

# Romania's and Bulgaria's accession to the Schengen Area



- whereas the Schengen Area is one of the most valuable achievements of the European Union in terms of freedom of movement and the integration of the Schengen acquis into the EU framework represents a cornerstone of European integration;
- whereas pursuant to the principle of sincere cooperation enshrined in Article 4 TEU, the EU and the member states shall, in full mutual respect, assist each other in carrying out tasks which flow from the Treaties;
- whereas the Council, in its conclusion of 9 June 2011 (9167/3/11), confirmed the successful conclusion of the evaluation process and the technical readiness of Romania and Bulgaria to accede to the Schengen Area;
- whereas in the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on December 8, 2022, Austria vetoed the decision for the full application of the Schengen acquis in Romania, Austria and The Netherlands vetoed in the case of Bulgaria;
- whereas withholding the decision on the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen Area may raise concerns amongst the people of Romania and Bulgaria and question their confidence in the EU project and its institutions;
- whereas Romanian and Bulgarian citizens are discriminated against as they face significant delays, excessive bureaucratic burden and additional costs when travelling or doing business abroad, compared to their counterparts from the Schengen countries;
- whereas the European People's Party and its member parties have traditionally been the strongest champions of European integration and of the deepening of our Union; whereas the EPP member parties play a crucial role in the achievement of Romania's and Bulgaria's accession to the Schengen Area as a full member.
- whereas, the recent decisions made by a number of member states to reintroduce border checks within the Schengen Area are further eroding the trust among Member States, thereby threatening the very existence of the freedom of movement;

**The European People's Party Political Assembly:**

- A. Calls upon all EU member states to uphold their commitments to the Schengen Agreement, adhere to the established rules, and work collaboratively to address any security concerns without compromising the principles of free movement and sincere cooperation;
- B. Emphasizes that Romania's and Bulgaria's exclusion from the Schengen Area hinders the full participation of the two countries as member states of the EU;
- C. reaffirms the EPP's strong support for Romania's and Bulgaria's accession to the Schengen Area as an element of its steadfast commitment to championing European integration; Recalls also the European Parliament's constant calls on the matter; Considers the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen Area to be essential, as an enlarged Schengen Area without internal border controls will make the EU stronger;

- D. Acknowledges with regret that the refusal to accept Romania and Bulgaria into the Schengen Area led to a sense of discrimination among the citizens of Romania and Bulgaria, had a detrimental effect on public support for the EU, and led to the raise of extreme-right political parties;
- E. Considers that the refusal to accept Romania and Bulgaria in the Schengen Area negatively affects a number of EU objectives and policies, such as, freedom of movement, environmental protection and climate change, competition policy, competitiveness and transport policy, among others;
- F. Urges all EPP member parties to intensify their efforts to support Romania's and Bulgaria's immediate accession to the Schengen Area and asks Austria to reconsider their positioning;
- G. Calls on the Council's Spanish presidency to give high priority to this topic in order for Romania and Bulgaria to join the Schengen Area.



Rue du Commerce 10  
1000 Brussels  
**T** +32-2-2854140  
**E** [connect@epp.eu](mailto:connect@epp.eu)

The publication of this document  
received financial support from the  
European Parliament.

Sole liability rests with the author. The European  
Parliament is not responsible for any use that may be  
made of the information contained therein.

**If you have any question you would like to ask please contact us.**