



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS



26.06.09

Council adopts Community code on Visas (Visa Code)

This week Council adopted common rules on procedures and conditions for issuing short stay visas. This is a major step to further develop a common visa policy and to reinforce cooperation in the Schengen area. Third-country nationals will benefit from a more consistent and transparent application procedures.

The provisions mainly concern transits through or intended stays not exceeding three months in any six-month period (short-term visas).

The new Regulation establishing a Community code on Visas (Visa Code) bundles all legal instruments concerning visa decisions and increases transparency and legal security for applicants. It replaces the Common Consular Instructions (CCI). Its main provisions are:

- It clarifies which Member State is responsible for processing a visa application and defines the different phases for examination and decision taking;
- It includes new provisions allowing for multiple-entry visas under certain conditions;
- It lists the documents a visa applicant needs to submit and the procedures for their verification;
- It harmonizes the fees that can be charged and sets common standards for the service provided, namely non-discrimination and that a decision should be taken within 15 calendar days;
- It obliges member states to give refused applicants the reasons for their decision and gives them the right to appeal.

The regulation enters into force 20 days after its publication and most of its provisions must be applied six months later.

[Read more](#)

To see the text of the Regulation [click here](#)



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

Increase in Suspicious Transactions

Europol and its cooperation partners target organised crime and terrorist organisations by identifying and following money trails. Suspicious Transaction Reports (STRs) are one of the most important tools for this purpose, and STRs are also extremely useful when it comes to the protection of the integrity and reputation of the financial system in the EU.

A recent survey of the transaction reporting practice in the EU Member States made by Europol shows that the volume of STRs disclosed in 2007 (602,450) increased by 6.2% compared to 2006 (567,146).

[Read more](#)

International Drugs Day – the launch of the European Action on Drugs

Today Commission Vice-President Jacques Barrot launched the European Action on Drugs (EAD) during a high-profile event with the participation of around 120 stakeholders from the EU.

The EAD aims to build on the principle of 'shared responsibility', and encourage everyone – whether groups or individuals, or professionals, or just every member of society –to sign a pledge and undertake a commitment that addresses the drugs problem in some way.

EAD is designed to be a platform for all European public and private organisations, stakeholders, NGOs, citizens and anyone active or interested in this field. While serving as a new tool for everyone in the EU, the EAD complements the various drugs policies and schemes run in the Member States.

[Read more](#)

Frontex and CEPOL Sign Cooperation Agreement

Frontex (the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States) and CEPOL (the European Police College) have signed a Cooperation Agreement.

The purpose of the arrangement is to support the harmonisation of police and border guard officers training and promoting their cooperation at European Union level. The arrangement particularly focuses on coordination and exchange of information on training activities; joint training activities; contributing to the development of training material or common curricula; and exchanging expertise and best practice.

[Read more](#)



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

JUDGEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

CASE C-14/08 – Roda Golf & Beach Resort SL

In this judgement the Court held that extrajudicial documents issued where there are no legal proceedings, such as notarial acts, are covered by the intra-Community system for the service of documents, stating that the judicial cooperation which this system is intended to achieve may take place both in connection with and in the absence of legal proceedings.

The Court explained that the aim of the Regulation on service of documents is to improve and expedite the transmission of judicial and extrajudicial documents in civil or commercial matters for the service of documents. It stated that the document concerned in the case, which was drawn up by a notary, constitutes an extrajudicial document within the meaning of the Regulation on service of documents.

Furthermore, the Court held that the definition of 'extrajudicial document' for the purposes of the Regulation on service of documents must be regarded as a Community law concept and not as a national law concept.

[Read more](#)