

EU ENTRY POLICY STRICTER?



After the recent cancellation of borders between most of the EU accession states, one may have been tempted to believe that travelling around Europe, even for non-EU citizens has now become a piece of cake. However, the opposite is now true as the EU have announced plans to force non-EU citizens to provide biometric data before entering the region.

The plans even include citizens of non-European countries who are now permitted to enter European territory without a visa. Indeed, the EU has dropped visa requirements for US citizens and for people from a number of Caribbean countries. However, these people will now be required to provide fingerprints and a digitalized facial image as the EU looks to address migratory pressure, combat illegal immigration and subdue the threat of terrorism.

Having open borders, for most states, represents the threat of a non-European citizen entering an overstaying the length of their visa. A typical situation used to be whereby a non-European would enter an Eastern European state and somehow smuggle himself across to the more prosperous Western Europe. When the border controls are “out of date” now, the task seems to be a lot easier. This is no longer the case as the so-called ‘overstay’ system shall track immigrants and send a signal to a satellite to warn that they have overstayed their welcome. Further technology, set to be installed in 2012, shall track the immigrants’ movements on European territory.

The Schengen agreement has 24 members, all of which shall be taking part in the scheme. It is not yet clear whether Britain, Ireland or Cyprus shall be participants in the scheme or not. Whatever the decision of these three countries, the EU has made it clear that its apparent leniency towards foreign nationals is indeed, purely apparent.

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