Basic information

2015/0134(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	Procedure completed
Uniform format for visas: security Amending Regulation (EC) No 1683/1995 1994/0163(CNS) **Subject** 7.10.04 External borders crossing and controls, visas	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	KAUFMANN Sylvia-Yvonne (S&D)	03/09/2015
	Shadow rapporteur SARVAMAA Petri (PPE) VON STORCH Beatrix (ECR) DEPREZ Gérard (ALDE) CHRYSOGONOS Kostas (GUE/NGL) VALERO Bodil (Verts/ALE)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
JURI Legal Affairs	DZHAMBAZKI Angel (ECR)	13/07/2015

Council of the European Union

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Migration and Home Affairs	AVRAMOPOULOS Dimitris

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
24/06/2015	Legislative proposal published	COM(2015)0303	Summary
06/07/2015	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
16/02/2016	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
18/02/2016	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A8-0028/2016	Summary
01/06/2017	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T8-0237/2017	Summary
01/06/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
01/06/2017	Debate in Parliament		
20/06/2017	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
04/07/2017	Final act signed		
05/07/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		
28/07/2017	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2015/0134(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Amendments and repeals	Amending Regulation (EC) No 1683/1995 1994/0163(CNS)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 077-p2
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/8/03750

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE569.500	12/11/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE573.112	11/12/2015	
Committee opinion	JURI	PE571.707	12/01/2016	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A8-0028/2016	18/02/2016	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T8-0237/2017	01/06/2017	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Draft final act	00020/2017/LEX	05/06/2017	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2015)0303	24/06/2015	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2017)494	19/07/2017	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	IT_SENATE	COM(2015)0303	04/08/2015	
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2015)0303	24/09/2015	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Regulation 2017/1370
OJ L 198 28.07.2017, p. 0024 Summary

Uniform format for visas: security

2015/0134(COD) - 24/06/2015 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to amend Regulation (EC) laying down a uniform format for visas.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: Regulation (EC) No 1683/95 laying down a uniform format for visas took over the design adopted by the Schengen states and sets out in its recitals that these documents have to contain all the necessary information and **meet very high technical standards,** notably as regards safeguards against counterfeiting and falsification.

Since the introduction of the uniform format for visas, two substantial modifications to the initial Regulation have been adopted, which have contributed to the issuance of secure documents, fulfilling very high technical standards:

- the first amendment was introduced with Regulation (EC) No 334/2002 integrating a photograph produced according to high security standards as a first step towards the use of elements establishing a more reliable link between the visa sticker and the holder;
- the second amendment with Regulation (EC) No 856/2008 related primarily to an adaptation of the numbering in order to comply with the requirements of the Visa Information System (VIS).

With the above mentioned modifications, high quality counterfeits have recently been detected in several Member States. It is therefore necessary to develop a new security concept with **better security features for the visa sticker**. The new common design should be established with more modern security features to render the visa sticker more secure and prevent forgery. For those reasons a physical document for the visa sticker will still be necessary for years to come.

CONTENT: Council Regulation (EC) No 1683/951 laid down a uniform format for visas. The current visa sticker, which has been in circulation for 20 years, has to be considered as compromised in view of serious incidents of counterfeiting and fraud.

Therefore, a new common model with more modern security features is proposed in order to render the visa sticker more secure and prevent forgery.

The technical specifications for the production of the visa sticker are laid down in the new Annex to the amended Regulation. There are no substantive changes to the enacting term of this Regulation, only the Annex is replaced to show the image and the general description of the new visa sticker. The Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1683/95 is replaced by the text in the Annex to this Regulation.

Transition period: to allow for using up existing stocks, a transitional period of six months is foreseen within which Member States can still use the old visa stickers. Moreover, in relation to the current visa sticker, further improvement of the overall security is necessary, without increasing the costs for the document itself.

Territorial provisions: specific measures are laid down in the proposal for the implementation of the proposal by Ireland and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, Regulation (EC) No 1683/95 is part of the Schengen acquis to which Norway and Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein are associated on the basis of their respective Association Agreements, the proposed amendment should also apply to them.

Uniform format for visas: security

2015/0134(COD) - 18/02/2016 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the report by Sylvia-Yvonne KAUFMANN (S&D, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1683/1995 of 29 May 1995 laying down a uniform format for visas.

The committee recommended the European Parliament to adopt its position at first reading taking over the Commission proposal.

In the explanatory statement accompanying the legislative resolution, it is recalled that the current security concept for a uniform format for visas dates back to 1995, when it was initially developed under the intergovernmental Schengen cooperation. Regulation (EC) No 1683/1995 on a uniform format for visas took it over into EU law. Since then, it has been modified substantially twice.

Over the past few years forged visa stickers have arisen in several Member States. The present sticker is, as far as specialists are concerned, not secure any longer.

Therefore, the Commission presented a proposal amending Regulation (EC) No 1683/1995 calling for a new model with more security features in order to make the visa sticker more secure and prevent forgery.

There are no substantive changes to the enacting terms of this Regulation; the annex is merely replaced to show the image and the general description of the new visa sticker. The Commission has furthermore held out the prospect that the Regulation could face a codification after it has been adopted.

Members considered that the **Commission proposal should be adopted without any amendments in order to complete swift legislation for unforgeable visa stickers**.

Uniform format for visas: security

2015/0134(COD) - 04/07/2017 - Final act

PURPOSE: to modernise the security features of the visa sticker.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) 2017/1370 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1683/95 laying down a uniform format for visas.

CONTENT: this Regulation amends Regulation (EC) No 1683/95 with a view to establishing **a new common design for the visa sticker**, which modernises the safety features to prevent forgery. The technical specifications of the security features of the new design are set out in a new Annex to the amended Regulation.

The common design for the visa sticker, which has been in circulation for 20 years, is considered to be compromised in view of serious incidents of counterfeiting and fraud.

The amending Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis. Therefore, **Ireland and the United Kingdom** shall not be subject to the application of the new measures in accordance with the Protocols annexed to the EU Treaties. However, upon the request of those Member States, the Commission may enter into **agreements** with them in order to exchange technical information on the model of their national visas.

In order to exhaust existing stocks, a **transitional period of 6 months** is planned during which Member States may continue to use the old visa stickers.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 17.8.2017.

APPLICATION: no later than 15 months after the adoption of the additional technical specifications referred to in Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 1683 /95.

Uniform format for visas: security

2015/0134(COD) - 01/06/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 606 votes to 9, with 25 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1683/1995 of 29 May 1995 laying down a uniform format for visas.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading, following the ordinary legislative procedure, amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Agreement with Ireland and the United Kingdom: upon request from Ireland or the United Kingdom, the Commission shall enter into appropriate arrangements with the requesting Member State to exchange technical information referred to in Article 2 for the purposes of issuing national visas by the requesting Member State. Costs to which Ireland and the United Kingdom do not contribute in accordance with Article 5 of Protocol No 21 on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, shall be borne by Ireland or the United Kingdom respectively if they make such request.

Territorial provisions: the future Regulation constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in which the United Kingdom and Ireland do not take part. These States shall not participate in the adoption of this Regulation and shall not be bound by it or subject to its application.

Annex: technical amendments have also been made to the Annex of the future Regulation.