



2024/1341

14.5.2024

**COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2024/1341**

**of 29 April 2024**

**on the suspension of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament  
and of the Council in respect of Ethiopia**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the of Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code) <sup>(1)</sup>, and in particular Article 25a(5), point (a), thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) Following an assessment pursuant to Article 25a(2) of Regulation (EC) No 810/2009, the Commission considers that cooperation with Ethiopia in the field of readmission is insufficient. Significant improvements in the cooperation on all the steps of the readmission process are needed, including to ensure that Ethiopia effectively cooperates with all Member States in a timely and predictable manner on the identification and issuance of travel documents, and on return operations.
- (2) There are persistent challenges in the identification of Ethiopian nationals illegally staying on the territory of the Member States. Those challenges are due to the lack of response from the Ethiopian authorities with regard to readmission requests, difficulties with the issuance of emergency travel documents, which are generally not provided even when the nationality has previously been confirmed, and difficulties with the organisation of return operations for voluntary and forced returns on scheduled and charter flights.
- (3) Taking into account the various steps taken so far by the Commission to improve the level of cooperation with Ethiopia and the Union's overall relations with Ethiopia, Ethiopia's cooperation with the Union on readmission matters is not sufficient and action is therefore needed.
- (4) The application of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 should therefore be temporarily suspended for nationals of Ethiopia who are subject to the visa requirement pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(2)</sup>. The objective is to encourage Ethiopia to undertake the actions necessary to improve cooperation on readmission matters.
- (5) The provisions temporarily suspended should be those referred to in Article 25a(5), point (a), of Regulation (EC) No 810/2009, namely: the possibility of waiving requirements with regard to the documentary evidence to be submitted by visa applicants referred to in Article 14(6) of that Regulation; the optional visa fee waiver for holders of diplomatic and service passports in accordance with Article 16(5), point (b), of that Regulation; the general processing period of 15 calendar days referred to in Article 23(1) of that Regulation, the suspension of which would, as a consequence, also exclude the application of the rule allowing for the extension of that period up to a maximum of 45 calendar days only in individual cases, meaning that the standard processing period would be 45 calendar days; and the issuing of multiple-entry visas in accordance with Article 24(2) and (2c) of that Regulation.
- (6) This Decision should not affect the application of Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(3)</sup>, which extends the right of free movement to family members irrespective of their nationality when accompanying or joining a Union citizen. This Decision should thus not apply to family members of a Union citizen to whom Directive 2004/38/EC applies or to family members of a national of a third country enjoying a right of free movement equivalent to that of Union citizens under an agreement between the Union and a third country.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 243, 15.9.2009, p. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (OJ L 303, 28.11.2018, p. 39).

<sup>(3)</sup> Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC (OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77).

- (7) The measures provided for in this Decision should be without prejudice to the obligations of the Member States under international law, including as host countries of international intergovernmental organisations or of international conferences convened by the United Nations or other international intergovernmental organisations hosted by Member States. Thus, the temporary suspension should not apply to nationals of Ethiopia applying for a visa insofar as necessary for Member States to comply with their obligations as host countries of such organisations or of such conferences.
- (8) In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of 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. Given that this Decision builds upon the Schengen *acquis*, Denmark shall, in accordance with Article 4 of that Protocol, decide within a period of six months after the Council has decided on this Decision whether it will implement it in its national law.
- (9) 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/EC<sup>(4)</sup>; Ireland is therefore not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application.
- (10) As regards Iceland and Norway, this Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* within the meaning of the Agreement concluded by 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*<sup>(5)</sup> which fall within the area referred to in Article 1, point B, of Council Decision 1999/437/EC<sup>(6)</sup>.
- (11) As regards Switzerland, this Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* within the meaning of 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*<sup>(7)</sup> 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<sup>(8)</sup>.
- (12) As regards Liechtenstein, this Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* within the meaning 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*<sup>(9)</sup> 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<sup>(10)</sup>.
- (13) This Decision constitutes an act building upon, or otherwise relating to, the Schengen *acquis* within the meaning of Article 3(2) of the 2003 Act of Accession,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

#### Article 1

1. This Decision applies to nationals of Ethiopia who are subject to the visa requirement pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1806.

<sup>(4)</sup> Council Decision 2002/192/EC of 28 February 2002 concerning Ireland's request to take part in some of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* (OJ L 64, 7.3.2002, p. 20).

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ L 176, 10.7.1999, p. 36.

<sup>(6)</sup> 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).

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ L 53, 27.2.2008, p. 52.

<sup>(8)</sup> Council Decision 2008/146/EC of 28 January 2008 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Community, of 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* (OJ L 53, 27.2.2008, p. 1).

<sup>(9)</sup> OJ L 160, 18.6.2011, p. 21.

<sup>(10)</sup> 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).

2. This Decision does not apply to nationals of Ethiopia who are exempt from the visa requirement under Article 4 or 6 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806.
3. This Decision does not apply to nationals of Ethiopia applying for a visa who are family members of a Union citizen to whom Directive 2004/38/EC applies or family members of a national of a third country enjoying a right of free movement equivalent to that of Union citizens under an agreement between the Union and a third country.
4. This Decision is without prejudice to the cases where a Member State is bound by an obligation of international law, namely:
  - (a) as a host country of an international intergovernmental organisation;
  - (b) as a host country of an international conference convened by, or under the auspices of, the United Nations or other international intergovernmental organisations hosted by a Member State;
  - (c) under a multilateral agreement conferring privileges and immunities; or
  - (d) pursuant to the 1929 Treaty of Conciliation (Lateran Pact) concluded by the Holy See (Vatican City State) and Italy, as last amended.

#### *Article 2*

The application of the following provisions of Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 is temporarily suspended in respect of Ethiopia:

- (a) Article 14(6);
- (b) Article 16(5), point (b);
- (c) Article 23(1);
- (d) Article 24(2) and (2c).

#### *Article 3*

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its notification.

#### *Article 4*

This Decision is addressed to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, 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, 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 Luxembourg, 29 April 2024.

*For the Council*

*The President*

D. CLARINVAL