

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002850/26
to the Commission**

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(9 July 2026)

Subject: Document fraud in extraordinary regularisation processes and protecting the integrity of the Schengen area

The Commission considers document fraud to be a threat to EU security and is tackling the problem through the FADO system and cooperation between Frontex and Europol ⁽¹⁾, given document fraud's close ties with organised crime and migrant smuggling ⁽²⁾ ⁽³⁾.

The risk is particularly great during national regularisation processes, where insufficient checks on documents can leave the door open to fraud or secondary movements. Recent police operations ⁽⁴⁾ ⁽⁵⁾ and reports by the Spanish National Police ⁽⁶⁾ have warned of an increase in fake documents to obtain residence permits.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission agree that insufficient checks on documents during national regularisation processes can compromise the integrity of the Schengen area and strengthen the business model for migrant smuggling networks?
2. Does the Commission believe cooperation needs to be ramped up between Member States, Frontex and Europol to prevent document fraud in those processes?
3. What best practices does the Commission recommend to Member States to prevent and detect document fraud in national procedures for granting residence permits, including extraordinary regularisation processes, and avoid risks to the integrity of the Schengen area?

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Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(1 September 2026)

1. Document fraud is an enabler of several types of criminal activities and a risk to the security and integrity of the Schengen area, notably where false or fraudulently obtained documents are used to obtain residence rights or to cross borders. While the issuance of residence permits is governed primarily by national law, it is also regulated by relevant EU legal migration Directives.
2. To address the threat of document fraud, the EU is strengthening cooperation between Member States, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), supported by interoperable IT systems. The False and Authentic Documents Online system (FADO) ⁽¹⁾ allows for the direct and secure information exchange between document experts in the Member States and Schengen Associated Countries and supports competent national authorities to recognise genuine security features and detect falsified documents ⁽²⁾.
3. The Commission promotes a set of best practices to reduce fraud risks, which include secure biometric enrolment and identity controls, security checks against relevant databases and stronger coordination between Member States and with Europol.

¹ <https://www.frontex.europa.eu/what-we-do/fighting-crime/document-fraud/>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0148>.

³ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/EU-SOCTA-2025.pdf>.

⁴ <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/detalle/articulo/Desmantelada-una-red-criminal-que-cobraba-hasta-10.500-euros-por-regularizar-ilegalmente-a-extranjeros/>.

⁵ <https://elpais.com/espana/2026-05-21/desmantelada-una-trama-de-gestorias-para-regularizar-migrantes-con-documentos-falsos.html>.

⁶ https://www.larazon.es/espana/cerco-fraude-regularizacion-extranjeros-policia-detecta-nuevas-estafas-conseguir-papeles_2026050869fd4013716e9c5714679934.html.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2020/493 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 March 2020 on the False and Authentic Documents Online (FADO) system and repealing Council Joint Action 98/700/JHA, OJ L 107, 6.4.2020, pp. 1-8. ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/493/oj>.

⁽²⁾ To ensure that the transition of Frontex to FADO occurs smoothly by January 2027, this work is being coordinated between Frontex, the Council General Secretariat and the Commission on data transfer and implementation steps.