Visas: detection of false or falsified documents in the diplomatic representations abroad or offices

1999/0903(CNS) - 29/04/1999 - Final act

PURPOSE : the combat against the counterfeiting and falsification of travel documents of nationals of third countries by providing a uniform level of equipment and detection techniques in the offices and the departments responsible for the issuing of visas in the Member States or diplomatic representations. COMMUNITY MEASURE : Council Recommendation 1999/C.140/01 on the provision for the detection of false or falsified documents in the visa departments of representations abroad and in the offices of domestic authorities dealing with the issue or extension of visas. CONTENT : With the purpose of alerting more effectively the counterfeiting of travel documents of third country nationals, the recommendation invites the Member States to take a series of measures aiming to provide expertise and equipment of a similar standard for detecting forged documents in visa issuing authorities of the Member States. The Member States are invited to improve the conditions for issuing visas using equipment of an appropriate standard and the corresponding strengthening of necessary staff competences and capacities to carry out these examinations, including systematic training measures needed for detecting false documents. The decision, which falls withion national competence, on how to provide for offices engaged in the issue and extension of visas should be taken on the basis of the following determining factors: number of visa applications, known levels of falsifying and counterfeiting documents. The decisive factor for the provision of equipment shall be not so much the size of the office or the number of visas which it issues as the actual risk of falsification and counterfeiting occurring during the visa procedure. The aim shall be to detect the counterfeiting or falsification of passports on which visas are to be entered, passport substitutes, requisite invitations and other proof which is material to the visa procedure. In addition, the recommendation describes the level of technical provisions to be integrated in each of the visa-issuing services of the Member States. This equipment must be regularly adapted to technical progress and allow the application of differentiated measures as a function of the degree of risk inherent to the identified falsified documents. Three levels are provided for (low risk, intermediate risk and high risk), for which the recommendation describes the level of training required for the staff and the "ad hoc" material to provide for the detection of forged documents. Measures are also laid down with a view to sharing, in the context of local consular cooperation, equipment for the detection of forged documents, the sharing of this equipment and ad hoc training. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 29.04.1999.