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Press release | 25.10.2011

Smart borders

Big brother border proposals with high costs are anything but smart

The European Commission today adopted 'smart borders' proposals, which aim to promote new electronic technologies for external border control, along the lines of the US system, including a biometric registration programme. The Greens criticised the proposals as excessive both in terms of oversight and cost. Commenting on the proposals, Green migration and borders spokesperson **Ska Keller** said:

"These proposals are anything but smart. Europe does not need a US-style big brother system of electronic border controls but the Commission is proposing wasting large sums to copy this US model. These proposals will lead to greater bureaucracy and extra, unnecessary monitoring, at an estimated cost of over €1 billion.

"One of the core stated aims of these electronic border controls is to ensure that visitors to the EU do not illegally overstay their permit but it would create the same problems as the US system: those who fail to have their exit registered are deemed illegal. Those who illegally overstay their permits and stay in the EU will not be caught under this system. In any case, we already have a system that checks all visitors to the EU on entry and exit, with those requiring visas also having to provide fingerprints and face-scans: this is already excessive.

"The proposed system would open the door to a far more extensive and excessive collection of personal data of those travelling to and from the EU. This would compromise the principles of fundamental rights and data protection rules guaranteed by the EU. Innocent travellers who fail to register under this system would be automatically viewed as a risk and that is unacceptable."

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Ska Keller

Member

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