
COVID-19 Coronavirus: EU, guidelines to protect citizens' health, manage borders, keep movement of goods

In a joint video meeting with EU ministers of Health and of Home Affairs, Commissioners Kyriakides and Johansson have presented the guidelines for border measures to address the COVID-19 emergency. The “guidelines” set out the “principles for an integrated approach to an effective border management to protect health while preserving the integrity of the internal market”. Some guidelines relate to health checks that may be carried out at the borders “without formal introduction of internal border controls”. People who are found sick “should not be denied entry but given access to healthcare”. Such controls “should be organised to prevent the emergence of large gatherings (e.g. queues)”, but “on one side of the border only”. Member States “must always admit their own citizens and residents, and should facilitate transit of other EU citizens and residents that are returning home”. They can take measures (self-isolation) if they impose the same requirements on their own nationals. The free movement of goods must be guaranteed especially for food supplies and vital medical and protective equipment and supplies. Hence, the Commission suggests “priority lanes for freight transport”, “safe movement for transport workers”, but “no additional certifications”, since “there is no evidence that food is a source or a transmission source of COVID-19”.

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