

EU internal and external borders rules strengthened

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Last night the European Parliament, Commission and Council reached an agreement on three major pieces of legislation within the framework of border management. Two of them lay down new Schengen governance rules by establishing an evaluation mechanism to verify application of the Schengen acquis and by setting common rules on the reintroduction of controls and internal borders in exceptional circumstances. The third, also known as EUROSUR, further develops the European external border surveillance system by setting up a common framework to facilitate the cooperation among Member States and the exchange of information between Member States and FRONTEX.

ALDE MEP Renate Weber (PNL, Romania), EP rapporteur on the proposed Regulation to review the common rules on the reintroduction of internal borders and shadow on the Schengen evaluation mechanism said: "Freedom of movement within Schengen area is one of the greatest achievements of our European integration that must be preserved. With this new regulation, we set clear rules and checks and balances for situations of last resort to avoid any abuse or misuse of the exceptional reintroduction of controls at Schengen's internal borders. The implications of an eventual reintroduction of border checks must involve the European Commission and Parliament."

Parliament will formally adopt the agreement on the Schengen reports during the June plenary session.

EP rapporteur on EUROSUR, ALDE MEP, Jan Mulder (VVD, the Netherlands) said: "Today's agreement on Eurosur is an important moment for EU citizens' freedom of movement. Reinforcing the cooperation between Member States on the management of the external borders of the EU will help restore a climate of trust and reinforce their commitment to the absence of controls at the internal borders".

He added: "Parliament secured major achievements tonight: a strong focus on fundamental rights (for example, the principle of "non-refoulement" will be part of Eurosur's monitoring); an increased role for the Commission, in particular for monitoring the agreements between Frontex and third countries; reinforced data protection provisions and increased cooperation between Frontex and international organisations."

Parliament will formally adopt the agreement during the September plenary session.