

Council to immediately remove the veto on Bulgaria and Romania's accession to the Schengen Area

1 Council to immediately remove the veto on Bulgaria and Romania's accession to the 2 Schengen Area

3 The Council of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party
4 convening in Bucharest, Romania, on the 20-21 October 2023:

5 Acknowledges that:

- 6 • Bulgaria and Romania have met all legal and operational conditions and criteria
7 for accession to the Schengen Area since 2011. However, the unjustified veto of
8 some member states has prevented them from joining the border-free area;
- 9 • the ALDE Party, Renew Europe, the European Parliament, and the European
10 Commission have all expressed their firm support for the accession of Bulgaria
11 and Romania to Schengen. the Commission President insisted in the State of the
12 Union 2023 address that Bulgaria and Romania should be admitted into the
13 Schengen Area without further delay;
- 14 • on 15 September 2023, the European Commission announced that it formally closed
15 the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria and Romania, often cited
16 as a prerequisite for lifting the veto, concluding that both countries had
17 satisfactorily met their judicial and anti-corruption reform obligations;
- 18 • the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the Schengen Area would strengthen the
19 EU's external borders, improve cooperation between law enforcement agencies, and
20 boost economic growth and trade. It would also be a powerful symbol of European
21 unity and solidarity;

22

23

24

25 Underlines that:

- 26 • the unjustified veto against Bulgaria and Romania's accession to the Schengen
27 Area has many negative consequences: it violates the principle of law-based
28 decisions, thereby harming the reputation of the European Union in accession
29 countries, feeds into populist anti-EU propaganda, discriminates against
30 citizens and businesses, and raises the cost of trade. It also hinders economic
31 growth and increases CO2 emissions, estimated at 46,000 tonnes annually with the
32 lengthy queues at the border crossing points between Greece, Bulgaria, Romania,
33 and Hungary.

34 Calls for :

- 35 • the Council's Spanish presidency to treat the matter with urgency and schedule a
36 vote on the matter before the end of 2023;
- 37 • All Member states to lift the veto without delay;
- 38 • ALDE Member parties to continue to publicly express their support and push for
39 the Schengen accession of Bulgaria and Romania.