



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Foreign Affairs

2012/0138(NLE)

23.1.2013

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine amending the Agreement between the European Community and Ukraine on the facilitation of the issuance of visas (12282/2012 – C7-0200/2012 – 2012/0138(NLE))

Rapporteur: Paweł Robert Kowal

PA_Leg_Consent

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The amended visa facilitation agreement between the European Union and Ukraine introduces clear improvements in the delivery of visas for Ukrainian citizens compared to the agreement currently in force. It simplifies the requirements for documents to be presented by certain visa applicants and expands the category of persons who can benefit from a 1-year or a 5-year multiple-entry visa.

The new categories covered by the amended agreement include representatives of civil society organisations travelling regularly to Member States for the purposes of educational training or conferences, participants in cross-border cooperation programmes funded by the EU, students and post-graduate students, representatives of religious communities, people participating for professional reasons in conferences or seminars organised on EU territory; also, persons who need to come regularly to the EU for medical reasons and persons accompanying them.

It therefore constitutes a valuable step on the way towards the establishment of a visa-free regime between Ukraine and the European Union that has been advocated by the European Parliament. It is also a clear signal towards the Ukrainian citizens that the EU is seriously committed to strengthen its partnership with the Ukrainian society and to further develop and facilitate people-to-people contacts, in line with the renewed European Neighbourhood Policy.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, as the committee responsible, to propose that Parliament give its consent.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	22.1.2013
Result of final vote	+: 51 -: 1 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Pino Arlacchi, Franziska Katharina Brantner, Elmar Brok, Arnaud Danjean, Michael Gahler, Ana Gomes, Richard Howitt, Anna Ibrisagic, Jelko Kacin, Tunne Kelam, Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Maria Eleni Koppa, Andrey Kovatchev, Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler, Eduard Kukan, Vytautas Landsbergis, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Krzysztof Lisek, Sabine Lösing, Ulrike Lunacek, Mario Mauro, Francisco José Millán Mon, Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Raimon Obiols, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Mirosław Piotrowski, Bernd Posselt, Fiorello Provera, Libor Rouček, Tokia Saïfi, Nikolaos Salavrakos, György Schöpflin, Marek Siwiec, Sophocles Sophocleous, Charles Tannock, Inese Vaidere, Sir Graham Watson, Karim Zérîbi
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Charalampos Angourakis, Göran Färm, Elisabeth Jeggle, Barbara Lochbihler, Emilio Menéndez del Valle, Teresa Riera Madurell, Potito Salatto, Indrek Tarand, Traian Ungureanu
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Maria Da Graça Carvalho, Jolanta Emilia Hibner, Ivari Padar, Monika Panayotova