

Efficient border control

The European Union wants to create a European border control system. Aims: getting illegal immigration under control and fight against cross-border criminality.

Prevention of illegal border crossings, increase of the inner security within the European Union by getting cross-border criminality under control and more help and support for illegal immigrants getting into mortal danger on sea: these are the main emphasis of the planned European border control system *Eurosur* focussing on the southern and eastern EU borders in the beginning.

With this system the EU member states should be supported in reaching awareness about the situation on their external borders and in increasing reaction capabilities of the judicial authorities. The 'situation awareness' measures the capability of authorities to discover cross-border movements and to find sufficient reasons and justification for control measures. The reaction capability measures the period of time necessary in order to control cross-border movement and the time and means to react properly on unusual circumstances.

Eurosur should provide the common technical framework for a more effective permanent cooperation and communication between the EU member authorities. Besides, the system should ease the inset of modern technology in border surveillance. One of the aims is the exchange of information between the national and European systems; with the exception of person related information.

Illegal immigrants. The national border control systems currently cover only selected sections of the external EU border. It is only possible to keep certain flat and coastal areas as well as areas with operations ongoing under observance. The border control authorities need more up-to-date and reliable information in order to reduce the number of illegal immigrants crossing external EU border undiscovered.

Cross-border criminality. Border surveillance does not only prevent illegal border crossing but is also an instrument against cross-border criminality such as terrorism, human trafficking, drug and weapon smuggling. An efficient border administration system on national and European level should contribute to a more efficient fight against cross-border criminality.

Rescue of human lives.

Numerous illegal immigrants and refugees take enormous personal risks and roughness by hiding in



vehicles or vessels in order to enter the European Union. The number of immigrants drowning in the Atlantic Ocean between Africa and Canary Islands as well as in the Mediterranean Sea was increasing drastically lately. The EU wants to reduce this dramatic death rate significantly. Smaller vessels on sea should be discovered faster and easier in order to increase the chances for search and rescue activities.

The integrated net should refer to the Mediterranean Sea in a first step, focussing on the inner security and should connect border control authorities and other authorities taking care of maritime security interests. Later the net should be extended to the entire European Union maritime area and should not only cover border related aspects but also other maritime activities such as shipping security, protection of sea environment, fishing control and law enforcement.

'It is a crucial step'. *Eurosur* is part of the future European border management which foresees also new instruments of an integrated border administration model and the further development of *Frontex*. The European Commission considers *Eurosur* as a 'crucial step towards the progressive establishment of a common integrated European border administration system'.

In putting into action the 'External Border Fund' should be the most important solidarity mechanism of the member states. The implementation of *Eurosur* could start already in 2008 in specific the intensified participation of EU member states in joint border patrols.

Source: Austrian Police Magazine 'Die öffentliche Sicherheit', Nr. 7-8/08.

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