External borders: simplified regime for the control of persons based on the unilateral recognition by Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania of certain documents as equivalent to their national visas for transit through or intended stays on their territories

2013/0210(COD) - 27/02/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 502 votes to 17, with 18 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council introducing a simplified regime for the control of persons at the external borders based on the unilateral recognition by Croatia and Cyprus of certain documents as equivalent to their national visas for transit through or intended stays on their territories not exceeding 90 days in any 180-day period and repealing Decision No 895/2006/EC and Decision No 582/2008/EC of the European Parliament and the Council.

Parliament adopted its positon at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of an agreement negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council. They amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Aim: the aim of the proposed Decision is to introduce a simplified regime for the control of persons at the external borders whereby **Bulgaria**, Croatia, Cyprus and **Romania** may recognise unilaterally as equivalent to their national visas for transit through or intended stays on their territory not exceeding 90 days in any 180-day period the documents issued to third country nationals subject to a visa obligation pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 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, to a visa obligation.

Types of documents recognised unilaterally: the common rules should apply to:

- short-term uniform visas,
- long-stay visas,
- **residence permits issued by Member States fully implementing the Schengen acquis**,
- visas with limited territorial validity issued in accordance with Article 25 (3) first sentence of the Visa Code,
- **short-term visas, long-term visas and residence permits issued by Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania**.

The recognition of a document should be limited to the period of validity of the document.

The documents issued by Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Bulgaria that should be recognised are listed in the annexes to the Decision.

Application: the simplified scheme should be voluntary and should not impose additional obligations on the new Member States compared to those laid down in the Acts of Accession of 2003 (Cyprus), in 2005 (Romania - Bulgaria) and 2011 (Croatia). These countries should notify the Commission within 20 working days from the entry into force of this Decision, their decision whether to apply it or not.