Basic information

2022/0135(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	Awaiting Parliament's position in 1st reading
Third countries whose nationals are subject to or exempt from a visa requirement: Kuwait, Qatar Amending Regulation 2018/1806 2018/0066(COD) **Subject** 7.10.04 External borders crossing and controls, visas **Geographical area** Kuwait Qatar **Legislative priorities** Joint Declaration 2023-24	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		

Former committee responsible	Former rapporteur	Appointed
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	MARQUARDT Erik (Greens/EFA)	13/07/2022

Council of the European Union

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Migration and Home Affairs	JOHANSSON Ylva

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
27/04/2022	Legislative proposal published	COM(2022)0189	Summary
18/05/2022	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
01/12/2022	Vote in committee, 1st reading		

01/12/2022	Committee decision to open interinstitutional negotiations with report adopted in committee		
05/12/2022	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A9-0288/2022	Summary
12/12/2022	Matter referred back to the committee responsible for reconsideration		
12/12/2022	Committee decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations announced in plenary (Rule 72)		
13/11/2024	Resumption of business from the previous parliamentary term		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2022/0135(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Amendments and repeals	Amending Regulation 2018/1806 2018/0066(COD)
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 204 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 077-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Awaiting Parliament's position in 1st reading
Committee dossier	LIBE/10/00187

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE736.470	16/09/2022	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE737.242	17/10/2022	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A9-0288/2022	05/12/2022	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2022)0189	27/04/2022	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2022)0129	27/04/2022	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Transparency				
Name	Role	Committee	Date	Interest representatives
LÓPEZ AGUILAR Juan Fernando	Committee chair	LIBE	07/12/2022	Embassy of Kuwait to Belgium and Luxembourg
MARQUARDT Erik	Rapporteur	LIBE	23/11/2022	Ambassador of Qatar to EU
LÓPEZ AGUILAR Juan Fernando	Committee chair	LIBE	14/11/2022	Ambassador-designate of the State of Kuwait to the European Union Ambassador of Qatar
MARQUARDT Erik	Rapporteur	LIBE	09/11/2022	Ambassador of Qatar to EU Ambassador of Kuwait to EU
MARQUARDT Erik	Rapporteur	LIBE	26/10/2022	European Union Department of Foreign Ministry of Oman Members Mission of Oman to EU
MARQUARDT Erik	Rapporteur	LIBE	19/10/2022	Ambassador of Kuwait to EU
LÓPEZ AGUILAR Juan Fernando	Committee chair	LIBE	12/10/2022	Ambassador of Ecuador to the European Union
MARQUARDT Erik	Rapporteur	LIBE	11/10/2022	Minister of labour of Qatar Members of Mission of Qatar to EU
MARQUARDT Erik	Rapporteur	LIBE	29/08/2022	Human Rights Watch
MARQUARDT Erik	Rapporteur	LIBE	13/07/2022	Ambassador of Qatar to EU First Secretary Mission of Kuwait to EU
LÓPEZ AGUILAR Juan Fernando	Committee chair	LIBE	02/06/2022	Kuwait Embassy and the Speaker of the House of Representative
LÓPEZ AGUILAR Juan Fernando	Committee chair	LIBE	10/05/2022	Minister of Labour of the State of Qatar

Third countries whose nationals are subject to or exempt from a visa requirement: Kuwait, Qatar

2022/0135(COD) - 27/04/2022 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to amend 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 (Kuwait, Qatar).

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 (EU) 2018/1806 lists 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. It is applied by all Member States except Ireland, as well as by Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. The Regulation is part of the EU's common visa policy for short stays of 90 days in any 180-day period.

Kuwait and Qatar present low risks for irregular migration to the EU and issue biometric passports in line with the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation. In recent years, security cooperation with these countries has intensified. As regards economic interests, Kuwait and Qatar are important economic partners for the EU, particularly in the field of energy.

Although challenges remain in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms, Kuwait and Qatar have undergone societal transformations and improvements regarding women's rights, labour rights and freedom of religion and interfaith dialogue and are expected to continue making progress and reforms. The long-term benefits of visa-free travel to the EU can reinforce positive trends in these areas.

In the context of the strengthening of overall relations between the EU and the Gulf, the EU should pursue a more strategic orientation with this region by developing a stronger, comprehensive and multi-sector partnership. Visa-free status plays a key role in promoting the partnership between both regions.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes to amend Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 by transferring the reference to Kuwait and Qatar from Annex I (list of third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders of the Member States) to Annex II (list of third countries whose nationals are exempt from the visa requirement when crossing the external borders of the Member States for stays of no more than 90 days in any given 180-day period).

Third countries whose nationals are subject to or exempt from a visa requirement: Kuwait, Qatar

2022/0135(COD) - 05/12/2022 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the report by Erik MARQUARDT (Greens/EFA, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1806, listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (Kuwait, Qatar).

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the proposal as follows:

Exemption from the visa requirement

Members consider that **nationals of Ecuador, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar** should be exempted from the visa requirement for stays of up to 90 days in a period of 180 days and that references to these countries should be transferred to Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806.

Negotiations on the bilateral visa waiver agreement should only start once a moratorium on the death penalty has been introduced in Kuwait.

As regards **Oman and Ecuador**, the visa waiver :

- would apply from the date of entry into force of a visa waiver agreement to be concluded with the EU;

- apply only to holders of biometric passports issued in accordance with International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards.

Negotiations on the bilateral visa waiver agreement should only start three months after the entry into force of the amending regulation, following the positive assessment by the Commission of a set of criteria set out in Article 1 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806.

Human rights dialogue

The amended text stresses that a genuine official human rights dialogue with **Kuwait, Qatar and Oman** should take place at least on an annual basis, the outcome of which should be reported to Parliament.

This dialogue should lead to tangible improvements and achievements in areas such as labour and workers' rights, including the rights of migrant workers and their access to compensation schemes and programmes, women's rights, LGBTQ+ rights, gender equality, freedom of religion, prohibition of torture, freedom of expression, freedom of the media, right of assembly and prohibition of the death penalty, and should include input from independent civil society actors.

The bilateral visa waiver agreements concluded with the EU should include explicit and concrete commitments to this effect.

With regard to **Ecuador**, the human rights dialogue established with the EU should continue and lead to further improvements and achievements, in particular with regard to prison conditions, the rights of women and girls, the rights of indigenous peoples and human rights defenders, as well as refugee protection in the country.

According to the report, the Commission should **monitor the human rights situation in third countries whose nationals** are exempt from the visa requirement and report regularly to Parliament. Bilateral visa waiver agreements to be concluded with the EU should provide for annual evaluation by the Commission of the implementation of their provisions, in particular as regards human rights and security.

Following the model of the current process as new generation agreements under Regulation (EU) 2018/1806, the Commission should promptly assess the situation of other third countries potentially eligible for visa exemption.