EU/Belarus Agreement on facilitation of issuance of visas

2019/0182(NLE) - 21/01/2020 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Belarus on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: in the Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration of 7 May 2009, the Union and the partner countries expressed their political support towards liberalisation of the visa regime in a safe and secure environment and reaffirmed their intention to take gradual steps towards a visa free regime for their citizens in due course.

The Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Belarus on the facilitation of the issuance of visas, once signed subject to its conclusion at a later date, should now be approved.

The Commission carried out an assessment of the security and integrity of the Belarusian system for issuing biometric diplomatic passports and their technical specifications.

CONTENT: the Council draft is aimed at approving, on behalf of the Union, the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Belarus on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

The purpose of the Agreement is to facilitate, on the basis of reciprocity, the issuance of visas for an intended stay of no more than 90 days out of a total period of 180 days to citizens of the Union and Belarus.

The proposed decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis. The United Kingdom and Ireland are therefore not taking part in its adoption. This is also the case for Denmark.