Council Decision (EU) 2020/752 of 27 May 2020 on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Belarus on the facilitation of the issuance of visas

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2020/752

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on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Belarus on the facilitation of the issuance of visas

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular point (a) of Article 77(2), in conjunction with point (a) of the second subparagraph of Article 218(6) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Having regard to the consent of the European Parliament[(1)],

Whereas:

(1) In accordance with Council Decision (EU) 2019/1915[(2)], the Agreement between the European Union and Republic of Belarus on the facilitation of the issuance of visas (hereinafter 'the Agreement') was signed on 8 January 2020, subject to its conclusion at a later date.

(2) In the Eastern Partnership Summit Declaration of 7 May 2009, the Union and the partner countries expressed their political support towards liberalisation of the visa regime in a safe and secure environment and reaffirmed their intention to take gradual steps towards a visa free regime for their citizens in due course.

(3) The purpose of the Agreement is to facilitate, on the basis of reciprocity, the issuance of visas for an intended stay of no more than 90 days in any 180-day period to the citizens of the Union and Belarus.

(4) This Decision constitutes a development the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* in which Ireland does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2002/192/EC[(3)]; Ireland is therefore not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application.

(5) In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of the Protocol No 22 on the position of Denmark, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Denmark is not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application.

(6) The Commission has carried out an assessment of the security and integrity of Belarus' system of issuance of biometric diplomatic passports and their technical specifications.

(7) The Agreement should be approved,

Changes to legislation: *There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Council Decision (EU) 2020/752. (See end of Document for details)*

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Belarus on the facilitation of the issuance of visas is hereby approved on behalf of the Union[(4)].

Article 2

The President of the Council shall, on behalf of the Union, give the notification provided for in Article 14(1) of the Agreement[(5)].

Article 3

The European Commission, assisted by the representatives of the Member States, shall represent the Union within the Joint Committee set up pursuant to Article 12 of the Agreement.

Article 4

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 27 May 2020.

For the Council

The President

G. GRLIĆ RADMAN