EU/Saint Kitts and Nevis Agreement: short-stay visa waiver

2017/0176(NLE) - 02/10/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

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 the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis 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 the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis 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).

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

- **economically**, St Kitts and Nevis was virtually a sugar monocrop economy until the late 1970s, when the government backed a drive into small-scale industrialisation. Tourism has become the largest source of foreign exchange;
- **politically speaking**, the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis is a constitutional monarchy. The country is a sovereign democratic federal state, with a unicameral National Assembly;
- **the EU's political dialogue** with the various ACP countries and the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis 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 the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis, which is of great political importance in the context of the Cotonou Agreement.