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Council and the European Parliament reach a provisional agreement on the EUROSUR system

The Permanent Representatives Committee¹ (Coreper) has endorsed the agreement reached with the European Parliament on 29 May on the proposal for a regulation establishing the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR).

The text was negotiated in trilogue meetings between the Council - represented by the Irish presidency - the European Parliament and the European Commission. After the European Parliament adopts its position on first reading - which is expected for September - the Council will approve the European Parliament's position and the act will be finally adopted.

The aim of the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) is to reinforce the control of the Schengen external borders. In particular, EUROSUR will establish a mechanism for member states' authorities carrying out border surveillance activities to share operational information and to cooperate with each other and with the FRONTEX Agency in order to reduce the number of irregular immigrants entering the EU undetected, and to increase internal security by preventing cross-border crime, such as trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of drugs.

According to the regulation, member states should establish national coordination centres to improve cooperation and information exchange between them and with the Agency for the purposes of border surveillance.

The regulation will apply to the surveillance of land and sea external borders of the member states. It will also apply to the surveillance of air borders as well as to checks at

¹ The Permanent Representatives Committee is composed of the ambassadors of the 27 EU member states. Its role is to prepare decisions of the Council.

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border crossing points if the member states voluntarily provide such information to EUROSUR.

The application of the EUROSUR regulation to the member states located at the southern and eastern external borders¹ will start from 2 December 2013 and to the remaining member states from 1 December 2014.

The EUROSUR system has been progressively developed since 2008. EUROSUR will improve daily cooperation between national authorities by establishing an information sharing and cooperation mechanism, which will enable member states' authorities to carry out coordinated border surveillance activities and work together with FRONTEX at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. The conclusions of the European Council held on 23-24 June 2011 called for EUROSUR to be further developed in order to become operational by 2013.

Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom are not taking part in the adoption of this regulation.

¹ Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Spain.