EU/Barbados Agreement: short-stay visa waiver

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The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the report by Emilian PAVEL (S&D, RO) on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Agreement between the European Union and Barbados amending the Agreement between the European Community and Barbados on the short-stay visa waiver.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament **give its consent** to the conclusion of the agreement.

The Agreement amending the Agreement between the European Community and Barbados ensures legal coherence and harmonisation between Member States, in accordance with the **new definition of short-term stay** provided by the Schengen Borders Code amendment, which clarifies the meaning of this term (a stay of up to 90 days in any 180-day period).

Barbados is a member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, Association of Caribbean States, Caribbean Community, Non-Aligned Movement, Organization of American States, United Nations and World Trade Organization.
The explanatory statement accompanying the recommendation notes the following points:

- **economically**, Barbados has an exceptionally high ‘quality of life’ rating for a developing country. The economy, formerly a sugar monoculture, was developed over three decades to achieve a balance of growth and social development, and diversified into three main sectors: services, light industry and sugar;
- **politically speaking**, Barbados is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. There is a bicameral legislature and party system, based on universal adult suffrage. The constitution may be amended by act of parliament passed by both houses, except for entrenched clauses, which require two-thirds majorities in both houses;
- **the EU’s political dialogue** with the various Pacific ACP countries and Barbados in particular is gradually increasing.

The new visa waiver agreement will enable citizens not only to derive full benefit from the ACP-EU partnership but continuing to participate in it by travelling at a reduced, economical and practical cost under a clearer and more coherent legal framework. It significantly deepens relations between the European Union and Barbados, which is of great political importance in the context of the Cotonou Agreement.