

Parliament asks EU Commission to press for full US-EU visa reciprocity

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The EU Commission is legally obliged to take measures temporarily reintroducing visa requirements for US citizens, given that Washington still does not grant visa-free access to nationals of five EU countries. In a resolution approved on Thursday, MEPs urge the Commission to adopt the necessary legal measures “within two months”.

The text prepared by the Civil Liberties Committee was adopted by a show of hands.

Visa reciprocity

Citizens of Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Poland and Romania still cannot enter US territory without a visa, while US citizens can travel to all EU countries visa-free.

According to the visa reciprocity mechanism, if a third country does not lift its visa requirements within 24 months of being notified of non-reciprocity, the EU Commission must adopt a delegated act - to which both Parliament and the Council may object - suspending the visa waiver for its nationals for 12 months.

Following a notification of non-reciprocity on 12 April 2014, the Commission should have acted before 12 April 2016 but it has yet to take any legal measure. Canada also imposes visa requirements on Bulgarian and Romanian citizens, but it has announced that [they will be lifted on 1 December 2017](#).

Background

In April 2014, the European Commission was notified that five countries were not meeting their obligations towards the EU with regard to reciprocity of visa-free travel: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Japan and the US.

Australia, Brunei and Japan have since lifted their visa requirements for all EU citizens and Canada will do so in December this year.

Procedure: Non-legislative resolution

[#visareciprocity](#)

Further information

- Adopted text will soon be available here (02.03.2017)
: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/texts-adopted.html>
- Video recording of debate (click on 14.12.2016)
: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/plenary/search-by-date>
- EbS+ (14.12.2016)
: <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm?sitelang=en&page=3&institution=0&date=12/14/2016>

Press release

- Regulation 1289/2013 amending Regulation 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement
: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013R1289>
- State of play and the possible ways forward as regards the situation of non-reciprocity with certain third countries in the area of visa policy (EC Communication, 21.12.2016)
: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-is-new/news/news/docs/state_of_play_possible_ways_forward_regards_situation_non-reciprocity_with_certain_third_countries_area_visa_policy_en.pdf
- MEPs urge Commission to press for full US-EU visa reciprocity (15 December 2016)
: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20161208IPR55165/meps-urge-commission-to-press-for-full-us-eu-visa-reciprocity>
- Audiovisual dynamic package :Visa reciprocity
: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Page.aspx?id=2872>

Political groups

- News pages of the EPP group
: <http://bit.ly/1WuQLqB>
- News pages of the S&D group
: <http://bit.ly/1WWG6F4>
- News pages of the ECR group
: <http://bit.ly/1Y0YFrj>
- News pages of the ALDE group
: <http://bit.ly/2ikk6qK>
- News pages of the GUE/NGL group
: <http://bit.ly/1UrAIM9>
- News pages of the Greens/EFA group
: <http://bit.ly/2m6JiBA>
- News pages of the EFDD group
: <http://bit.ly/1TUnDFU>
- News pages of the ENF group
: <http://bit.ly/2cxzxcR>

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