

Pascal Arimont

Mitglied des Europäischen Parlaments

President of the Commission
Ursula von der Leyen

Brussels, May 8th 2020

Ending border controls and restrictions on admission at the EU's internal borders

Dear President of the Commission,

Almost all EU Member States have been applying strict border controls and restrictions on admission at internal borders for several weeks now. What Member States considered proportionate at the beginning of the COVID 19 crisis for reasons of public health is no longer valid. As the respective protection measures in the different Member States are very similar, border controls and travel restrictions are no longer compatible with the Schengen Borders Code and the Directive on the free movement of persons. In addition, almost all EU Member States are starting to implement exit strategies.

In this light, it is incomprehensible that the European Commission has so far made no clear appeal to put an end to border controls and restrictions on admission at internal EU borders. In its roadmap towards lifting COVID-19 containment measures, drawn up jointly with the Council, the European Commission recommended that the *“travel restrictions and border controls currently applied should be lifted once the border regions’ epidemiological situation converges sufficiently and social distancing rules are widely and responsibly applied”*. An exact reference date or clear criteria for the end of border controls and restrictions on admission have not been defined.

The European Commission needs to become much clearer in order to protect the European idea as the return to the model of mere national thinking represents a serious threat to the cohesion of the European Union. In particular, the many border regions of Europe feel the severe restrictions. For people living in these regions, crossing borders is nothing exceptional, it happens on a daily basis on professional, recreational grounds and especially for family reasons.

We therefore urge you to strongly advocate to finally put an end to the border controls and travel restrictions on our internal borders not later than May 9th, the date of the delivery of the Schuman Declaration.

Yours sincerely,

Pascal Arimont

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