

Visas: standard model

1994/0163(CNS) - 13/07/1994 - Legislative proposal

The proposal for a regulation was based on Article 100c(3) of the Treaty, which called on the Council to adopt, before 1 January 1996, measures concerning the uniform format for visas issued by the Member States. It complemented the proposal that had already been submitted to establish a joint list of the third countries whose citizens would require a visa to enter the EU and aimed to help achieve the free movement of persons within the internal market. A visa referred to any type of authorisation to enter the territory of a Member State that was valid for no more than three months, during a six-month period, either continuously or consisting of several visits. The uniform format should have the following characteristics: it should contain all the necessary information and meet very high technical standards, particularly as regards safeguards against counterfeiting and falsification; it should be suited to use by all the Member States; it should bear universally recognisable security features that were clearly visible to the naked eye. It should comply with the provisions concerning the protection of personal data. In addition, an individual to whom a visa had been issued should have the right to access and amend inexact, irrelevant or excessive information. The uniform format took account of the work carried out in the context of the Schengen Agreement, which should respond to the same requirements. Only one body in each Member State should have responsibility for printing the uniform format for visas. The annex to the regulation included a box beginning with the words "valid for", in which the issuing Member State should indicate the territory for which entry was authorised. This meant that the visa's validity could be limited to the territory of each Member State until the Convention on the crossing of the external borders of the Community entered into force. From then on, the majority of visas issued by the Member States would be valid throughout the Community, except in exceptional circumstances.