

## THE SCHENGEN AREA

The name of Schengen, a small village in Luxembourg close to the border with Germany and France, has become synonymous with the free movement of people in Europe.

The abolition of internal border controls has gone hand in hand with common rules for controlling external borders and reinforced judicial and police cooperation for combating crime.

Each state in the Schengen area is regularly assessed by the EU competent bodies to check that it applies the agreed rules correctly.

The Schengen area without internal border controls currently covers 27 countries (23 European Union Member States and 4 associated states), which apply the entire Schengen *acquis*.

The external border of the Schengen area is over 50 000 km long (80 % sea and 20 % land) and includes hundreds of airports and maritime ports and land border-crossing points.



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## SCHENGEN

Your gateway  
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Print: ISBN 978-92-824-9188-1, doi:10.2860/332413, QC-04-23-067-EN-C – PDF: ISBN 978-92-824-9155-3, doi:10.2860/373077, QC-04-23-067-EN-N

# The Schengen area

- The **Schengen *acquis*** applies in its entirety to the European territories of the following EU Member States: **Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain** (including the **Balearic Islands** and the **Canary Islands**), **France, Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta**, the **Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal** (including **Madeira** and the **Azores**), **Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland** and **Sweden**.
- **Denmark** is an EU Member State that has a special position with regard to the application of the Schengen *acquis*. It has to implement the entire Schengen *acquis*, not as EU law but as an obligation under international law. As a consequence, Denmark does not vote when Schengen measures are adopted by the EU.
- **Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway** (except **Svalbard**) and **Switzerland**, which are not EU Member States, are associated with the implementation of the Schengen *acquis* through **association agreements**. They have the right to be present and make suggestions during the preparation of Schengen *acquis* acts that are subsequently adopted by the EU institutions. They have to implement all Schengen acts after their adoption by the EU institutions and notify the Council of the European Union accordingly.
- **Bulgaria, Cyprus** and **Romania** are EU Member States bound by the entire Schengen *acquis*. However, they do not yet apply the parts of the *acquis* that concern the absence of controls at internal borders, including visas. Bulgaria and Romania are also connected to the Schengen information system. Cyprus will be fully connected to the Schengen information system from 23 July 2023. The controls at the internal borders with these Member States can be lifted only as a result of a decision adopted by the Council.
- **Ireland** is an EU Member State which does not participate in Schengen cooperation. However, it may request and be authorised to take part in some parts of the Schengen *acquis* concerning police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters. Today, Ireland provisionally applies the areas of the Schengen *acquis* in which it has asked to participate, including the Schengen information system related to police.

