









Procedure file

Basic information			
CNS - Consultation procedure Directive		2023/0441(CNS)	
Consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the Union in third countries		Awaiting final decision	
Amending Directive 2015/637		2011/0432(CNS)	
Amending Directive 2019/997		2018/0186(CNS)	
Subject			
1.20.20 Diplomatic and consular protection			
Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		31/01/2024
		 VINCZE Loránt	
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 KALJURAND Marina	
		 TOOM Jana	
		 STRIK Tineke	
		 KANKO Assita	
		 URBÁN CRESPO Miguel	
Council of the European Union	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs (Associated committee)		20/02/2024
		 SÁNCHEZ AMOR Nacho	
	DEVE Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	JURI Legal Affairs		13/02/2024
		 LEBRETON Gilles	
European Commission		Commissioner	
Justice and Consumers		REYNDERS Didier	

Key events			
06/12/2023	Legislative proposal published	COM(2023)0930	Summary
14/03/2024	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
19/04/2024	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A9-0178/2024	
24/04/2024	Decision by Parliament	T9-0336/2024	

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2023/0441(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Directive
	Amending Directive 2015/637 2011/0432(CNS) Amending Directive 2019/997 2018/0186(CNS)
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 57; Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 023-a2
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Awaiting final decision
Committee dossier	LIBE/9/13828

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		COM(2023)0930	06/12/2023	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		SEC(2023)0930	07/12/2023	EC	
Document attached to the procedure		SWD(2023)0940	07/12/2023	EC	
Document attached to the procedure		SWD(2023)0941	07/12/2023	EC	
Document attached to the procedure		SWD(2023)0942	07/12/2023	EC	
Committee draft report		PE759.050	05/03/2024	EP	
Committee opinion	AFET	PE758.853	21/03/2024	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE760.930	03/04/2024	EP	
Committee opinion	JURI	PE759.733	10/04/2024	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A9-0178/2024	19/04/2024	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T9-0336/2024	24/04/2024	EP	

Consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the Union in third countries

PURPOSE: to revise the EU Consular Protection Directive to facilitate consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the Union in third countries.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Directive.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the Council adopts the act after consulting the European Parliament but without being obliged to follow its opinion.

BACKGROUND: crises resulting in requests for consular protection are increasing in frequency and scale. The COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis in Afghanistan, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the conflict in Sudan, the repatriations from Israel and Gaza and other similar crises have provided a context to identify gaps and reflect on how to further facilitate the exercise of the right to consular protection.

Improving consular protection of Union citizens abroad by reinforcing Union solidarity and cooperation in this field ensures that Union citizens continue to benefit from this fundamental right according to the highest standards, in particular during times of crisis.

The rules established under the Consular Protection Directive should be amended to protect and support EU citizens abroad in times of crisis.

To improve legal certainty for consular authorities and citizens, it is therefore appropriate to lay down more detailed criteria that aid in the assessment whether a Union citizen is to be considered as unrepresented and thus eligible to receive consular protection from the Member State whose consular authorities have been approached. Those criteria should be sufficiently flexible and applied in light of local circumstances, such as ease of travel or security situation in the third country concerned.

CONTENT: in this regard, the Commission proposes to revise the EU Consular Protection Directive to ensure better and easier protection for EU citizens in a third country, where their country of nationality does not have a consulate or embassy. Therefore, EU citizens should be able to get clearer information and exercise their rights for assistance and protection.

Overall, the proposal aims to: (i) simplify procedures and make best use of the EU's global network of EU delegations, Member States' embassies and consulates to better assist citizens in need; (ii) reinforce crisis preparedness and response measures, including by conducting regular consular crisis exercises and preparing crisis consular plans with an assessment of possible risks and an estimate of EU citizens present for each country; (iii) send joint teams of consular experts to reinforce diplomatic and consular staff during crises.

More specifically, the proposal:

- clarifies when a Member State is not to be considered as represented in a third country due to the fact that it has no embassy or consulate effectively in a position to provide consular protection. The proposal also sets out the criteria to be taken into account by the embassy or consulate from which the unrepresented citizen seeks consular protection to determine whether a Member State has no embassy or consulate effectively in a position to provide consular protection in a given case;
- clarifies that the presence of an honorary consul of the citizens Member State of nationality may only be taken into account if the assistance requested by the citizen is covered by the competences of the honorary consul. This is to avoid that citizens are denied assistance with reference to an honorary consul who is not competent to assist them;
- adds a reference to evacuation to comprehensively cover situations where Union citizens are rescued and moved from areas affected by an emergency to a safe location, which must not necessarily be the territory of a Member State, as well as situations where Union citizens are repatriated to Union territory;
- states that Member States may involve, in their coordination and cooperation measures, security and military personnel, honorary consuls, international organisations or diplomatic and consular authorities of third countries;
- introduces the possibility to Member States to offer their citizens the possibility to register with or inform competent national authorities of their travels to or residence in third countries. This is meant to improve the information available on the estimated number and location of Union citizens present in a third country for the purposes of crisis preparedness and crisis response. It would also make it easier to contact citizens affected by a crisis situation;
- lays down the rules on the reimbursement of the costs for consular protection which would be adapted to provide that such costs are primarily to be reimbursed by the assisted unrepresented citizen directly, either when making the request or at a later stage. Only if such reimbursement does not take place, the assisting Member State should approach the Member State of nationality for reimbursement. Moreover, Member States that assist represented citizens in crisis situations may also ask for the reimbursement of costs, given that it may not be possible or practically feasible to distinguish them from unrepresented citizens in crisis situations;
- implements the fundamental right to an effective remedy in the context of consular protection.