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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.7.2026)

The Commission Opinion on the necessity and proportionality of the reintroduction of border control by Italy of 2 June 2026¹ stresses that the reintroduction of internal border control must remain a temporary and exceptional measure of last resort, subject to the rules of the revised Schengen Borders Code².

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) shows a steady decline in detected unauthorised border crossings, including along the Western Balkans Route³. Moreover, the use of alternative measures, such as cross-border police cooperation and information exchange are an efficient and effective means to ensure a high level of security.

The Commission continues to work on the reinforcement of the management of the external borders, through the upcoming revision of the Frontex Regulation and the entry into application of the Pact on Asylum and Migration, which includes the screening of third country nationals at the external borders⁴. Member States along the Western Balkans route continue to strengthen their operational cooperation under a ‘whole of route-approach’. Member States should fully use existing mechanisms to enhance security and operational law enforcement cooperation. The European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) has two Operational Action Plans dedicated to Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking⁵. The European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) continues to target migrant smuggling along the Western Balkans route. The recently established European Centre Against Migrant Smuggling within Europol further strengthens EU-level operational and analytical support for Member States in dismantling high-risk migrant smuggling networks.

¹ Commission Opinion of 2.6.2026 on the necessity and proportionality of the reintroduction of border control by Italy at its land border with Slovenia in accordance with Article 27a(3) of Regulation (EU) No 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code), 2.6.2026 C(2026) 3552 final.

² Regulation (EU) 2024/1717 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 amending Regulation (EU) 2016/399 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders. OJ L 2024/1717, 20.6.2024.

³ European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), Frontex: Irregular border crossings into the EU down 37% in the first half of 2026, 10 July 2026, available at: <https://www.frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/frontex-irregular-border-crossings-into-the-eu-down-37-in-the-first-half-of-2026-Z5YoLp>.

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2024/1356 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 introducing the screening of third-country nationals at the external borders and amending Regulations (EC) No 767/2008, (EU) 2017/2226, (EU) 2018/1240 and (EU) 2019/817. OJ L, 2024/1356, 22.5.2024.

⁵ Europol, EU Policy Cycle – EMPACT 2026-2029 Fighting crime together, available at: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/how-we-work/empact>.