

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001063/25
to the Commission
Tomas Tobé (PPE), Pekka Toveri (PPE)
(12 March 2025)**

Subject: Monitoring of the Schengen *acquis*: unannounced evaluations

In the summer of 2022, the Council adopted the revised Schengen evaluation and monitoring mechanism.

According to the adopted regulatory framework, evaluations without prior notification to Member States may only take place if the Commission has 'substantiated grounds to consider that there are serious violations of fundamental rights in the application of the Schengen *acquis*'. The Commission is thus prevented from carrying out evaluations of Member States' border management on any other grounds without prior notification.

Compared to the Commission's original proposal from 2021, this constitutes a severe weakening of the Commission's toolbox with regard to evaluations conducted within the framework of the Schengen evaluation and monitoring mechanism.

Our questions to the Commission are as follows:

1. Does the Commission believe that the narrow scope of Article 19(4) of the Schengen evaluation and monitoring mechanism constitutes a problem?
2. What consequences does the Commission believe the differences between its original proposal for a revised Schengen evaluation and monitoring mechanism (2 June 2021) and the adopted version (9 June 2022) regarding evaluations without prior notification have had in practice?
3. What measures does the Commission intend to take to strengthen the monitoring of the Schengen *acquis*?

Submitted: 12.3.2025

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(28 April 2025)**

1. The Commission considers that the new Schengen Evaluation Regulation ⁽¹⁾ offers a meaningful and important tool to ensure an effective response to situations that may impact the functioning of the Schengen area, including fundamental rights violations.
2. Since 2022, the Commission has carried out several unannounced visits. These visits revealed that while the required 24-hour notification may allow authorities to prepare, this does not compromise the integrity and effectiveness of the unannounced visit. For example, in one case, serious deficiencies in the quality of border management were identified.
3. The Commission has strengthened the Schengen governance framework to ensure robust monitoring of the Schengen *acquis*. This includes increased scrutiny of Member States through verification visits, with reinforced oversight by the Schengen Council through regular exchanges on key priorities identified for each Schengen cycle, supported by the Schengen Coordinator and tools, such as the Schengen Barometer+ and Scoreboard. The reinforced governance framework seeks to address the most pressing needs by making the most of the existing resources, by strengthening operational scrutiny, promoting more active political engagement, and fostering synergies at all levels, including with EU agencies.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EU) 2022/922 of 9 June 2022 on the establishment and operation of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis*, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013, OJ L 160, 15.6.2022, p. 1-27.