

# Procedure file

Basic information		
NLE - Non-legislative enactments	<a href="#">2013/0356(NLE)</a>	Procedure completed
EU/Azerbaijan Agreement: facilitation of the issuance of visas		
Subject 6.40.04.04 Relations with Caucasus countries 7.10.04 External borders crossing and controls, visas		
Geographical area Azerbaijan		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<b>LIBE</b> Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		05/12/2013
		PPE <a href="#">GABRIEL Mariya</a>	
		Shadow rapporteur Verts/ALE <a href="#">ŽDANOKA Tatjana</a>	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	<b>AFET</b> Foreign Affairs		26/11/2013
		ALDE <a href="#">JÄÄTTEENMÄKI Anneli</a>	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	<a href="#">Agriculture and Fisheries</a>	<a href="#">3308</a>	14/04/2014
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	<a href="#">Migration and Home Affairs</a>	MALMSTRÖM Cecilia	

Key events			
29/10/2013	Preparatory document	COM(2013)0742	Summary
07/02/2014	Legislative proposal published	<a href="#">17846/2013</a>	Summary
20/02/2014	Vote in committee		
04/03/2014	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	<a href="#">A7-0155/2014</a>	Summary
10/03/2014	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
12/03/2014	Decision by Parliament	<a href="#">T7-0214/2014</a>	Summary
14/04/2014	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
	End of procedure in Parliament		

14/04/2014			
30/04/2014	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2013/0356(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Consent by Parliament
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 077-p2; Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 218-p6a
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/7/14436

Documentation gateway					
Preparatory document		COM(2013)0742	29/10/2013	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		<a href="#">15554/2013</a>	18/11/2013	CSL	
Committee draft report		<a href="#">PE527.928</a>	20/01/2014	EP	
Committee opinion	AFET	<a href="#">PE526.103</a>	06/02/2014	EP	
Legislative proposal		<a href="#">17846/2013</a>	07/02/2014	CSL	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		<a href="#">A7-0155/2014</a>	04/03/2014	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		<a href="#">T7-0214/2014</a>	12/03/2014	EP	Summary

Additional information	
National parliaments	<a href="#">IPEX</a>
European Commission	<a href="#">EUR-Lex</a>

Final act
<a href="#">Decision 2014/242</a> <a href="#">OJ L 128 30.04.2014, p. 0047</a> Summary

## EU/Azerbaijan Agreement: facilitation of the issuance of visas

**PURPOSE:** to conclude an Agreement between the European Union and Azerbaijan aiming to facilitate the issuance of visas.

**PROPOSED ACT:** Council Decision.

**BACKGROUND:** in the context of the Warsaw Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration of 30 September 2011, the EU and the partner countries confirmed their political support for enhancing the mobility of citizens in a secure and well-managed environment and reaffirmed their intention to take gradual steps towards a visa free regime for their citizens in due course.

On that basis the Commission presented on 16 September 2011, a recommendation to the Council in order to authorise the Commission to open negotiations with Azerbaijan on a Visa Facilitation Agreement.

Following the authorisation given by the Council on 19 December 2011, the negotiations with Azerbaijan on the Agreement were opened in Baku on 1 March 2012 and continued until 13 March 2013 in Brussels. The final text of the Agreement was initialled in Brussels on 29 July 2013 by the chief negotiators.

Member States have been regularly informed and consulted in the relevant Council Working Groups at all stages of the negotiations.

The Commission considers that the objectives set by the Council in its negotiating directives were attained and that the draft Agreement is acceptable to the Union. The European Parliament needs to give its consent to the Agreement.

It is necessary now to conclude the Agreement on behalf of the EU.

**CONTENT:** the proposed decision provides that the Council conclude, on behalf of the EU, the Agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan on visa facilitation.

**Terms of the Agreement:** the main provisions are as follows:

- for all visa applicants, a decision on whether or not to issue a visa will have to be taken within 10 calendar days. This period may be extended up to 30 calendar days when further scrutiny is needed. In urgent cases, the period for taking a decision may be reduced to two working days or less. As a rule, the visa applicants can have an appointment for lodging their application within a period of two weeks from the date of request and in cases of urgency immediately or without an appointment;
- the visa fee for processing applications shall amount to EUR 35. This fee will be applied to all visa applicants and concerns both single and multiple-entry visas. Moreover, certain categories of persons benefit from a full waiver of the visa fee: pensioners, close relatives, members of official delegations participating in government activities, pupils, students (including postgraduate students), persons with disabilities, journalists and the technical crew accompanying them, representatives of civil society organisations, children under the age of 12, humanitarian cases and persons participating in scientific, cultural, artistic activities and sport events;
- the documents to be presented regarding the purpose of the journey have been simplified for some categories of persons: close relatives, business people, members of official delegations, pupils, students and post-graduate students, participants in scientific, cultural and sporting events, journalists, persons visiting military and civil burials, representatives of civil society, members of the professions, drivers conducting international cargo and passenger transportation services, participants in official exchange programmes of twin cities and persons visiting for medical reasons. For these categories of persons, only the documents listed in the Agreement may be requested for justifying the purpose of the journey. No other justification, invitation or validation provided for by the legislation of the Member States or Azerbaijan will be required;
- simplified criteria for issuing multiple-entry visas for the following categories of persons: (i) for permanent members of official delegations and spouses and children visiting citizens of the EU legally residing in the territory of Azerbaijan or citizens of Azerbaijan legally residing in the Member States or EU citizens residing in the territory of the Member States of which they are nationals or citizens of Azerbaijan residing in the territory of Azerbaijan: visas valid for five years (or shorter, limited to the period of the validity of their mandate or authorisation for legal residence); (ii) participants in scientific, cultural, official exchange programmes and sport events, journalists, students, business people, members of official delegations, representatives of civil society, members of the professions and drivers, provided that during the previous two years they have made good use of 1 year multiple-entry visas and the reasons for requesting a multiple-entry are still valid: visas valid for a minimum of two years and a maximum of 5 years are issued;

**Other provisions:** these are as follows:

- a protocol addresses the specific situation of Member States that do not yet fully apply the Schengen acquis and their unilateral recognition of Schengen visas and residence permits issued to citizens of Azerbaijan for the purpose of transit through their territory in accordance with Council Decision N° 582/2008/EC;
- a Joint Declaration is attached to the Agreement on the implementation of Article 10 on diplomatic passports;
- a Joint Declaration is attached to the Agreement on cooperation on travel documents and regular exchange of information on travel document security;
- a Joint Declaration reaffirming that the Agreement does not affect the ability of individual Member States and Azerbaijan to conclude bilateral Visa Waiver Agreements for holders of service passports.

**Territorial provisions:** the specific situations of Denmark, the United Kingdom and Ireland are reflected in the preamble. The close association of Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein to the implementation, application and development of the Schengen acquis is reflected in a Joint Declaration to the Agreement.

## EU/Azerbaijan Agreement: facilitation of the issuance of visas

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**PURPOSE:** to conclude an Agreement between the European Union and Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

**PROPOSED ACT:** Council Decision.

**ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT:** the Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

**BACKGROUND:** in accordance with Council Decision 2013/695/EU, the Agreement between the European Union and Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas was signed on 29 November 2013, subject to its conclusion.

That Agreement should now be concluded.

**CONTENT:** the draft decision aims to conclude the Agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

For details of the terms of the Agreement, please see the summary of the initial legislative proposal of 29/10/2013.

## EU/Azerbaijan Agreement: facilitation of the issuance of visas

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The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted the report by Mariya GABRIEL (EPP, BG) on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

Members recommended that Parliament consent to the conclusion of the Agreement, since the latter was a step forward in cooperation in the field of mobility and were of political and procedural importance. As a result of the new rules introduced in the agreements, procedures would be simpler and faster.

## EU/Azerbaijan Agreement: facilitation of the issuance of visas

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The European Parliament adopted by 589 votes to 25, with 32 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

Parliament gave its consent to the conclusion of the Agreement.

## EU/Azerbaijan Agreement: facilitation of the issuance of visas

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**PURPOSE:** to conclude an agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan aiming to facilitate the issuance of visas.

**NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Council Decision 2014/242/EU on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.

**BACKGROUND:** in accordance with Council Decision 2013/695/EU, the Agreement between the European Union and Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas was signed on 29 November 2013, subject to its conclusion. The Agreement should be approved.

**CONTENT:** the Decision provides that the Council, after obtaining the approval of the European Parliament, concludes, on behalf of the EU, the Agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan on visa facilitation.

**Terms of the Agreement:** the main provisions are as follows:

- for all visa applicants, a decision on whether or not to issue a visa will have to be taken within 10 calendar days. This period may be extended up to 30 calendar days when further scrutiny is needed. In urgent cases, the period for taking a decision may be reduced to two working days or less. As a rule, the visa applicants can have an appointment for lodging their application within a period of two weeks from the date of request and in cases of urgency immediately or without an appointment;
- the visa fee for processing applications shall amount to EUR 35. This fee will be applied to all visa applicants and concerns both single and multiple-entry visas. Moreover, certain categories of persons benefit from a full waiver of the visa fee;
- the documents to be presented regarding the purpose of the journey have been simplified for some categories of persons for whom only the documents listed in the Agreement may be requested for justifying the purpose of the journey. No other justification, invitation or validation provided for by the legislation of the Member States or Azerbaijan will be required;
- simplified criteria for issuing multiple-entry visas for the following categories of persons: (i) for permanent members of official delegations and spouses and children visiting citizens of the EU legally residing in the territory of Azerbaijan or citizens of Azerbaijan legally residing in the Member States or EU citizens residing in the territory of the Member States of which they are nationals or citizens of Azerbaijan residing in the territory of Azerbaijan: visas valid for five years (or shorter, limited to the period of the validity of their mandate or authorisation for legal residence); (ii) participants in scientific, cultural, and sport events, in accordance with the conditions set out: visas valid for a minimum of two years and a maximum of 5 years are issued;
- citizens of Azerbaijan who are holders of a valid diplomatic passport will not require a visa for short stays.

**Other provisions:** the Agreement also contains a series of technical provisions including a Joint Declaration reaffirming that the Agreement does not affect the ability of individual Member States and Azerbaijan to conclude bilateral Visa Waiver Agreements for holders of service passports.

**Territorial provisions:** the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark will not take part in the adoption of the Agreement and are not bound by it or subject to its application.

**ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 14.04.2014. The date of entry into force of the Agreement will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union by the General Secretariat of the Council.