

Third countries whose nationals are subject to or exempt from a visa requirement (Visa Regulation)

2000/0030(CNS) - 26/01/2000 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : To present a proposal for a Council Regulation on a list of third countries whose nationals must have a visa when entering the European Union and those countries whose nationals do not need a visa. **CONTENT** : visa policy is given a legal base by the Treaty of Amsterdam. The law as it stands is based on Council Regulations and the Schengen acquis. Once the regulation is adopted, the Member States will be precluded from unilaterally determining the visa rules for any third country at all. They do, however, have the possibility of providing for certain derogations and exceptions applicable to certain categories of persons, notably on the grounds of international law or custom. The proposal mentions the issue of variable geometry applying to Denmark, the United Kingdom and Ireland. The proposal refers to visas for no longer than three months. The proposed regulation does not apply, inter alia, to long-stay visas and airport transit visas; nor does it determine the procedures and conditions for issuing visas. There are special provisions relating to stateless persons. The countries subject to visa requirements are listed in Annex I and those exempt are listed in Annex II. It should be noted that Bulgaria and Romania have moved from Annex I to II. Similarly, the Hong Kong and Macao SARs are in Annex II.