

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

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The committee adopted the report (consultation procedure) by Klaus-Heiner LEHNE (EPP/ED, D) approving, with a few amendments, the Commission proposal on listing third countries whose nationals are subject to or exempt from visa requirements for the EU. The report broadly endorsed the proposal, as it was consistent with Parliament's main demands. The amendments were mainly of a legal nature, designed to clarify certain aspects of the proposed regulation and ensure consistency with the existing Schengen rules. The committee also adopted an amendment allowing Member States to make an exemption from visa requirements to enable young people to participate in EU youth programmes more easily. In addition, the report strongly urged the Council to maintain Bulgaria and Romania on the list of third countries whose nationals were exempt from visa requirements, given that these two countries were set to become members of the EU eventually and had taken steps to address the concerns of the Member States.