

**Priority question for written answer P-005122/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Closure of border crossing points in Catalonia and in the Basque Country

In January 2021, the French and Spanish authorities agreed to close border crossing points on the pretext of strengthening the 'fight against illegal immigration and terrorism'. According to the closure decrees of the Pyrénées-Orientales and Pyrénées-Atlantiques prefectures in January, this measure was supposed to be 'temporary'¹². This measure is detrimental to cross-border workers who use these crossings on a daily basis³ and it is contrary to the Schengen Agreement and the EU Treaties.

On 20 October 2021, the Pyrénées-Atlantiques and the Pyrénées-Orientales prefectures confirmed that their four and five affected border crossing points, respectively, will be closed 'until further notice'⁴, thus negating the temporary nature of the measure. The rest of the border crossings currently operate under tight police surveillance.

These closures have sparked protests from residents and local authorities on both sides of the border⁵.

1. Will the Commission require the French and Spanish authorities to reopen these border crossings?
2. What percentage of their borders can Member States close without being considered to be undermining the freedom of movement of workers, goods or services within the EU?

¹ <https://www.lindependant.fr/2021/01/08/pyrenees-orientales-la-prefecture-ferme-le-col-de-banyuls-et-autres-points-de-passage-de-la-frontiere-secondaires-9299893.php>

² <https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/societe/pays-basque-le-prefet-ferme-la-moitie-des-passages-frontaliers-au-nom-de-la-lutte-contre-le-1610471595>

³ <https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/societe/la-colere-monte-a-banyuls-sur-mer-apres-9-mois-de-fermeture-de-la-frontiere-avec-l-espagne-1634579219>

⁴ <https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/occitanie/pyrenees-orientales/pyrenees-orientales-la-frontiere-du-col-de-banyuls-restera-fermee-jusqu-a-nouvel-ordre-au-grand-dam-des-habitants-2301907.html>

⁵ <https://www.radioarrels.cat/noticia/1782/el-tancament-dels-passos-fronterers-al-vallespir-i-a-cerdanya-afecta-leconomia-daquests-se>