

## **Resolution of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)**

### Concerning the Use of Border Controls as a Measure of Last Resort within the European Union

The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR),

Stating that the AEBR is a network of more than 100 border regions and Euroregions across Europe, and is committed to representing the interests of border regions and advocating for constructive dialogue among member states to enhance cooperation,

Aware of the fact that approximately 150 million people living in border regions which means 30% of Europeans;

Aware of the importance of the Schengen Treaty, which underpins the free movement of people and goods within the European Union, a core value of the Union;

Recalling that the Schengen Treaty explicitly states that border controls should only be used as a measure of last resort;

Noting that recently, border controls and questionnaires concerning personal details have been reintroduced by influential countries in response to immigration and security issues, though these measures appear to be political reactions rather than effective solutions;

The AEBR recognizes that according to the Schengen Code, Member States can re-introduce temporary border checks 'only as a last resort', when they face a serious threat to public policy or internal security. The AEBR recognizes the need to take action to prevent illegal migration and cross-border crime. At the same time, it points out that that the population and the economy in the border regions depends on permeable borders and the free movement of people.

Noting that there are effective alternatives to border controls,

Recognizing that residents of border regions are experiencing significant disruptions due to these controls, including delays, economic disadvantages, and a reduction in social cohesion,

Emphasizing that open borders are essential for the development of border regions and for strengthening European integration,

The Association of European Border Regions:

1. Reaffirms its support for the principle of free movement of people and goods as a cornerstone of European integration and cooperation.
2. Calls for restraint in the use of border controls, which should only be applied as a last resort, in line with the Schengen Treaty.
3. Emphasizes that border controls should not become an inflationary measure, and that repeated implementation of these controls by different major member states set a dangerous precedent, potentially leading other countries to follow.
4. Declares that the current trend of border controls seriously hinders integration and cooperation within border regions and negatively impacts the daily lives of citizens in these areas.
5. Urges the European Union and its member states to apply border controls based solely on objective criteria, with a strong focus on maintaining the Schengen area and cross-border cooperation.
6. Advocates for strengthening cross-border cooperation and coordination between countries to address challenges such as illegal immigration without resorting to repeated border controls.

Resolves to disseminate this resolution broadly within the European Union and to relevant European institutions, emphasizing the importance of a unified European approach and protecting border regions from the negative consequences of frequent border control measures.

Adopted by the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR),

Dated: October 24<sup>th</sup> 2024

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