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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 4 June 2026
To: Delegations

Subject: Council Conclusions on strengthening EU and national Schengen governance

Delegations will find in the annex the Council Conclusions on strengthening EU and national Schengen governance, as approved by the Council (Justice and Home Affairs) at its 4179th meeting on 4 June 2026.

Council Conclusions on strengthening EU and national Schengen governance

Schengen has evolved into a robust, unique and comprehensive system, where different components must be implemented in a coherent and coordinated way to boost our collective resilience.

A well-functioning Schengen area requires EU and national governance frameworks that mutually reinforce each other, bringing together all relevant policy areas and implementing authorities. These frameworks comprise a set of rules, procedures and practices enabling the effective implementation of the Schengen acquis, ensuring the free movement of persons across internal borders, strengthening the management of external borders and maintaining a high level of internal security.

They provide a coordinated and coherent approach to addressing the current challenges that can affect the Schengen area. In this respect, the necessary consideration of migration-related policy areas should be made, since irregular migration and unauthorised secondary movements, despite declining numbers, as well as instrumentalization of migration, continue to pose a significant challenge to a well-functioning Schengen area.

Despite sustained efforts during recent years to strengthen the Schengen area, some shortcomings persist in the implementation of the Schengen acquis. A number of recommendations from the Schengen evaluations remain unaddressed, a significant number remain to be fully addressed, while others take long to implement. Some results of Schengen evaluations show that ineffective national Schengen governance may negatively affect national performance with an impact on the functioning of the Schengen area and thereby potentially on the mutual trust among Member States.

At the same time, EU governance frameworks need to be strengthened, as an essential component of the governance of the Schengen area. The most pressing shortcomings, identified through existing tools, should be followed by strategic discussions within the Council, both at the political and technical levels.

While respecting national particularities and existing administrative structures, solid governance at both national and EU level is key to develop and implement strategic processes, including regarding integrated border management and related capability development, internal security, and effective use of EU and national funding, to address identified deficiencies and implement the Schengen priorities. Consistent national and EU governance frameworks also contribute to crisis preparedness, especially with respect to contingency planning linked to integrated border management.

In light of the above,

Regarding Schengen governance on the EU level:

1. The Council recalls the Schengen Declaration of 12 June 2025¹, which emphasises the importance to further consolidate Schengen governance at EU and national level, and indicates that a Schengen area without internal border controls underpins freedom of movement, fostering social cohesion and economic growth, while the temporary reintroduction of internal border controls should remain a measure of last resort.
2. The Council also recalls the European Council Conclusions of 19 March 2026², in particular its point 31 on the prevention and removal of barriers to the four freedoms, for competitiveness and the functioning of the single market.

¹ 10068/25.

² As an essential enabler of the Single Market, the Schengen area is a crucial driver of economic growth and competitiveness (EUCO 1/26).

3. The Council recalls the Strategic Guidelines for legislative and operational planning within the area of freedom, security and justice³.
4. The Council values the Schengen Evaluation and Monitoring Mechanism⁴ as the main quality control mechanism at EU level, guaranteeing the proper functioning of the Schengen area, and the Vulnerability Assessment⁵ in the field of border management. The Council underlines the importance of the State of Schengen Report, the Schengen Barometer and the Schengen Scoreboard. They should provide a shared data- and analysis-driven comprehensive assessment of the functioning of the Schengen area, as a basis for evidence-based policy making. Those tools should, in a concise manner, identify the most impactful results and shortcomings across the Schengen area, supporting the definition by the Council and its preparatory bodies of key areas for follow-up, including through discussions in the relevant Working Parties and decision-making in the Schengen Council. In this direction, the Commission, when preparing the Barometer should clearly highlight the political dimension of the identified results and shortcomings, while its methodology should be constantly improved. The State of Schengen Report and the Schengen Barometer must be shared with the Council well ahead of any discussions in the relevant Working Parties to allow for concrete preparation of the Schengen Council.

³ 16343/24.

⁴ Council Regulation (EU) 2022/922 of 9 June 2022 on the establishment and operation of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen acquis and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013.

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1052/2013 and (EU) 2016/1624.

5. The Schengen Council enhanced the political steering of the Schengen area. It is the role of the Schengen Council to ensure stronger coherence between the technical evaluations and the political steering of Schengen. Noting that progress was achieved in strengthening Schengen governance in recent years, the use of the available EU tools should continue to be prioritised at EU and national level, while stronger emphasis on a structured follow-up process at EU level, including through dedicated discussions within the relevant Council preparatory bodies to identify areas requiring further action should be pursued. In this direction, the Council invites the Commission, in line with its existing competencies, to regularly provide an overview of follow-up actions taken in response to findings identified through the Schengen Barometer.
6. Therefore, the Council reinforces its political commitment to thoroughly and timely follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations stemming from Schengen evaluations with the support of the Commission and the relevant EU agencies. By doing so, the Council will be able to uphold a high level of accountability and foster mutual trust among Member States.
7. In the same spirit, the Council, with the support of the Commission and relevant EU agencies, should use all available dialogue frameworks at EU level to actively address and pursue solutions to persistent shortcomings in the application of the acquis.
8. The Council invites the European Commission and the relevant EU agencies, in line with their respective competences, to enhance situational awareness through regular situational pictures and analytical reports on the state of Schengen. The Commission should continue to develop the State of Schengen Report, the Schengen Barometer and the Schengen Scoreboard, in line with paragraph 4 above, and in close cooperation with EU agencies and Member States.
9. The Council invites also the relevant EU Agencies to continue developing their training capacities, in line with their respective competences and with Member States' needs, and to closely collaborate among themselves in order to increase synergies, avoid overlapping and allow for rapid reaction to changing needs.

Regarding national Schengen governance:

10. The Council invites Member States to further enhance strong political leadership to oversee and coordinate Schengen-related activities, including the implementation of the Schengen Council cycle priorities and actions.
11. To achieve this, Member States are invited to further develop their integrated, whole-of-government approach, ensuring coherent and coordinated action across all relevant policy areas, including related areas potentially impacting Schengen, such as migration, while respecting fundamental rights, including the protection of personal data.
12. Having in place well-functioning national quality check arrangements, organised by Member States to suit their relevant specific needs and structures, could support this coherent and comprehensive approach covering all Schengen policy areas, in line with existing provisions of the Schengen acquis.
13. Without pre-empting negotiations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the need for appropriate resources to implement and develop the Schengen framework should be taken into due consideration. This is crucial for ensuring the effective implementation of EU and national capabilities and contingency plans, supported by sufficient personnel, robust training, adequate infrastructure and equipment, regular testing, and updates, considering also support from EU agencies.