

Full application of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in Bulgaria and Romania: abolition of checks at internal land, sea and air borders

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The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the report by Sergei STANISHEV (S&D, BG) on the application of all provisions of the Schengen acquis in Bulgaria and Romania: abolition of checks at internal land, sea and air borders.

Members recall that all the conditions necessary for the full application of the Schengen acquis were met by Bulgaria and Romania in 2011. They therefore consider that the proposal to split the abolition of internal border controls into two legal acts in order to set different deadlines for the abolition of land, sea and air border controls constitutes a significant departure from the text of the [draft Council decision](#) of 29 September 2010 approved by Parliament.

Members fear that the introduction of a two-step approach could have a negative impact on the future enlargement of the Schengen area. Indeed, the division of the Council decision into two legal acts (one for the abolition of controls at air and sea borders and the other for land borders) would legally codify the current double standards in the Schengen area, where Bulgaria and Romania have all the obligations and responsibilities of fully-fledged Schengen members, but do not enjoy the benefit of free movement.

The report underlines that the maintenance of controls at the internal borders of Bulgaria and Romania has a negative impact on exports and imports to and from both Member States and on transport operations to and from some of the largest freight and passenger ports in southern Europe, resulting in financial losses and increased expenditure.

It is estimated that the reintroduction of border controls could cost the European Union between EUR 50 million and EUR 20 billion in one-off costs and EUR 2 billion in annual operating costs.

Members urge the Council to present as soon as possible a new draft decision on the application of all the provisions of the Schengen acquis in Bulgaria and Romania on the basis of its draft decision of 29 September 2010 and, by means of a single legal act, to take an immediate decision for the abolition of checks at internal land, sea and air borders. They invite the Council to apply the same approach to Croatia.

Lastly, Members point out that the Council can only take a decision on the application of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in Bulgaria and Romania after consulting Parliament. They reiterate their call to the Council to notify Parliament if it intends to depart from the text approved by Parliament in its [legislative resolution of 8 June 2011](#)