



## Activities in and around ETTW

No 10 – November/December 2016

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### I. News from Board and Working Groups

The November Board meeting was scheduled to be held in Luxembourg in connection with the EUROSTAT conference on social statistics. However, as it proved difficult logistically to organize the meeting in parallel with the conference, which had expanded its focus on migration statistics, it was agreed to postpone the Board Meeting and the General Assembly to January 17, 2017. As usual the meetings will be held in the Fondation Universitaire in Brussels.

#### Follow-up to the Riga Recommendations:

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**The EUROSTAT Conference - Towards More Agile Social Statistics** took place in Luxembourg 28-30 November 2016 addressing one of ETTW's current priorities: **improving migration statistics**. For this purpose ETTW had contacted Eurostat already in September 2015 and has had a couple of meetings with the responsible team. Eurostat was planning a big conference on social statistics to be held in Luxembourg in November 2016 and welcomed the input from ETTW. We submitted several proposals for topics and a list of speakers who had made excellent presentations in the two conferences on Free Movement, co-organized by ETTW and the Latvian EU Presidency in 2015.

Subsequently Eurostat decided to let migration statistics be an important theme of the conference and took on board several points raised by the ETTW in the conference program. Three sessions were directly dealing with statistics on migration and mobility: "Statistics on Asylum and Migration", "Statistics on Intra-EU Mobility" and "New Challenges in Labour Market Statistics - including Statistics on Mobility".



The conference addressed the questions of ***new statistical methods and the need for more detailed data for population statistics and more cross country comparability***. The value and accuracy of conventional statistical categories such as NUTS and GDP were questioned, and it was agreed that these categories needed to be refined by more regular consultations with prime users of statistics.

Other conference themes were the need for more effective sampling and the challenge of comprehensive personal data collection versus the need for individual data protection. Timeliness of data collection, especially in crisis situations (e.g. the recent refugee crisis) and communication of data to decision makers were another relevant perspectives raised. The need to develop better and more adequate definitions of migration (e.g. duration) was mentioned as was the advantage of bi- and trilateral cooperation among EU member states and Eurostat to cover major current trends of migration and free movement. The dimension of statistics and geography to achieve more accurate localized outputs was also discussed.

It was concluded that the ***need for immediate, accurate and reliable statistics*** is a must and that multisource and multidiscipline statistics is the way forward. At the same time caution should be observed when sensitive issues such as migration statistics and estimates are communicated.

When the proceedings of the conference are available they will be circulated to ETTW members.

The expert meeting '**Living in another member state: barriers to EU Citizens' full enjoyment of their rights**' was organized by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency on October 10 -11. The purpose of the meeting was to have a discussion of the European Commission's project on Free Movement and citizens' rights. The ETTW had been invited to participate as a result of our priority project *on monitoring EU case law on free movement*. The FRA research project will result in ***an inventory of national case law on EU-citizens' rights***; the outcome will be available to legal practitioners and judges in the EU in a user friendly format.



At the meeting participants from EU institutions, legal authorities and civil society in the member states had a thorough discussion of the legal and communicative aspects of the project which involves the right to move and reside freely in the EU, the right to vote and stand as candidates in elections to the EP, consular protection and the right of citizens to petition the EP.

Contact: Steen Illeborg: [steen.illeborg@gmail.com](mailto:steen.illeborg@gmail.com)

## Electronic voting

The project to try to set up **Crowd funding for the ETTW i-voting campaign targeting the European elections in 2019** is still ongoing. Working Group I discussed the matter at its meeting on December 6. The two major software companies with which ETTW cooperated on the i-voting conference this summer are not willing to support us financially in launching the crowd funding so it was decided to ask the Board to go back to the European Parliament's research department in order to establish a partnership on the project.

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## Expats and Education

Relating to our priority on **Recognition of scholar grades, a skills agenda for Europe and a network of European and international schools** a draft inventory of dedicated schools/education services for expats will be tabled at the next Board meeting. Member organizations will be asked to contribute actively to this and to the questionnaire on recognition of grades mentioned in the last issue of ETTW News Service.

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## II. News from member organisations

### Belgium - Vlamingen in de Wereld

#### **New chairwoman for *Flemings in the World***

The Board of Directors of the foundation *Flemings in the World* has elected Greet Ickx as its new chairwoman as of January 1, 2017 to govern the foundation for the next four years. She is presently the foundation's vice-chairwoman.

For many years, Greet Ickx was the foundation's official representative in Shanghai, where she founded two Dutch-speaking schools. Greet Ickx possesses a great knowledge of the foundation's target group and knows exactly how to assess the requirements of Flemings living abroad.

As a mother, Greet Ickx recognises the needs of families living abroad and as the manager of her own company, she has also acquired considerable international entrepreneurial expertise.

The foundation is proud to present a chairwoman who combines foreign experience with a national network and looks forward to four flourishing years together with her and the renewed Board of Directors

Chairwoman Greet Ickx will attend the first ETTW-board meeting of 2017.

Contact: Koen Van der Schaege, Director, [koen.vanderschaeghe@viw.be](mailto:koen.vanderschaeghe@viw.be)

### Sweden – Swedes Worldwide

#### **Education for Swedes abroad**

Swedes Worldwide wants to ensure that contributions from the government to supplementary education in Swedish, for Swedes abroad, are improved and that they should cover younger children (4-5 years). They are also trying to get the rules on state subsidies for Swedish schools abroad more transparent. This autumn, Swedes Worldwide has investigated Swedish children's schooling



abroad through a survey to Swedes in other countries with children 0-18 years old. The results of this survey will be a support when Swedes Worldwide will discuss the issues with Sweden's Minister for Education Gustaf Fridolin in December.

### **Watching Swedish TV abroad**

Other issues that Swedes Worldwide have been trying to influence the Swedish government lately on are for example the shutdown of SVT World, a TV channel that has facilitated for Swedes in other countries to stay tuned on political and cultural matters in their homeland. Swedes Worldwide has asked the Minister of Culture Alice Bah Kuhnke and the president and CEO at the Swedish Television to change the determination of closing the channel, that for many Swedes abroad would be a terrible loss of contact with their roots and what is happening in their country of origin.

### **From IB Schools to Swedish Senior High Schools**

The Swedish Council for Higher Education has suggested that grades from IB schools, International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, should be equalized with grades from Swedish Senior High Schools. Swedes Worldwide has recommended that this change should not be materialized but disused, since such a move would make it almost impossible for students at IB schools to enter the most popular higher educations in Sweden. To get the highest possible grades from IB is much more difficult than getting maximum grades from Swedish Senior High Schools.

### **Studies abroad encouraged**

As part of Swedes Worldwide's strategy to make more students study abroad and also to involve younger people in the organization, Swedes Worldwide is arranging a set of seminars to inspire students to study abroad or at least choose to study part of their education in another country. A seminar was held in Stockholm last spring, another seminar took place at Lund University in November and two more seminars will follow at Uppsala University and at the Stockholm University in 2017. The participants at the seminars have received a lot of inspiration and information on what it could mean to their future if they choose to study in another country, for their career and for their personal development. In a small country like Sweden, the exchange of ideas and



knowledge among students and scientists in other countries is of outmost importance to ensure that employers have access to candidates with the right qualifications. It is also essential to Sweden's trade with a broad network and to the future in general.

## **Handbook for emigrants**

More people than ever move abroad from Sweden, over 50 000 in 2015 (the population is soon reaching 10 million). Swedes Worldwide has published a book for emigrants, full of ideas, facts and suggestions on what you should think of and do if you are moving abroad. The organization is also spreading this information at different events, such as at fairs for buying houses abroad.

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## **Romania - ROMBEL - Romanian community in Belgium**

### **Council of Romanians abroad established**

The operating rules and statutes of the first Council of Romanians Abroad has been finally validated by the Romanian Parliament. The Council held its first congress for Romanians abroad in Bucharest in June 2016. Its 35 members will represent the Romanian Diaspora and act as a consultative forum for the Parliament and Romanian authorities concerning development and implementation of programs aimed at Romanian communities abroad. More details here: <http://www.agerpres.ro/comunicate/2016/11/15/comunicat-de-presa-consiliul-romanilor-de-pretutindeni-17-08-16>

### **Romanian Festivals in Brussels**

9-13 October 2016: The EU-RO-CULTURA Festival was held for the second time in Brussels. Seven days of events where various artists from Romania shared their tradition, culture and history in the heart of Europe.



16-18 December 2016. If you want to taste some Romanian food, be welcomed to the Romanian's corner of "Marché de Noel" on Anderlecht's square. Open: Friday: 12:00- 23:00; Saturday: 12:00- 23:00; Sunday: 12:00- 18:00  
More information: <http://www.rombel.com/evenimente/56605-daruri-de-acas-targ-de-crciun-anderlecht-16-18-decembrie-2016.html>

Contact: Dorin Fleseriu, President, [www.rombel.com](http://www.rombel.com)

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## III. News from Partner organisations and other sources

### Global Lithuanian Leaders

#### Forum of Global Lithuanian Professionals | December 28

Fifth year in a row, the network of Lithuanian professional diaspora Global Lithuanian Leaders in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, is organizing Global Lithuanian Awards. Those will take place on December 28, 2016 in the Presidential Palace in Vilnius. This year, the official ceremony will be preceded by a Diaspora Forum on Talent Competitiveness. The Forum will aim to connect global professionals with the newly formed Government for the fruitful dialogue and encourage Lithuania to compete for global talent on global scale.

The participants of the Forum will include Laureates and Nominees of all Global Lithuanian Awards (2012-2016), representatives of newly formed respective Ministries, representatives of leading businesses and academic community. More information is coming soon. Please register for the updates participation here.

Contact :[Info@lithuanianleaders.org](mailto:Info@lithuanianleaders.org)



## L'Organisation des Suisses de l'étranger (OSE)

### La Poste introduces the voting on the Internet

On 27 November, Swiss nationals registered on the lists of the canton of Fribourg will vote by means of the electronic voting system of the Swiss Post. The canton of Neuchâtel will use the system from 2017 onwards. La Poste operates its electronic voting platform in its own TÜV and ISO certified calculation centers. All data are therefore available in Switzerland. The secrecy of the vote is guaranteed by an end-to-end encryption, from the voter's browser to the decryption of the urn by the canton. In other words, neither the canton nor the post office can identify who is behind a digital "ballot". With the postal solution, all the personal data of the citizens and their political rights remain in the partner canton.

Experience in voting traditionally, Swiss Post plays an important role in elections because it is responsible for distributing documents for elections and voting and for voting by correspondence. At present, it can also propose electronic voting to the cantons. This is a major advantage for Swiss abroad: from now on, envelopes arriving in Switzerland after the legal deadline will belong to the past.

The Post, Advertorial Print article 21.11.16,

### Brexit Reports from expats:

#### 1. From ECREU –European Citizens Rights in the European Union

#### A Briton abroad is a Briton ignored

Today, the British Citizen in Europe feels more isolated than ever. Who cares that they are worried, even distraught for their future? The British Government shows no true interest in their welfare.



ECREU [European Citizens Rights in the European Union] is, amongst other groups, trying to ameliorate this situation. It has attracted 4700 adherents since it began last July. You too can join – see [www.ecreu.com](http://www.ecreu.com)

The aim is to awaken concern among the British politicians. We do this not by demanding and bellowing like trumpets, but by quiet comment and the soft approach. We have contacted all 645 Members of Parliament and all the members of the House of Lords serving on committees concerned with the State of the Nation after the result of the Referendum. Our member data and written submissions have been accepted as evidence and published by the Lords EU Justice Sub-Committee, along with our critique of a Foreign Office report on the condition of British Citizens in Europe.

You may be aware that the United Kingdom is almost alone amongst European Nations in maintaining a lack of regard for the citizens abroad. There is truth in the quip *‘a Briton abroad is a Briton ignored’*. Many of us have no vote for the British parliament, unlike the shining examples for citizens of France and Italy and other nations. The EU Commission has requested that all citizens be represented in their national assemblies, wherever they live in the EU Member States. Is it too late for British Citizens?

On our steering committee we have people who have considerable experience in British Politics. Our oldest member, Harry Shindler at ninety five was in London in November visiting the Minister for the Constitution to plead yet again that Britons abroad must have the vote. If we had already held that Right at the Referendum, the result may well have been different. The electoral role was diminished by our absence.

The 450,000 elderly British citizens resident in EU States beyond the UK may well suffer loss of healthcare and a continuing fall in income if Brexit is pushed through to its worst position – the ‘hard Brexit’. Some, already in difficult circumstances, may become destitute. Younger citizens may lose their rights to work throughout Europe, cease to have their qualifications recognized, and the young citizens yet to be adults may lose their rights to study, and take a full



role in European Life as European Citizens. All because a small majority [just 37% of the diminished electorate, though 52% of those who voted] voted to cease to be Europeans. More than a million of us remain, and wish to be Europeans.

**Contact: Brian Cave** [briancave@ecreu.com](mailto:briancave@ecreu.com)

## 2. From New Europeans (December 6)

### **We are no bargaining chip**

As I write this the UK Supreme Court has been listening to arguments from the British Government that Article 50, signaling the country's intention to leave the EU, can be triggered without having to be debated in or approved by Parliament.

This is the culmination of a hectic half year, since Britain voted, by a slim majority, in favour of Brexit. This decision, taken following an acrimonious and wildly misleading Referendum campaign, has led to intensive action on many fronts by New Europeans.

We were formed originally in 2012-13 to promote the rights of EU citizens in the UK but our task has never been more vital since the Brexit decision this June and the refusal of the UK's Conservative Government to guarantee the three million EU nationals, living and working in Britain, the right to remain once the country departs from the EU.

Instead, Theresa May's Government wants to use the issue as a 'bargaining chip' claiming it cannot give way on the issue until the EU guarantees reciprocal rights for British citizens living abroad. New Europeans' stance is that people, their homes, the livelihoods and their families are not bargaining chips and that the right to remain post-Brexit should and must be guaranteed without delay.

We have re-enforced our position by partnering with two other newly-formed organisations during the past few months: the3million, which is campaigning for the rights of EU nationals in the UK, and Fair Deal for Expats, working to support British nationals living in Europe. Our first joint action was to launch a



Pledge Card at an event in the Palace of Westminster calling on Parliamentarians to work to secure a fair and just future arrangement to secure the rights of EU nationals. We are in the process of asking MPs and Members of the House of Lords to support this.

In the meantime we have been active appearing on conference platforms throughout the Europe and strengthening our regional branch structure in Britain.

Then, most recently, there is the UK Government's appeal to the Supreme Court against the High Court decision that the UK Government could not simply trigger Article 50 using the so-called Royal Prerogative. We made an application to appear before the Supreme Court as one of the partners to the legal action to argue against the Government's position.

Sadly, our application was rejected. Although, I'm glad to say that Fair Deal for Expats are able to intervene in the case and we are supporting them. Our contention is that EU nationals in the UK were first of all denied the opportunity to vote in the June Referendum and, should Article 50 be triggered without Parliamentary debate, the views of EU nationals will once more be ignored.

Our argument, which we are nevertheless making through whichever media are available to us, is that the use of EU nationals as bargaining chips in the Brexit process is a breach of Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life) of the Human Rights Act.

Furthermore, Nationals from 53 countries were allowed to vote in the EU referendum; UK nationals, nationals of the 51 other Commonwealth countries and Irish nationals. Of these just four are members of the EU – UK, Cyprus, Malta and Ireland. On the other hand nationals of the 24 other EU countries were excluded from the vote. This clearly breaks discrimination laws.

The Supreme Court's decision, scheduled in early January, is widely expected to go against the Government and require it to obtain Parliamentary approval before Article 50 is triggered. If this is indeed the case the Government plans to



put a perfunctory, one-line Bill before Parliament to obtain approval. The Labour Opposition has already confirmed it will seek to amend this to force the Government to outline its basic negotiating stance. A significant number of Conservative MPS have already said they would be likely to support this amendment which would force Theresa May to provide certain details and assurances before triggering Article 50 could be approved by the House of Commons.

In this event New Europeans will be pressing for MPs to insist that the safeguarding of EU nationals' rights must one of those absolute assurances.

At present the Brexit debate here in the UK has only served to highlight the shambles that masquerades for Government policy with ministers frequently contradicting one another on such fundamental issues as freedom of movement and whether payments will still be made to the EU so as to ensure access to the European market once Britain has departed. Amid all this confusion and obfuscation our position at New Europeans is crystal clear: we are demanding absolute guarantees for the rights of all EU Nationals, both those living in the UK and British ex-pats living elsewhere. And we want it now!

**Contact: Roger Casale CEO and Founder, New Europeans**



## IV. Interesting Reading

### EPIM call for proposals on protecting access to rights for mobile EU citizens

EPIM: European Programme for Integration and Migration

In 2015, 15.3 million EU citizens were living in a Member State other than their own. While free movement is at the core of European integration, the question of EU citizens' mobility has become increasingly politicised as negative sentiments about this issue reached a peak during the EU referendum in the UK and the debates that accompanied it.

Mobile EU citizens may “fall through the cracks” of public policies and actions, both at the national and local levels, hindering access to their rights and entitlements. Firstly, mobile EU mobile citizens are not considered as migrants” and are therefore not taken into account in policies addressing third-country nationals. Their entitlement to social rights mostly depends on their relationship to the labour market. Furthermore, many EU citizens are also not aware of their own rights. Finally, at the policy level, the Citizens Rights Directive (2004/38/EC) is being transposed into national legislation, interpreted and applied by EU Member States in an increasingly restrictive manner.

Across Europe, these restrictions already impact upon the lives of mobile EU citizens who face discrimination in accessing social services, leaving many without health care, housing, family benefits etc. There is a high risk for ‘Brexit’ and its modalities to further encourage a ‘race to the bottom’ as far as mobile EU citizens’ access to rights is concerned.

With this call for proposals, EPIM aims to support projects of civil society organisations that seek to engage **at European level** and have an **advocacy and/or awareness raising focus**, to:

- **Increase EU institutions’ role in monitoring and providing guidance to EU Member States** on the transposition, interpretation and application of the Citizens’ Rights Directive, and **strengthen EU funding** for the protection of mobile EU citizens’ access to rights;



- **Counter the trend towards/limit the possibilities for a restrictive interpretation of the Citizens' Rights Directive** in Member State law, policy and practice, in particular with respect to vulnerable groups;
- **Increase the extent to which mobile EU citizens can effectively secure access to/are aware of their entitlements**, and have access to effective accountability mechanisms.

Organisations from all EU Member States can apply for this call for proposals. Projects can run **up to 24 months** starting in April 2017. Single projects may be proposed for **up to 180,000 EUR**.

Concept notes can be submitted online at <https://applications.nef-europe.org/> until **Monday, 9 January 2017 (COB)**

Please refer to EPIM Programme Manager, Sophie Ngo-Diep, at [sophie.ngo-diep@epim.info](mailto:sophie.ngo-diep@epim.info) with any questions you might have.



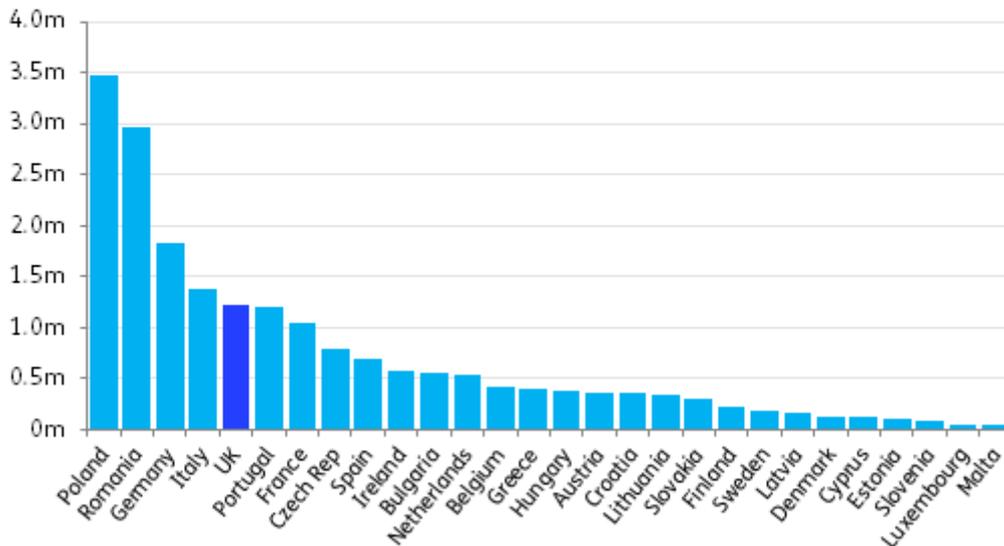
## Which EU country has the largest number of citizens living overseas?

Immigration is the subject of intense debate in many European countries and is thought to have been a key issue in the UK's decision to leave the European Union. While there has been much media coverage of the number of people moving to the UK, there has been relatively little attention paid to the number of Brits moving overseas. In fact the UK has more citizens living overseas than any other European nation – 4.9 million British people live in other countries around the world.

The UK ranks number 5, with Poland, Romania, Germany and Italy all having more citizens outside their own borders but within Europe.

## Expats across the EU

Estimated size of expat population across the EU, by country of nationality, 2015 estimates



In fact Poland has nearly three times the number of citizens living elsewhere in the EU than the UK does.



## Where do Brits go in Europe?

A breakdown of the number of UK citizens living elsewhere in the EU shows that Spain and Ireland are the favoured destinations.

### Brits abroad in the EU

Number of UK born people living in other EU member states, 2015 estimates

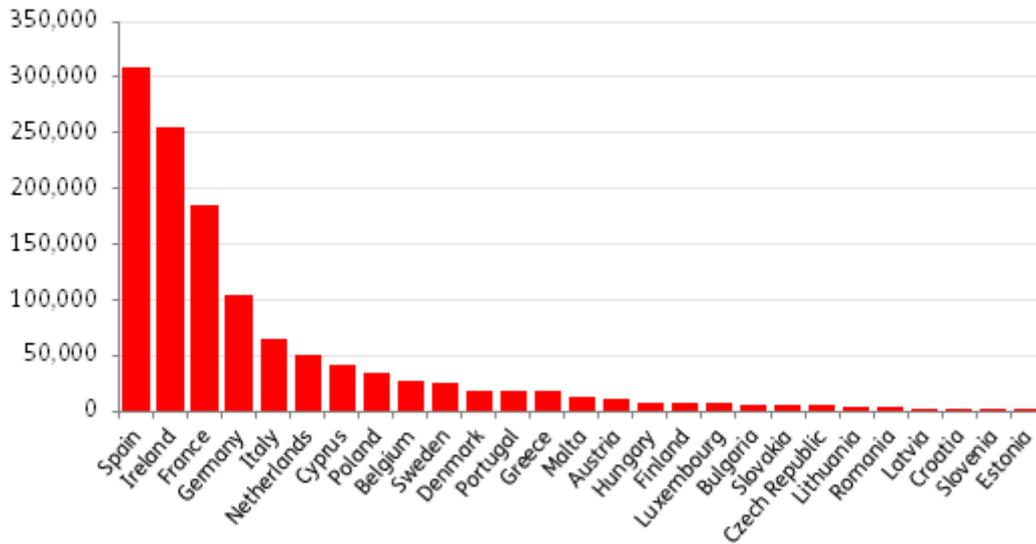


Image: Fullfact.org; UN 2015 data

France and Germany are the other two countries which are home to more than 50,000 UK nationals.

Both EU nationals in the UK and UK nationals in the EU face an uncertain future, with no firm decision yet taken on residency rights when Brexit is enacted.

Source: Keith Breene, Formative Content.



## Schengen opens for systematic checks of EU citizens at external borders

The European Parliament and the Council have now agreed on the European Commission’s proposal to modify the Schengen Borders Code to enforce systematic controls on all travelers – including EU citizens – crossing EU external borders against relevant databases.

According to Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos, this is another crucial step in the work to preserve the freedom of movement within the Schengen area and ensuring the security of our citizens. It will mean that for the first time all those entering and exiting the EU will be checked against a key database for law enforcement in the EU – the Schengen Information System. It will help detect all the wanted individuals who have an alert placed on them– including foreign terrorist fighters. The agreement should now be formally adopted by the co-legislators so that it can enter into force and be applied by Member States as soon as possible. While third-country nationals are already subject to systematic document and security checks against relevant databases upon entry, the targeted reform of the Schengen Borders Code also introduces mandatory systematic checks of EU citizens against relevant databases, namely the Schengen Information System (SIS) and the Interpol Stolen and Lost Travel Documents Database (SLTD). In addition, Member States will have the possibility to carry out systematic checks of EU citizens against other relevant national systems and other Interpol databases. Furthermore, third-country nationals will now also have to be checked systematically upon exit against SIS and Interpol's SLTD. This should be done strictly respecting data protection rules and the EU's legislation on fundamental rights.

**For more information:**

**STATEMENT/16/4273 (European Commission)**

Code Proposal for a regulation on a targeted modification of the Schengen Borders Code

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