



DRAFT PROGRAMME

Hearing

The Visa Package

Wednesday, 17 June 2015, 15:00 - 18:30

European Parliament, Brussels

Room: Paul-Henri Spaak P1A002

Background and purpose of the hearing

Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code) contains the conditions and procedures for the issuing of Schengen short-stay visas. As such it is one of the core elements of the EU's common visa policy. Other elements of this visa policy are the Regulation 539/01 containing the lists of countries whose citizen require a visa to enter the Schengen area and those exempt from the visa obligation, the Visa Information System, the provisions on the uniform visa and a range of visa facilitation agreements with third countries.

In April 2014, just before the end of the last parliamentary term, the European Commission presented its visa package. It consists mainly of two legislative proposals, namely the proposal for a Regulation on the **Union Code on Visas** (COM(2014) 0164) amending the Visa Code currently in force and the proposal for a Regulation establishing a **touring visa** (COM(2014) 0163), a completely new type of visa. The package also contains a report about the implementation of the current Visa Code in force as required by it (COM(2014) 0165) which is accompanied by a more detailed staff working document (SWD(2014) 0101).¹

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs started the examination of these proposals at the beginning of the new legislative term. Following a series of informal meetings with the Commission's services two working documents were presented by the two rapporteurs in the Committee on 5 March. At the same meeting the study requested by the Committee on humanitarian visas was presented.

With this hearing the Committee seeks the input of experts for its further works. As the proposals have a significant impact on the work of consulates but also on visa applicants as well as on EU citizens - be it as business partners, family members or others - it is crucial to hear from as many concerned parties as possible in order to formulate an adequate response of the Committee to the Commission's proposals. The hearing therefore complements the mission to Istanbul with a series of visits to consulates as well as an external service provider which took place on 9-10 April this year.

¹ For complete references and links to the background documents for this hearing see further below.

Background Documents

- Working document on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Union Code on Visas (Visa Code)
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/libe/dt/1051/1051030/1051030en.pdf
- Working document on the proposal on the establishment of a touring visa and amending the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement and Regulations (EC) No 562/2006 and (EC) No 767/2008
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/libe/dt/1051/1051856/1051856en.pdf
- More flexible visa rules to boost growth and job creation [IP/14/347](#)
- Frequently Asked Questions: A smarter EU visa policy for growth [MEMO/14/247](#)
- Report '[A smarter Visa Policy for economic growth](#)' (accompanying [Staff Working Document](#))
- Proposal for a [Regulation on the Union Code on Visas \(Visa Code\)](#) ([annexes](#) and accompanying [Staff Working Document](#))
- Proposal for a [Regulation establishing a touring visa](#) and ([annexes](#))
- Infographic: [An overview of Visa statistics](#)
- [Comprehensive visa statistics](#)
- [Impact assessment study supporting the review of the Union's visa policy to facilitate legitimate travelling](#)

II. Public Consultation of the Commission

- [Consultation text](#)
- [Report on the results of the consultation](#)

Contributions from NGOs and interest groups

- [Artists, culture](#)
- [Business, seafarers, cruise passengers](#)
- [Migration NGOs](#)
- [University](#)
- [Youth organisations](#)
- [Individuals](#)

Order of Business

Wednesday 17 June 2015

Introduction

15.00 - 15.05 **OPENING REMARKS** by **Barbara KUDRYCKA**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament

SESSION I - The proposal for the new Visa Code

This session should allow for a detailed discussion of the Commission's proposal on the Visa Code. Following the introduction by the rapporteur, the views of the speakers are sought on the following questions:

What problems do you see with the Visa Code currently in force?

How do you assess the proposal of the Commission? Does it adequately address the shortcomings identified?

What are your views regarding the suggestions for amendments brought forward by the rapporteur?

What other suggestions for the modification of the Visa Code do you propose?

15.05 - 15.15 Introduction by the rapporteur, **Tanja FAJON**
First ideas for amendments to the Commission's proposal

15.15 - 15.25 **Michel DEJAEGER**, former French Consul General
Point of view of consulates

15.25 - 15.35 **Pierre BENICHO**, VFS Global
Point of view of an external service provider

15.35 - 15.45 **Krzysztof MROZEK**, Visa-free Europe Coalition
Experiences of individual applicants

15.45 - 15.55 **Marianna GEORGALLIS**, Youth association: European Youth Forum

15.55 - 16.05 **Michel DE BLUST**, Tourism associations: Network for the European private sector in Tourism (NET)

16.05 - 16.15 **Dominique GUIBERT**, European Association for the Defence of Human Rights (AEDH): Humanitarian visas

16.15 - 16.25	Krum GARKOV , Executive Director, eu-LISA Visa Information System
16.25 - 16.35	Stefan GURDEBEKE , Chief Commissioner, Federal Police, Head of Border Control Department at Brussels National Airport; Point of view of Member States' authorities responsible for security
16.35 - 17.00	Q&A
17.00 - 17.10	Yolanda GALLEGRO-CASILDA GRAU , DG HOME, European Commission
17.10 - 17.20	Maira ROZE , Chair of the Visa Working Party of the Latvian Presidency: state of play of the works in Council
17.20 - 17.25	Conclusions by rapporteur, Tanja FAJON

SESSION II - The proposal for the new Touring Visa

The touring visa is a new type of visa which would permit the future holder to travel within the Schengen Area for a total of more than 90 days in any 180-day period, provided that he does not stay in the same Member State for more than 90 days. The visa would be valid for one year, and be renewed for an additional year, extending its total period of validity to a maximum of two years.

During this hearing and following the rapporteur's introduction, the speakers' views will be sought on the following questions:

- What would be the relevance of the touring visa?
- What do you think of the potential economic impact?
- What do you think of the security and migratory risks?
- Do you think the scope should be narrowed or extended regarding above considerations?

17.25 - 17.30	Introduction by the rapporteur, Brice HORTEFEUX General considerations on the touring visa
17.30 - 17.40	Lies MARTENS , Pearle (Performing Arts Employers' Associations League Europe)
17.40 - 17.50	Michel DEJAEGER , former French Consul General Point of view of consulates
17.50 - 17.55	Yolanda GALLEGRO-CASILDA GRAU , DG HOME, European Commission
17.55 - 18.05	Maira ROZE , Chair of the Visa Working Party of the Latvian

Presidency: state of play of the works in Council

18.05 - 18.20

Q&A

18.20 - 18.25

Conclusions by the rapporteur, **Brice HORTEFEUX**

18.25 - 18.30

CLOSING REMARKS by **Barbara KUDRYCKA**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament

ANNEX

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR THOSE WISHING TO ATTEND THE MEETING

This meeting is open to the public. However, for security reasons, participants who do not have a European Parliament access badge must obtain a pass in advance. Those wishing to obtain such a pass should contact the secretariat (libe-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu) **before 12 June 2015 at noon**. It is essential to provide us with your **LAST NAME, First name, date of birth, nationality, type of ID (passport, identity card, driving licence, etc.), number of ID, address and company/institution/organisation**. Without this information, the Security Service will not provide entry passes.¹

All participants from national Parliaments (Members, officials and Brussels-based representatives) need to complete the online registration form for the event at the following web address: <http://www.opinio.europarl.europa.eu/opinio/s?s=icm libe juri>

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE DEBATE

- During the discussion, so as to make it possible for the highest number of parliamentarians to intervene, speaking time of speakers will be limited to **ten minutes** and speaking time of other participants to **two minutes** per contribution or question.
- Members are kindly asked to fill in the sheet requesting speaking time (indicating their name and parliament) which will be distributed in the meeting room.
- Speakers wishing to supplement their speeches may do so in writing by submitting a document (preferably in English or French) in advance to the secretariat (email: libe-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu). These documents will be circulated during the meeting.
- Meeting documents will be progressively added to the Events section of the LIBE Committee pages:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/libe/home.html;jsessionid=950C3963529E0F97FC49294206DE0405.node2>

THE MEETING IS BROADCASTED LIVE AND RECORDED

LIBE Committee pages:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/homeCom.do?language=EN&body=LIBE>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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¹ The processing of personal data is subject to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of 18 December 2001 (OJ.L 8 12.1.2001, p. 1)

