

Home affairs

EP endorses third country participation in Schengen acquis

By Manon Malhère | Wednesday 15 February 2012

The European Parliament has agreed to Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland taking part in the work of the committees which assist the European Commission in the exercise of its powers as regards the implementation, application and development of the Schengen *acquis*. At a plenary session in Strasbourg on 15 February, MEPs adopted, in first reading, the draft Council decision on the conclusion of an arrangement along these lines between the EU and these four countries.

The draft decision formalises the participation of associated states in the process of drafting texts in the Schengen comitology committees (namely the joint committees) made up of representatives of governments of the associated states, the Council and the Commission.

The decision envisages that the states in question will be associated as observers in the work of the Schengen comitology committees that assist the Commission. It then defines a number of rights and obligations to guarantee their participation. They are given the opportunity, for instance, to present problems created by a given act or to suggest a response to problems experienced by the other delegations and to give their views on all questions related to the preparation and drafting of provisions. The associated states also have the right to make suggestions. However, to the extent that they participate only in the development of acts, «the associated states do not participate in voting in the Schengen comitology committee and shall withdraw when this committee proceeds to a vote», says the text.

Copyright © 2008 Europolitics. Tous droits réservés.