COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 12.2.2018

as regards further technical specifications for the uniform format for visas and repealing Commission Decision C(2010) 319¹

(Only the Bulgarian, Spanish, Czech, Danish, German, Estonian, Greek, French, Croatian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Maltese, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Finnish and Swedish texts are authentic)

¹ SECRET UE/EU SECRET Sans l'(les) annexe(s) jointe(s) – non classifié / When detached from annex(es) – non-classified.
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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1683/95 of 29 May 1995 laying down a uniform format for visas², and in particular Article 2 thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Regulation (EC) No 1683/95 empowers the Commission to adopt further technical specifications for the uniform format for visas in order to prevent counterfeiting and falsification.

(2) Due to the current visa sticker being compromised, a new common design should be established with more modern security features to render it more secure and to prevent forgery.

(3) The technical specifications laid down by Commission Decision C(2010) 319 should therefore be replaced by the specifications for the re-designed version in the annex to the Regulation (EC) No 1683/95.

(4) This Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in which the United Kingdom does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2000/365/EC³; the United Kingdom is therefore not taking part in its adoption and is not bound by it or subject to its application.

(5) This Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in which Ireland does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2002/192/EC⁴; Ireland is therefore not taking part in its adoption and is not bound by it or subject to its application.

(6) This Decision constitutes an act building upon, or otherwise related to, the Schengen acquis within, respectively, the meaning of Article 3(1) of the 2003 Act of Accession,

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(7) As regards Iceland and Norway, this Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis within the meaning of the Agreement concluded between the Council of the European Union and the Republic of Iceland and the Kingdom of Norway concerning the latter’s association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen acquis\(^5\), which fall within the area referred to in Article 1, point B of Council Decision 1999/437/EC\(^6\).

(8) As regards Switzerland, this Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis within the meaning of the Agreement concluded between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Swiss Confederation’s association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen acquis\(^7\), which fall within the area referred to in Article 1, point B, of Decision 1999/437/EC read in conjunction with Article 3 of Council Decision 2008/146/EC\(^8\).

(9) As regards Liechtenstein, this Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen acquis within the meaning of the Protocol signed between the European Union, the European Community, the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein on the accession of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the Agreement concluded between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Swiss Confederation’s association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen acquis\(^9\), which fall within the area referred to in Article 1, point B, of Decision 1999/437/EC read in conjunction with Article 3 of Council Decision 2011/350/EU\(^{10}\).

(10) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee created by Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No 1683/95,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Technical specifications for the uniform format for visas shall be as specified in the annexes.

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\(^5\) OJ L 176, 10.7.1999, p. 36.
\(^6\) Council Decision 1999/437/EC of 17 May 1999 on certain arrangements for the application of the Agreement concluded by the Council of the European Union and the Republic of Iceland and the Kingdom of Norway concerning the association of those two States with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen acquis (OJ L 176, 10.7.1999, p. 31).
\(^7\) OJ L 53, 27.2.2008, p. 52.
\(^{10}\) Council Decision 2011/350/EU of 7 March 2011 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol between the European Union, the European Community, the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein on the accession of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the Agreement between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Swiss Confederation’s association with the implementation, application and development of the Schengen acquis, relating to the abolition of checks at internal borders and movement of persons (OJ L 160, 18.6.2011, p. 19).
Article 2
The Member States shall cooperate in the implementation of this Decision in particular by exchanging information on all the technical specifications.
Each Member State shall send to the Commission and to the other Member States a reference specimen of the visa which it issues. Each Member State shall also keep specimens of subsequent print runs and shall hold them at the disposal of the Commission and the other Member States.

Article 3

Article 4
This Decision is addressed to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Estonia, the Hellenic Republic, the Kingdom of Spain, the French Republic, the Republic of Croatia, the Italian Republic, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Poland, the Portuguese Republic, Romania, the Republic of Slovenia, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Finland and the Kingdom of Sweden.
Done at Brussels, 12.2.2018

For the Commission
Dimitris AVRAMOPOULOS
Member of the Commission