

Temporary suspension of the visa exemption for all nationals of Vanuatu

2022/2984(DEA) - 01/12/2022 - Non-legislative basic document

The Commission's delegated regulation concerns the temporary suspension of the exemption from the visa requirement for all nationals of Vanuatu. It amends Annex II to [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1806](#) listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders of the Member States and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement.

Background

The Republic of Vanuatu is listed in Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 among the third countries whose nationals are exempt from the requirement to be in possession of a visa when crossing the external borders of the Member States for stays of no more than 90 days in any 180-day period.

The exemption from the visa requirement for nationals of Vanuatu is applicable since 28 May 2015, when the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Vanuatu on the short-stay visa waiver was signed and started to apply on a provisional basis.

Since 25 May 2015, Vanuatu has been operating **investor citizenship schemes** allowing visa required third-country nationals to easily obtain the nationality of a visa-free country, thus enabling them to bypass the Schengen visa procedure and gain visa-free access to the EU. The manner in which the said schemes are being implemented constitutes a **circumvention of the Union short-stay visa procedure** and the assessment of security and migratory risks.

On 3 March 2022, the Council adopted [Decision \(EU\) 2022/366](#) on the partial suspension of the application of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Vanuatu on the short-stay visa waiver. On 27 April 2022, the Commission adopted Implementing [Regulation \(EU\) 2022/693](#) on the temporary suspension of the visa exemption for nationals of Vanuatu, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1806. The suspension applies from 4 May 2022 to 3 February 2023.

The Commission established on 12 May 2022 an enhanced dialogue with Vanuatu with a view to addressing the circumstances that gave rise to the temporary suspension of the visa waiver. Vanuatu has informed the Commission of the decision of the Government of Vanuatu to establish a task force group to review the investor citizenship schemes. However, Vanuatu has **not made any significant contribution** since then. To date, Vanuatu's citizenship-by-investment programmes continue to operate.

In view of the **continuing situation**, it is necessary to adopt a delegated act temporarily suspending the visa waiver for a period of 18 months for all nationals of Vanuatu.

Content

The delegated act amends Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 providing that the **exemption from the visa requirement is temporarily suspended for a period of 18 months, from 4 February 2023 to 3 August 2024**, for all nationals of Vanuatu. The delegated act should take effect from the date of expiry of Commission implementing regulation (EU) 2022/693.

The Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in which Ireland does not participate.

