

Local border traffic at external borders: inclusion of the Kaliningrad area and certain Polish administrative districts in the eligible border area

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The committee held a **first exchange of views** on a proposal to amend the EU rules on local border traffic (LBT). The proposal aims at facilitating border crossings in the Kaliningrad area through the **inclusion of the Kaliningrad area and certain Polish administrative districts in the eligible border area**. The presidency underlined that the proposed amendment was a specific solution responding to a unique situation which did not constitute a precedent.

The Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation with a population of almost one million inhabitants became the only enclave within the EU as a consequence of the 2004 EU enlargement.

The original regulation was adopted in 2006 to ensure that the borders between EU Member States and their non-EU neighbours were not barriers to trade, social and cultural interchange or regional cooperation. It enables derogations, for persons living in a border area, from the general rules on border checks set out in the Schengen Borders Code. The Regulation authorises Member States to conclude bilateral agreements with neighbouring non-EU countries, provided these agreements fully comply with the parameters set by the regulation.