

ICSMS

- *ICSMS (Information and Communication System for Market Surveillance) is an IT tool that provides for a comprehensive communication platform between all the market surveillance authorities.*
- *ICSMS consists of an internal area (accessible only to market surveillance authorities) and a public area.*

Role

ICSMS offers fast and efficient communication means for market surveillance authorities to exchange information within a short space of time. ICSMS allows information on non-compliant products (test results, product identification data, photographs, economic operator information, risk assessments, accident information, information on measures taken by surveillance authorities etc.) to be quickly and efficiently shared between authorities.

The aim is not only **to avoid** cases where an unsafe product taken off the market in one country to be on sale for a long time in another country but mainly to have a **market surveillance policy tool** that allows to establish a co-operation mechanism among authorities.

While being aware of the fact that the mere reliable exchange of information is crucial for the market surveillance, it must be acknowledged that the added value of ICSMS stems from its capacity to be the platform for the implementation of the European market surveillance policy.

In this respect, whenever a national authority wants to exchange information about a product under investigation with other authorities in order to share resources (e.g. for product checks), carry out common actions or consult other authorities, it must input into ICSMS the relevant information. This must be done as early as possible and certainly well before the decision to adopt measures for products found to present a risk. E.g. if a national authority cannot determine the level of the risk presented by a relevant product and carries out investigations, it must use ICSMS in order to communicate with the competent authorities of the other Member States.

Thus the ultimate role of ICSMS is to **help the European Union** to fulfil one of its major political objectives; i.e. to ensure reliability and coherence in the implementation and enforcement of the European legislation, in order for operators and citizens to benefit from the original intention of full access to the Internal Market.

In particular ICSMS helps market surveillance authorities to:

- proceed to quick and in-time exchange of information on market surveillance measures;
- coordinate their activities and inspections more effectively, especially by focusing on products which have not been inspected or tested yet;

- share resources and have thus more time to concentrate on other products which have yet to be tested;
- carry out wide-scale market interventions wherever products of a dubious nature are concerned using the latest information and avoid thus duplicate and multiple inspections;
- Elaborate best practices;
- Ensure that market surveillance is efficient and of even rigour in all Member States and avoid thus distortion to competition;
- Establish an encyclopaedia of EU market surveillance intelligence.

Structure

The internal area is destined for market surveillance authorities, customs authorities and the EU. It contains all information available (product description, test results, measures taken etc.). Only ICSMS account holders may access this area

The public area is destined for consumers, users and manufacturers. The information which is visible to the public provides only the data which reference the product and its non-compliance, and not any internal documents (i.e. information exchange between authority and importer/manufacturer).

ICSMS enables specific searches for non-compliant products. Confidentiality aspects are protected by a system of access authorisations.

Each market surveillance authority can input data about investigated products, which are not already in the database, and add information (e.g. additional tests results, measures taken) to an already existing product information file.

Note

The most recent ICSMS version is available for all interested parties at the following address:
<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/icsms>