



Council of the
European Union

THE SCHENGEN AREA



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The name of Schengen, a little village in Luxembourg, close to the border with Germany and France, has become synonymous with the free movement of persons in Europe.

The abolition of internal border controls has gone hand in hand with common rules for controlling external borders and reinforced judicial and police cooperation for combating crime. Each state in the Schengen area is regularly assessed by the EU to check it is applying the agreed rules correctly.

The Schengen area currently covers 26 countries (22 European Union Member States and four associated States), which apply the entire Schengen acquis.

The external border of the Schengen area is over 50 000 km long (80 % sea and 20 % land) and includes hundreds of airports and maritime ports, as well as land border crossing points.

EU Member States applying the whole Schengen acquis with voting rights in the Council: European territories of **Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden**, plus the **Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands, Madeira and Azores**.

Denmark, an EU Member State, applies the whole Schengen acquis as international law (with no voting rights in the Council), except for the measures determining the third countries whose nationals must have a visa when crossing the external borders of Member States and the measures concerning the introduction of a uniform format for visas, on which Denmark has voting rights in the Council.

Associated States that are not EU Member States which apply the Schengen acquis through association agreements and take part in preparing acts that are subsequently adopted by the competent EU institutions: **Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein**.

EU Member States that apply the whole Schengen acquis except for the part concerning the absence of internal border controls and visas. These States are connected to the Schengen Information System (SIS) but are not obliged to refuse entry to persons for whom non-admission alerts have been issued and cannot issue such alerts themselves.

They are awaiting a Council Decision to set the date by when the whole Schengen acquis (opening of internal borders) is to be applied. They have voting rights in the Council for the whole Schengen acquis: **Bulgaria and Romania**.

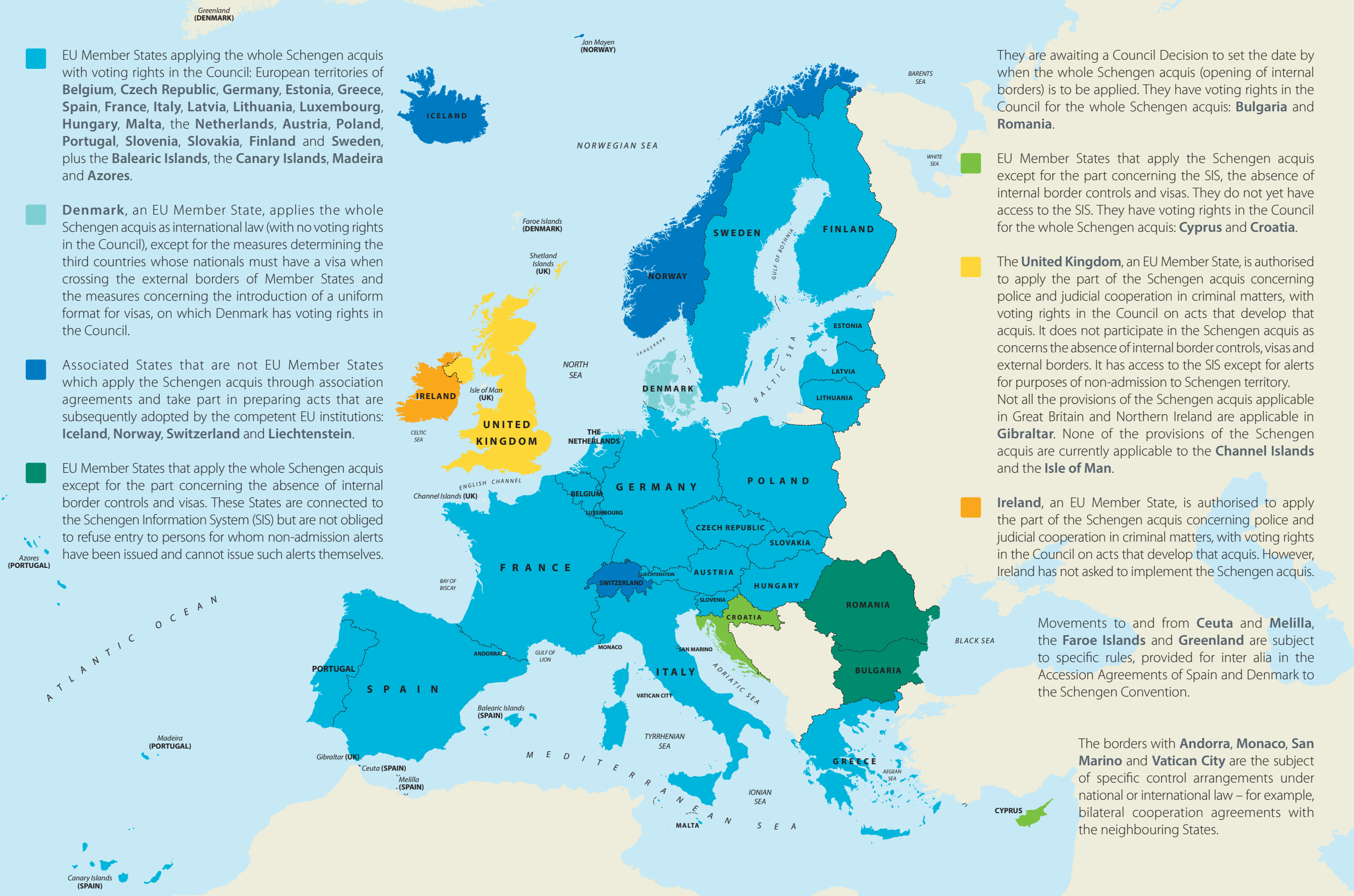
EU Member States that apply the Schengen acquis except for the part concerning the SIS, the absence of internal border controls and visas. They do not yet have access to the SIS. They have voting rights in the Council for the whole Schengen acquis: **Cyprus and Croatia**.

The **United Kingdom**, an EU Member State, is authorised to apply the part of the Schengen acquis concerning police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, with voting rights in the Council on acts that develop that acquis. It does not participate in the Schengen acquis as concerns the absence of internal border controls, visas and external borders. It has access to the SIS except for alerts for purposes of non-admission to Schengen territory. Not all the provisions of the Schengen acquis applicable in Great Britain and Northern Ireland are applicable in **Gibraltar**. None of the provisions of the Schengen acquis are currently applicable to the **Channel Islands** and the **Isle of Man**.

Ireland, an EU Member State, is authorised to apply the part of the Schengen acquis concerning police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, with voting rights in the Council on acts that develop that acquis. However, Ireland has not asked to implement the Schengen acquis.

Movements to and from **Ceuta and Melilla**, the **Faroe Islands** and **Greenland** are subject to specific rules, provided for inter alia in the Accession Agreements of Spain and Denmark to the Schengen Convention.

The borders with **Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and Vatican City** are the subject of specific control arrangements under national or international law – for example, bilateral cooperation agreements with the neighbouring States.





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