

SCHENGEN

Your gateway to free movement
in Europe



Council of the
European Union

THE SCHENGEN AREA

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 competent bodies in order to check whether it applies the agreed rules correctly.

The Schengen area without internal border controls 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.



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The whole Schengen acquis applies to the European territories of the following EU Member States: **Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain** (including the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands), France, Italy, **Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal** (including **Madeira** and the **Azores**), **Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland** and **Sweden**.

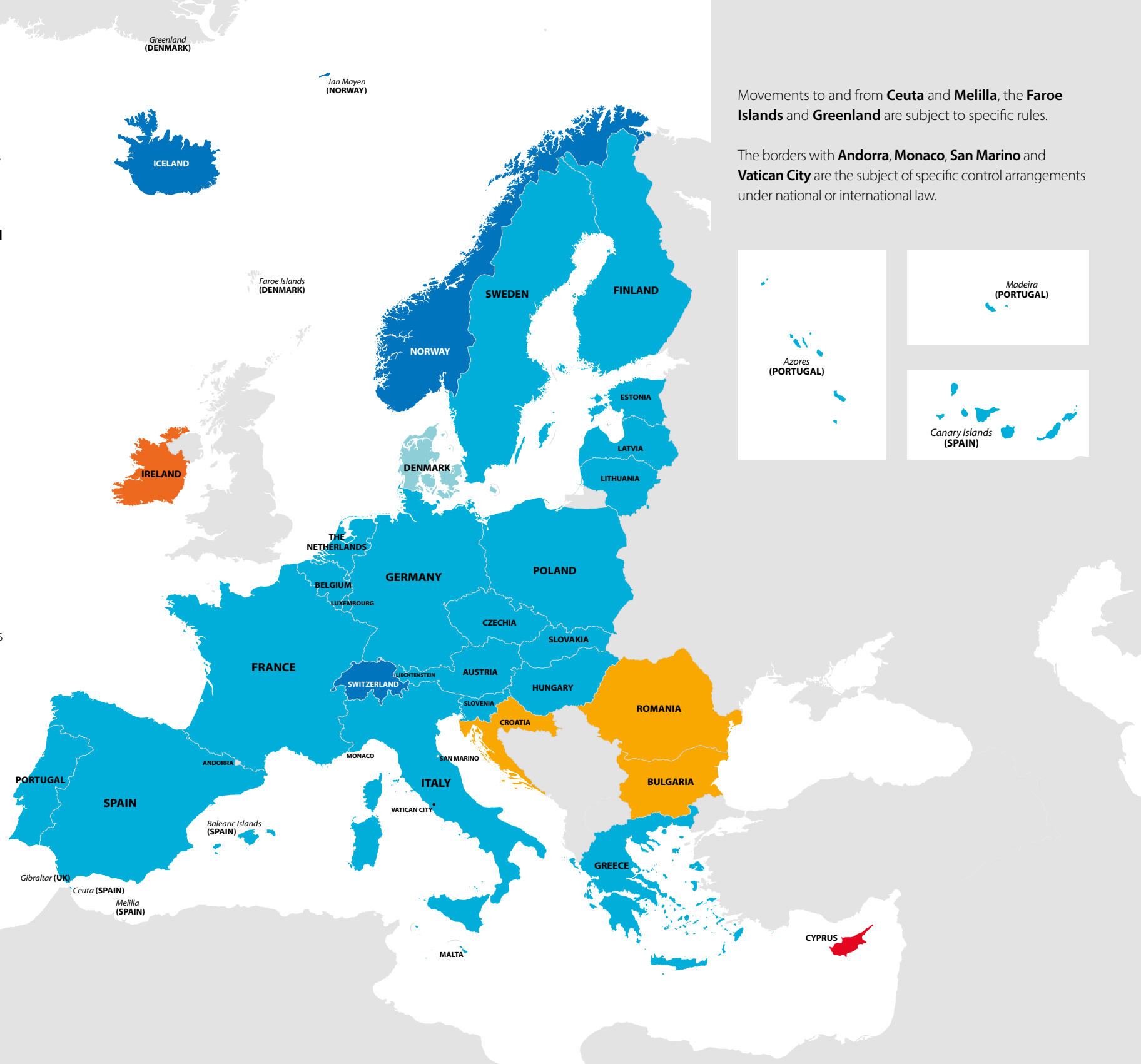
Denmark is an EU Member State that applies the whole Schengen acquis as international law, except for the measures determining those third countries whose nationals must have a visa when crossing the external borders of Member States and the measures concerning the introduction of a uniform format for visas.

Iceland, Norway (except Svalbard), **Switzerland and Liechtenstein** are associated States (not EU Member States), which take part in preparing the Schengen acquis acts that are subsequently adopted by the EU institutions. These four countries apply the Schengen acquis acts after their adoption through association agreements.

Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia are 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); Croatia, although connected to SIS, is not obliged to refuse entry to persons for whom non-admission alerts have been issued and cannot issue such alerts itself. These three Member States are awaiting a Council Decision to set the date by when the whole Schengen acquis (opening of internal borders) is to be applied.

Cyprus is an EU Member State that applies the Schengen acquis except for the part concerning the SIS, the absence of internal border controls and visas. It does not yet have access to the SIS.

Ireland is an EU Member State that is authorised to apply the part of the Schengen acquis concerning police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters. Ireland has not as yet put into effect the part of the Schengen acquis in which it has asked to participate.



Movements to and from **Ceuta** and **Melilla**, the **Faroe Islands** and **Greenland** are subject to specific rules.

The borders with **Andorra, Monaco, San Marino** and **Vatican City** are the subject of specific control arrangements under national or international law.



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