EU/Samoa Agreement: short-stay visa waiver

2015/0056(NLE) - 12/02/2016 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude the Agreement between the European Union and Samoa on the short-stay visa waiver.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2016/274 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Agreement between the European Union and the Independent State of Samoa on the short-stay visa waiver.

CONTENT: under this Decision, **the Agreement between the European Union and Samoa** on the short-stay visa waiver is approved on behalf of the Union.

To recall, the Commission negotiated on behalf of the European Union an agreement with Samoa on the short-stay visa waiver. The Agreement has been signed and is applied on a provisional basis as from 28 May 2015.

The Agreement provides for visa-free travel for the citizens of the European Union and for the citizens of Samoa when travelling to the territory of the other Contracting Party for a **maximum period of 90 days in any 180-day period**. A joint statement on the interpretation of this duration of 90 days is annexed to the Agreement.

The visa waiver covers all categories of persons (ordinary, diplomatic, service/official and special passport holders) travelling for all kinds of purposes, **except for the purpose of carrying out a paid activity**. For this latter category, each Member State and also Samoa remain free to impose the visa requirement on the citizens of the other Party in accordance with the applicable Union or national law.

The Member States and Samoa reserve the right to refuse entry into and short stay in their territories **if one or more of these conditions are not met**.

The Agreement sets up a **Joint Committee of experts** for the management of the Agreement. The Union is to be represented within that Joint Committee by the Commission, which should be assisted by the representatives of the Member States.

This Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in which **Ireland and the United Kingdom do not take part**. Therefore, these two countries are not bound by it or subject to its application.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 12.2.2016.