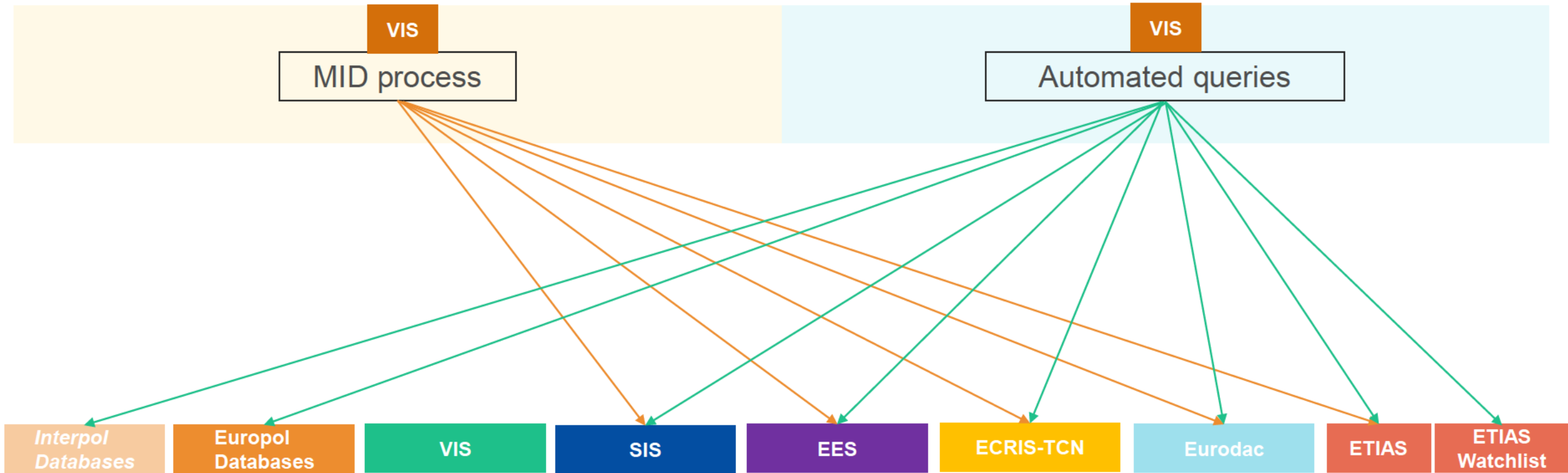
*“Do any negative indicators exist in the EU information systems, that are important to take into consideration when assessing the person’s visa request?”*

# What is coming in 2027?

- **Multiple-identity detection** to support authorities with the correct identification of the person requesting a visa.

*“Am I really dealing with the person he or she claims him or herself to be?”*

# What is checked (from visa authority perspective)?



# Upcoming queries for Asylum authorities

*Focus on revised VIS, revised Eurodac and Interoperability Regulations*

# What is coming in second half 2026?

- **Specific queries (in the revised VIS)** to support authorities in determining responsibility for asylum request and deciding on the asylum request.

*“Does the VIS contain any information that can help determining which Member States is responsible for an asylum request?”*

*“Does the VIS contain information on the applicant for asylum?”*

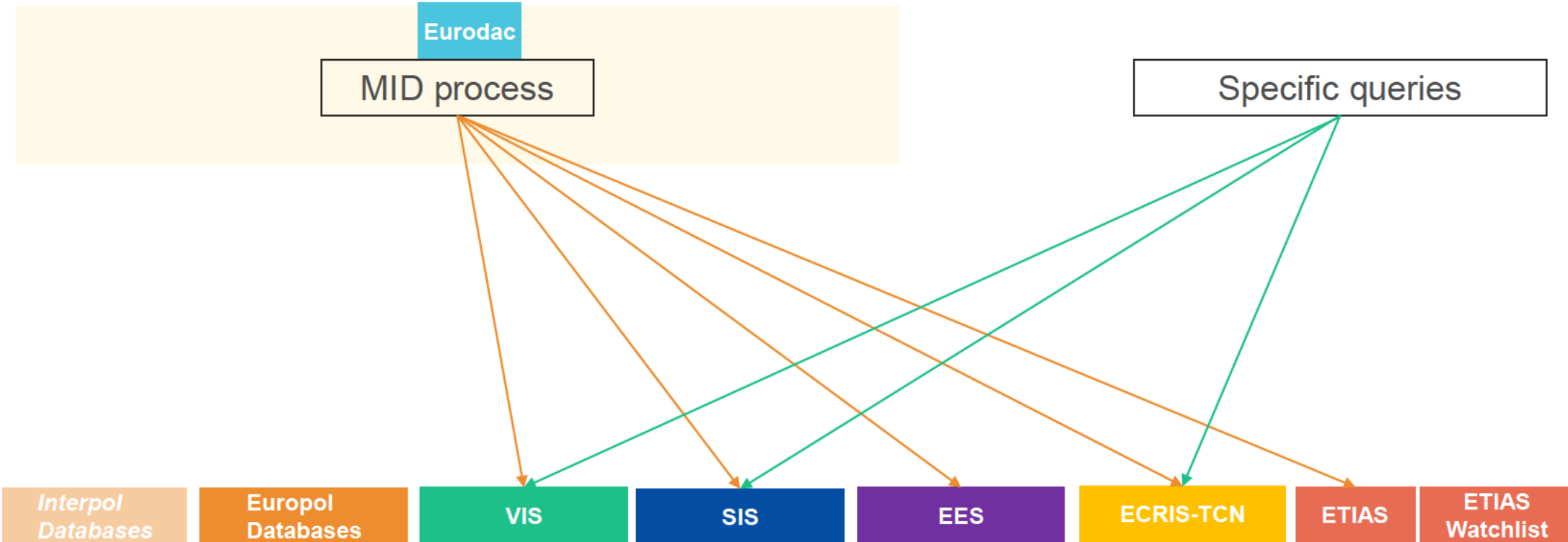
# What is coming in 2027?

- **Multiple-identity detection** to support authorities with the correct identification of the person requesting asylum (also applies to other Eurodac categories).

*“Am I really dealing with the person he or she claims him or herself to be?”*



# What is checked (from asylum authority perspective)?



# Upcoming statistics to both authorities

# The CRRS



All EU information systems **generate data and statistics**. To facilitate access to this data and its use the **Central Repository for Reporting and Statistics (CRRS) tool** was established.



The CRRS stores **anonymised data** extracted from the underlying EU information systems and Interoperability components solely for the purpose of reporting and statistics.



Apart from the regular reporting, authorities will be able to access and retrieve the statistical data **themselves**.

# Coming in second half 2026

- Access to reporting and statistics through the CRRS
  - Data of the VIS – Regulation (EC) No 767/2008, article 45a
  - Data of Eurodac – Regulation (EU) 2024/1356, article 12
  - Cross-system statistics – Regulation (EU) 2024/1358, article 12(3)
    - Between **Eurodac, the VIS, ETIAS and the EES**
    - The Commission shall, by means of **implementing acts, specify the content of the monthly cross-system statistics.**

# Summary

- Improved searches to support identity checks
- Improved searches to support business operations
- More and easier access to statistics



# Thank you



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