

Procedure file

Basic information		
CNS - Consultation procedure Decision	2007/0159(CNS)	Procedure completed
EC/Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia FYROM agreement: issuance of short-stay visas		
Subject 6.40.03 Relations with South-East Europe and the Balkans 7.10.04 External borders crossing and controls, visas 7.10.08 Migration policy		
Geographical area Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	ALDE VĂLEAN Adina-Ioana	10/09/2007
Council of the European Union	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs		
European Commission	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2827	08/11/2007
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2818	18/09/2007
	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Justice and Consumers	FRATTINI Franco	

Key events			
18/07/2007	Legislative proposal published	COM(2007)0421	Summary
24/09/2007	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
09/10/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
12/10/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A6-0383/2007	
24/10/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
24/10/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0454/2007	Summary
08/11/2007	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		

08/11/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		
19/12/2007	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2007/0159(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	International agreement
Legislative instrument	Decision
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 300-p2/3-a1; EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 062-p2-ab-i/ii
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/6/52249

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		COM(2007)0421	18/07/2007	EC	Summary
Committee draft report		PE394.120	21/09/2007	EP	
Committee opinion	AFET	PE394.094	04/10/2007	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A6-0383/2007	12/10/2007	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T6-0454/2007	24/10/2007	EP	Summary

Additional information	
National parliaments	IPEX
European Commission	EUR-Lex

Final act
Decision 2007/824 OJ L 334 19.12.2007, p. 0120 Summary

EC/Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia FYROM agreement: issuance of short-stay visas

PURPOSE: to sign and conclude an Agreement between the Community and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on the issuance of short-stay visas.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

BACKGROUND: the 2003 Thessaloniki Agenda recognised the need to integrate and accommodate the visa needs of the Western Balkan countries with those of the EU - a policy which is fully compatible, and in line with, the EU's Hague Programmes on the development of a common approach on visas. Indeed, the EU has already developed and signed Agreements on short-term visas with both the Russian Federation and with the Ukraine the purpose of which is to facilitate the processing of visas. Accordingly, in 2006 the Council authorised the Commission to begin negotiations with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on the issuance of short-stay visas alongside negotiations for a Readmission Agreement. See [CNS/2007/0147](#). These negotiations were concluded in April 2007. Throughout the negotiations process both the Member States and Parliament were kept fully abreast of developments by the Commission.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal, therefore, is to request the Council to sign and conclude an Agreement between the Community and the FYROM on facilitating the issuance of short-stay visas. For the purpose of the proposed Agreement short-stay visas will apply to issuing a visa for an intended stay of no more than 90 days per period of 180 days.

The main elements of the proposal can be summarised as follows:

- in principle, a decision on whether or not to issue a visa will have to be taken within 10 calendar days. This period may be extended by

up to 30 calendar days. In urgent cases the period for taking a decision may be reduced to three working days or less;

- the visa fee will amount to EUR 35. It concerns both single and multiple-entry visas. Certain categories of persons may have their fee waived. For example, close relatives, officials participating in government activities, students, journalists, disabled persons etc.;
- provisions regarding the presentation of documents in the case of a journey have been simplified for certain categories of people including, inter alia: close relatives, business people, official delegates, students, drivers conducting international cargo, tourists on organised trips, etc.;
- the criteria for issuing multiple-entry visas has been simplified for certain categories of peoples. For example, in the case of members of national Governments, Parliament, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the Judiciary Council and Public Prosecutors Council, permanent members of official delegations and spouses and children visiting citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that reside legally in the Member States, journalists, business people and representatives of the religious communities, then the visa will be valid for up to five years or depending on the period of their mandate for legal residence. For participants in scientific, cultural, official exchange programmes and sport events, journalists, business people etc. visas will be valid for a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years. There are, however, conditions attached to this later point;
- holders of diplomatic passports are exempted from the short-stay visa requirements;
- for those citizens who already hold a service passport then the bilateral Agreements that have been signed before 1 January 2007 will continue to apply for a period of five years;
- a Protocol has been attached to the Agreement stating that those Member States who are yet to apply the Schengen acquis in full, may unilaterally recognise Schengen visas and residence permits that have been issued to citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the purpose of transit through their territory;
- a European Community Declaration has been attached to the Agreement on the matter of allowing visa applicants access to information on issuing short-stay visas;
- in response to specific requests from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the European Community has attached Declarations to the Agreement regarding those family members who are not legally covered by the provisions of the Agreement as well as for bona fide applicants;
- in cases where certain issues are not covered by this Agreement, the normal Schengen rules apply or national law (such as refusing a visa, the recognition of travel documents, proof of sufficient means of subsistence etc).

Neither the United Kingdom nor Ireland are bound by the Agreement. Nor will Denmark be participating in the Agreement. Since the Agreements on visa facilitation and readmission are linked, both Agreements should be signed, concluded and entered into force simultaneously.

EC/Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia FYROM agreement: issuance of short-stay visas

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted a report drawn up by Adina-Ioana VĂLEAN (ALDE, RO) approving, without amendment, the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Community and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the facilitation of issuance of short-stay visas.

EC/Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia FYROM agreement: issuance of short-stay visas

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Adina-Ioana VĂLEAN (ALDE, RO) and approved the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Community and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the facilitation of issuance of short-stay visas.

EC/Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia FYROM agreement: issuance of short-stay visas

PURPOSE: to sign and conclude an Agreement between the Community and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on the issuance of short-stay visas.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2007/824/EC on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Community and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

CONTENT: the main elements of the Agreement can be summarised as follows:

- short-stay visas will apply to issuing a visa for an intended stay of no more than 90 days per period of 180 days.
- in principle, a decision on whether or not to issue a visa will have to be taken within 10 calendar days. This period may be extended by up to 30 calendar days. In urgent cases the period for taking a decision may be reduced to three working days or less;
- the visa fee will amount to EUR 35. It concerns both single and multiple-entry visas. Certain categories of persons may have their fee waived. For example, close relatives, officials participating in government activities, students, journalists, disabled persons etc.;
- provisions regarding the presentation of documents in the case of a journey have been simplified for certain categories of people including, inter alia: close relatives, business people, official delegates, students, drivers conducting international cargo, tourists on organised trips, etc.;
- the criteria for issuing multiple-entry visas has been simplified for certain categories of peoples. For example, in the case of members of national Governments, Parliament, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the Judiciary Council and Public Prosecutors Council, permanent members of official delegations and spouses and children visiting citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia that reside legally in the Member States, journalists, business people and representatives of the religious communities, then the visa will be valid for up to five years ? or depending on the period of their mandate for legal residence. For participants in scientific, cultural, official exchange programmes and sport events, journalists, business people etc. visas will be valid for a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years. There are, however, conditions attached to this later point;

- holders of diplomatic passports are exempted from the short-stay visa requirements;
- for those citizens who already hold a service passport then the bilateral Agreements that have been signed before 1 January 2007 will continue to apply for a period of five years;
- a Protocol has been attached to the Agreement stating that those Member States who are yet to apply the Schengen acquis in full, may unilaterally recognise Schengen visas and residence permits that have been issued to citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the purpose of transit through their territory in accordance with European Parliament and Council Decision 895/2006/EC. A reference to the future amendment of the [Decision \(EC\) 895/2006](#) for covering Bulgaria and Romania is added;
- a European Community Declaration has been attached to the Agreement on the matter of allowing visa applicants access to information on issuing short-stay visas;
- in response to specific requests from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the European Community has attached Declarations to the Agreement regarding those family members who are not legally covered by the provisions of the Agreement as well as for bona fide applicants;
- in cases where certain issues are not covered by this Agreement, the normal Schengen rules apply or national law (such as refusing a visa, the recognition of travel documents, proof of sufficient means of subsistence etc).

Neither the United Kingdom nor Ireland is bound by the Agreement. Nor will Denmark be participating in the Agreement. Since the Agreements on visa facilitation and readmission are linked, both Agreements should be signed, concluded and entered into force simultaneously.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the agreement will enter into force when the necessary formalities have been concluded and on the same date as the parallel agreement on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation (see [CNS/2007/0147](#)).