


Procedure file

Basic information		
CNS - Consultation procedure Regulation	1994/0163(CNS)	Procedure completed
Visas: standard model Amended by 2001/0232(CNS) Amended by 2008/0074(CNS) Amended by 2011/0051(COD) Amended by 2015/0134(COD) Amended by 2022/0132A(COD) Amended by 2022/0132B(COD)		
Subject 7.10.04 External borders crossing and controls, visas		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	LIBE Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs		07/09/1994
		PPE LEHNE Klaus-Heiner	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy		14/09/1994
		FE CALIGARIS Luigi	
	JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights		04/11/1994
		PSE ODDY Christine Margaret	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	General Affairs	1847	29/05/1995

Key events			
13/07/1994	Legislative proposal published	COM(1994)0287	Summary
26/09/1994	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
19/12/1994	Vote in committee		Summary
19/12/1994	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A4-0117/1994	
16/01/1995	Debate in Parliament		
16/01/1995	Decision by Parliament	T4-0001/1995	Summary
29/05/1995	Act adopted by Council after consultation		Summary

	of Parliament		
29/05/1995	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/07/1995	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1994/0163(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
	Amended by 2001/0232(CNS) Amended by 2008/0074(CNS) Amended by 2011/0051(COD) Amended by 2015/0134(COD) Amended by 2022/0132A(COD) Amended by 2022/0132B(COD)
Legal basis	EC before Amsterdam E 100C-p3
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/4/05939

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		COM(1994)0287 OJ C 238 26.08.1994, p. 0008	13/07/1994	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0117/1994 OJ C 043 20.02.1995, p. 0004	19/12/1994	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0001/1995 OJ C 043 20.02.1995, p. 0009-0011	16/01/1995	EP	Summary

Additional information	
European Commission	EUR-Lex

Final act
Regulation 1995/1683 OJ L 164 14.07.1995, p. 0001 Summary

Visas: standard model

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. ?

Visas: standard model

The committee adopted the report approving the proposal for a regulation laying down a uniform format for visas. This proposal was limited to defining the physical characteristics (the form, the data included, etc.) for a future visa valid at Community level. However, it was important to remember, as the EP had always pointed out, that a harmonised visa policy called for measures such as the definition of a list of third countries whose nationals were required to hold a visa when crossing the external borders of the Member States or the harmonisation of checks on persons crossing external borders. Unfortunately, the proposals that had been submitted to this end seemed to have reached a deadlock. The rapporteur suggested that the regulation should clarify that it applied solely to visas for short-term stays ("grosso modo", up to three months). Another amendment pointed out that the secret specifications that applied to the format - those necessary to avoid counterfeiting and falsification - which would be adopted according to a specific procedure, could not include or refer to personal data. ?

Visas: standard model

In adopting the LEHNE report, the European Parliament approved the proposal for a regulation with certain amendments. The EP considered that it was important to clarify that the regulation applied solely to visas for short-term stays (around three months). In addition, it pointed out that the secret specifications should not include or refer to personal data but should be confined to data necessary to prevent counterfeiting and falsification of the visa itself. The uniform visa format should comply with the provisions of the European Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data of 28 January 1981 and the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe regulating the use of personal data in the police sector adopted on 17 September 1987. ?

Visas: standard model

OBJECTIVE: To lay down a Community visa model with a view to harmonising national visa policies and promoting the free movement of persons in the European Union. SUBSTANCE: 1. This regulation lays down a uniform format for visas for all Member States. 2. For the purposes of the regulation, a "visa" shall mean an authorisation given by or a decision taken by a Member State which is required for entry into its territory with a view to: - an intended stay in that Member State or in several Member States of no more than three months in all, - transit through the territory or airport transit zone of that Member State or several Member States. 3. Member States may use the visa format for purposes other than those mentioned above as long as there is no confusion with the uniform visa defined in point 2. 4. The information contained in the uniform visa format must comply with: * the technical specifications listed in the annex to the regulation outlining universally recognisable security features which are clearly visible to the naked eye; * the additional secret technical specifications designed to prevent visa counterfeiting and falsification. 5. Each Member State should designate not more than one body having responsibility for printing the visas. They must communicate the name of this body to the Commission and the other Member States. 6. The procedure for adopting the secret specifications is laid down in the regulation. They are forwarded to: - the bodies responsible for printing the visas; - persons duly authorised by the Commission or a Member State. 7. The regulation contains a clause concerning the protection of personal data relating to individuals to whom visas have been issued. Source: European Commission - Info 92 - 10/95. ?

Visas: standard model

Following the agreement in principle reached at the last JHA Council meeting on 9 and 10 March, the Council formally adopted the Regulation laying down a uniform format for visas (see Press Release 5423/95, Presse 69). The Regulation lays down that visas issued by the Member States will be produced in a uniform format - sticker - and will conform to the common specifications set out in an Annex to the Regulation, concerning, inter alia, security features that render the visa difficult to counterfeit or falsify, the nature and colour of the paper, the parts to be filled in by the issuing authority and the languages to be used. The uniform format for visas will come into effective use six months after the additional technical specifications to reduce counterfeiting or falsification have been adopted by the Commission with the assent of a committee consisting of representatives of the Member States.