Press release | 16.09.2011

Schengen/border-free zone

Commission proposals point the way for preserving the purpose of Schengen

The European Commission today presented its anticipated proposals aimed at revising the Schengen border system in response to the controversy surrounding the reimposition of border controls earlier this year. The Greens welcomed the proposal to make decisions on reimposition of border controls subject to EU-level approval in particular. Commenting on the proposals, Green MEP **Judith Sargentini** said:

"Today's proposals go some way towards preserving the integrity of the Schengen system, which is one of the EU's major and tangible success stories. The Schengen border-free system is trans-national in its conception and purpose; it is therefore common-sense that any decision to temporarily reintroduce border controls be subject to EU-level approval and not left up to the narrow-minded, national whims of individual member states. We welcome the Commission's proposal to 'Europeanise' any decision on the reimposition of border controls by any member state and believe the majority in the EP will push to ensure this is adopted.

"The reintroduction of border controls completely undermines the essence of the Schengen system and any decision to do so must only be a last resort. Any 'exceptional' and immediate reintroduction, not covered by EU authorisation, must be strictly limited temporally, and certainly not be extended beyond five days. We welcome that the Commission has maintained this limit."

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Judith Sargentini

Member

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