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Abstract: The Border control cooperation in the European Union in the perspective of Schengen visa regime

European Union nationals and nationals from those countries that are part of the Schengen area and their family members have the right to enter the territory of EU Member States without prior authorization. They can only be excluded on grounds of public policy, public security or public health. Border control, policing and the administration of justice is today an important part of the European integration process. In contemporary Europe, internal borders have been physically dismantled across most of the continent and common rules put in place to regulate the entry of visitors and are in place to govern external borders and coordinate police and judicial collaboration. This regional free travel area is usually referred to as the Schengen cooperation. That border cooperation should be controversial is not surprising. The development of passports, visas and the guarding of territorial frontiers play a central role in processes of state formation. These practices help to establish who is present within a polity and determine their status as citizens, residents or temporary visitors. Border control is thus important to the on-going construction and policing of national identity and state sovereignty.

The 2007 Schengen enlargement provides the material for a quasi-experiment. It allows us to study the effect of EU-cooperation by measuring visa-issuing practices before and after. This paper investigates the governing of Europe’s external border. It analyses how the common Schengen short-stay visa policy has been applied in practice by member states.