© imagemonkey

en | de | fr

Position Paper | 10.06.2020

Protecting Schengen

Why internal border controls in Europe should be lifted immediately

INTRODUCTION

Border controls in the European Schengen area jeopardise one of the most tangible achievements of an integrated Europe: the possibility to travel and live together in a common area without internal border controls. Internal border controls divide families and friends, they re-establish boundaries between long integrated regions and neighbourhoods and undermine the process of developing new regional cooperation. They seriously restrict our freedom.

The Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament stands up for the achievements of the Schengen area. 35 years ago, on 14 June 1985, five European Member States in the small town of Schengen laid the foundation for the possibility for now 400 million people to travel and live together without restrictions in Europe. We must uphold this achievement. It is at the very heart of the European project.

Internal border controls against the pandemic are ineffective and unlawful. They do not help to prevent the spreading of the virus, harm the economic activity and family life of cross-border workers and have serious repercussions on the right of free movement of EU citizens. **Therefore, internal border controls must be lifted immediately and replaced by more appropriate and effective measures. The capacities for EU-wide manual contact tracing by health authorities need to be scaled up as a matter of urgency, an app is not needed for this purpose. In addition, Member States must provide up-to-date information to travellers. They should also coordinate their (de-)confinement measures cross-border and adhere to the guidance by the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) as outlined in the latter's publication "Considerations for travel-related measures to reduce spread of COVID-19 in the EU/EEA"[1].**

Our call for protecting border-free travel in the Schengen area is not a call for "getting back to normal". Confinement measures are still necessary where infection rates are high, and physical distancing, hygienic measures as well as quarantine requirements should remain in place as long as a reliable vaccine against COVID-19 is not available. But we argue that the current focus on border controls distracts from real solutions. Alternatives to border controls are more effective in preventing the spreading of the virus. It is therefore all the more unjustified to jeopardize the

achievements of the Schengen area.

Unfortunately, the Commission is for the time being not very helpful in finding an alternative to border checks in the Schengen area. In its Communication on lifting internal border controls, the Commission proposes lifting border controls only between regions with comparatively low infection levels and similar containment measures.[2] Thus, in case of a second wave, borders will likely be closed again. If we continue like this, we run the risk that Member States establish threats to public health as a legitimate reason for national border controls and for limiting the freedom of travel and movement in the EU and for discriminating between EU citizens.

- READ THE POSITION PAPER

---

[1] https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Considerations-related-to-measures-for-travellers-reduce-spread-COVID-19-in-EUEEA.pdf

[2] https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication_freemovement.pdf

Recommended

Event

© girma-nigusse



FRONTEX – WHICH WAY?

02.07.2026

Study

©abraham osorio



REFORMING FRONTEX | A HUMAN RIGHTS - BASED REVIEW

01.07.2026

Press release

Nikolaus Riss



MEPs denied proper inspection of detention center in G…

29.06.2026

Press release

MarcosMaltese



[Right-wing majority jettisons compassion & common sens…]

17.06.2026

Attached documents

Protecting Schengen - position paper on lifting internal border controls - 10 June 2020

Please share

- E-Mail