EU/Marshall Islands Agreement: short-stay visa waiver

2016/0103(NLE) - 07/02/2017 - Final act

PURPOSE: to approve the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Marshall Islands on the short-stay visa waiver.

NON LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2017/233 on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of the Marshall Islands on the short-stay visa waiver.

CONTENT: the Council approved **the Agreement between the European Union and the Marshall Islands on the short-stay visa waiver**, on behalf of the Union.

To recall, the Commission negotiated on behalf of the Union an agreement with the Marshall Islands on the short-stay visa waiver. This Agreement was signed and was provisionally applied from 28 June 2016.

The Agreement provides for **visa-free travel** for the citizens of the Union and for the citizens of the Marshall Islands when travelling to the territory of the other Contracting Party **for a maximum period of 90 days in any 180-day period**. 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 those travelling to carry out a paid activity, each Member State and also the Marshall Islands remain free to impose the visa requirement on the citizens of the other Party in accordance with the applicable Union or national law. Member States and the Marshall Islands have reserved the right to prevent a person entering their respective territories or making a short stay there, if one or several conditions relating to short stay or entry are not fulfilled.

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 will be assisted by the representatives of the Member States.

The Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen a*cquis* in which the United Kingdom and Ireland do not take part. The latter two Member States are therefore not taking part in the adoption of the Decision and are not bound by it or subject to its application.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 7.2.2017.