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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	Commission services
To:	Visa Working Party
Subject:	Visa policy alignment: progress by Western Balkans and Eastern partnership partners (2022 – 2025)

Delegations will find attached the presentation made by the Commission services at the Visa Working Party meeting of 18 February 2025 on the above-mentioned subject.



Visa policy alignment: progress by Western Balkans and Eastern partnership partners (2022 – 2025)

DG HOME B4

18 February 2025

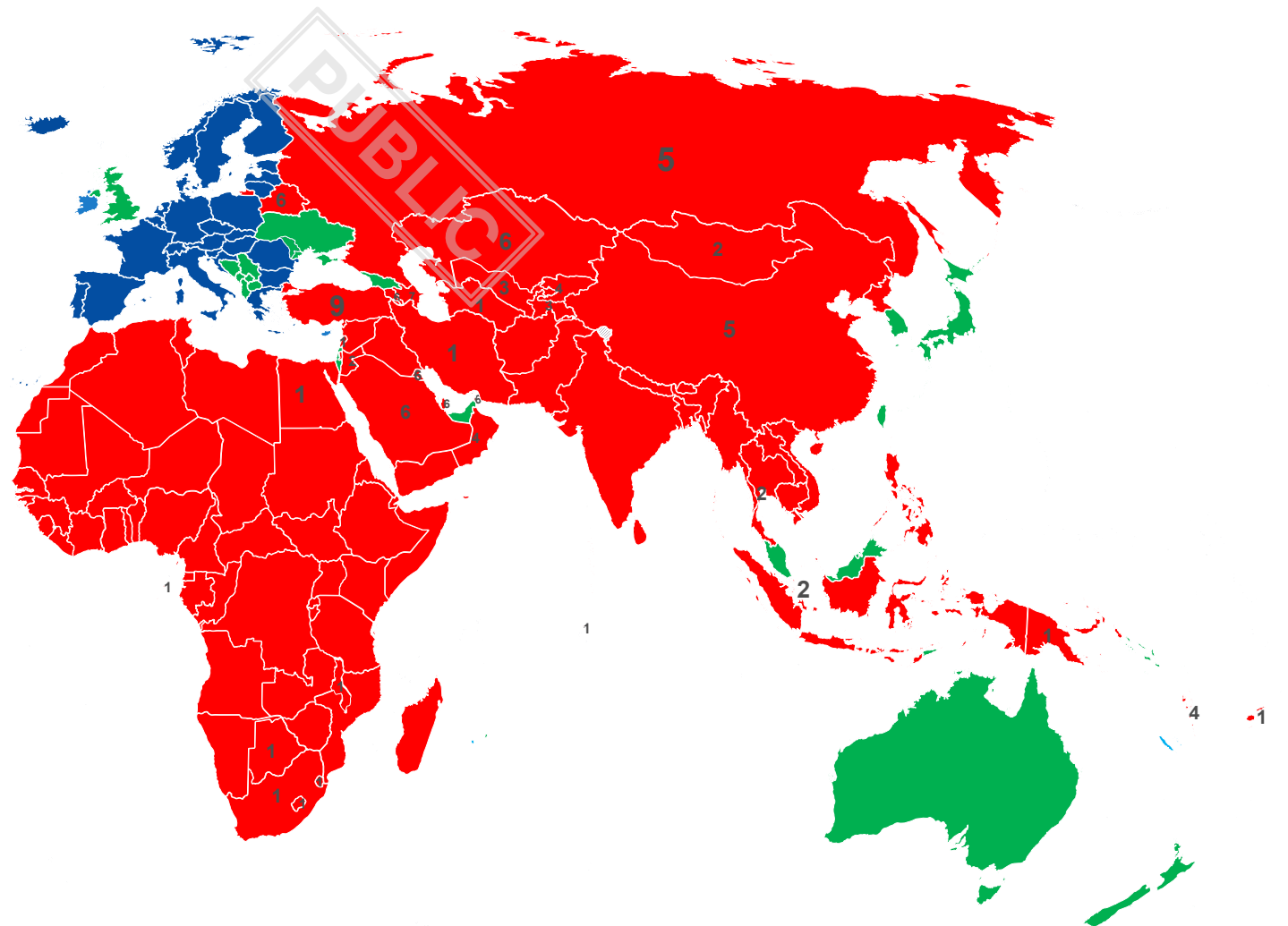
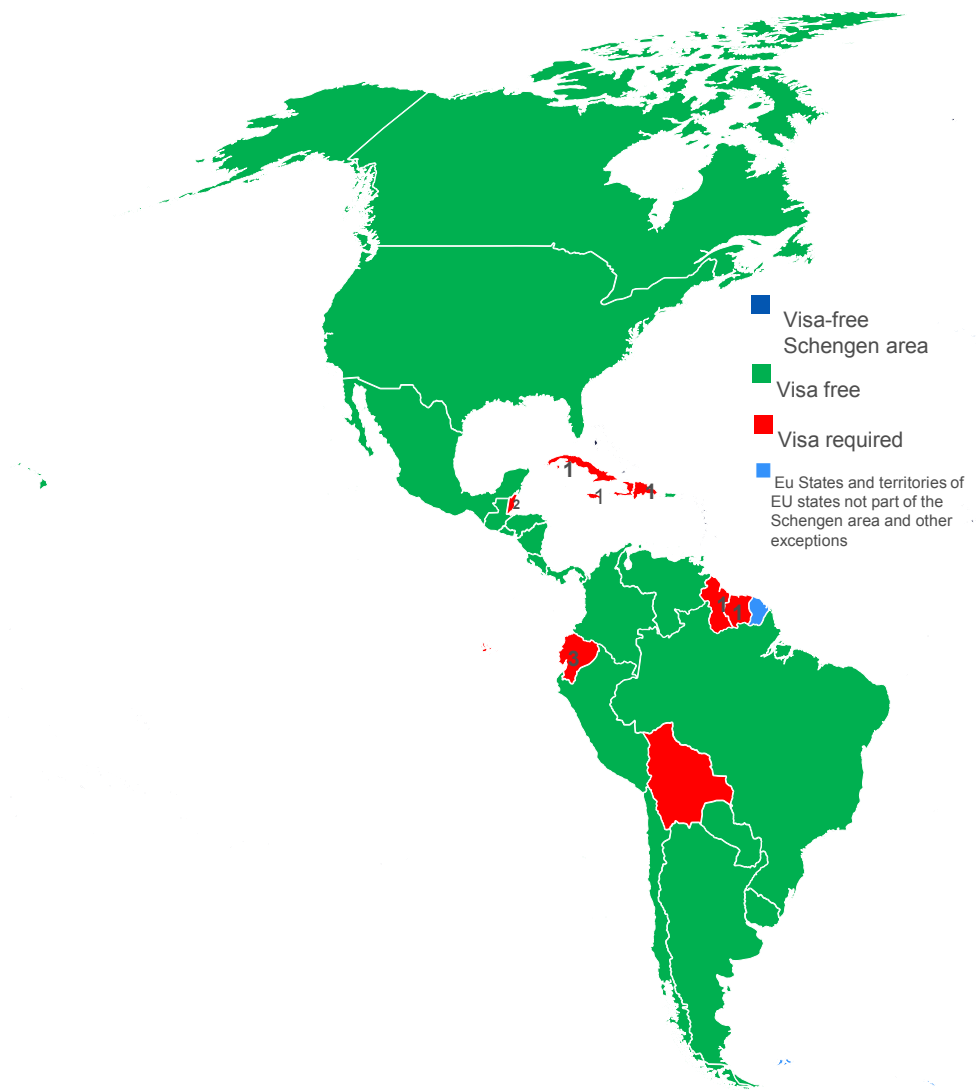
Progress visa policy alignment 2022 – 2025 (without Vanuatu)

	Albania	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Kosovo*	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine
2022	16 (8 seasonal)	8	19 (2024)	15 (5 seasonal)	4 (1 seasonal)	20	24	12	15
2025	13 (6 seasonal)	7 (1 seasonal)	16	13 (4 seasonal)	1	12	25	11	15

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

Visa policy alignment 2025

Albania	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Kosovo	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Georgia	Moldova	Ukraine
<p><i>Permanent:</i></p> <p>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Türkiye, UAE TCNs.</p> <p><i>Seasonal:</i></p> <p>Bahrain, Indonesia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Thailand</p>	<p><i>Permanent:</i></p> <p>Azerbaijan, China, Kuwait, Qatar, Russia, Türkiye and Vanuatu</p> <p><i>Seasonal:</i></p> <p>Saudi Arabia</p>	<p>Bahrain, Belize, Eswatini, Fiji, Guyana, Jordan, Kuwait, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Vanuatu</p>	<p><i>Permanent:</i></p> <p>Azerbaijan, Bahrein, Belarus, China, Kuwait, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye</p> <p><i>Seasonal:</i></p> <p>Armenia, Egypt, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan</p>	Türkiye	<p>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, China, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Russia, Suriname, Türkiye</p>	<p>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan</p>	<p>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, Russia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Uzbekistan and Vanuatu</p>	<p>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Uzbekistan</p>



Albania

- In **2022** Albania had **eight** permanent visa-free agreements with third countries visa required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Guyana, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Türkiye plus foreign citizens who have a valid 10 years permit of stay in the United Arab Emirates. Albania had also **eight** seasonal visa waivers for nationals of countries visa required for the EU: Bahrain, Egypt, India, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand.
- On 2 December 2022, the seasonal visa waivers for Egypt and India were terminated. In 2023, the seasonal visa waiver for Russia was terminated. In March 2024, citizens of Indonesia obtained a seasonal visa waiver.
- In May 2024, Albania partially suspended its visa-free waiver with Belarus for diplomatic and service passport holders, maintaining visa-free regime for holders of Belarus ordinary passports. In July 2024, the visa-free agreement with Guyana was terminated.
- As of February **2025**, Albania has permanent visa-free agreements with **seven** third countries visa-required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Türkiye plus foreign citizens holding 10 years permit of stay in the United Arab Emirates. Albania also has **six** seasonal visa waivers for nationals of countries visa required for the EU: Bahrain, Indonesia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Thailand.
- Progress between 2022 and 2025: **one** country for permanent visa waivers and **two** countries for seasonal visa waivers.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- In **2022**, Bosnia and Herzegovina had **eight** permanent visa-free agreements with third countries visa required for the EU: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, China, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Russia and Türkiye.
- In **2023**, Bosnia and Herzegovina introduced a seasonal visa waiver for Saudi Arabia and terminated the visa-free agreement with Bahrain.
- In **March 2024**, Bosnia and Herzegovina terminated the visa-free agreement with Oman.
- With the entry in force of EU visa requirement for Vanuatu, as of **February 2025** Bosnia and Herzegovina has permanent visa-free agreements with **seven** third countries visa-required for the EU: Azerbaijan, China, Kuwait, Qatar, Russia, Türkiye and Vanuatu plus **one** seasonal (summer) visa waiver (with Saudi Arabia).
- Progress between 2022 and 2025: **one** country for permanent visa-free agreements but regression by one on seasonal visa waivers.

Kosovo

- Kosovo visa policy alignment began to be assessed only in 2024. At the beginning of **2024**, Kosovo had **nineteen** visa-free agreements with countries visa required for the EU: Bahrain, Belize, Botswana, Eswatini, Fiji, Guyana, Jordan, Kuwait, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Namibia, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Türkiye.
- In August 2024, Kosovo introduced the visa requirement for nationals of Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa.
- With the entry in force of the EU visa requirement for Vanuatu, as of February **2025** Kosovo has **seventeen** visa-free agreements with third-countries visa-required in EU: Bahrain, Belize, Eswatini, Fiji, Guyana, Jordan, Kuwait, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Vanuatu.

Progress between 2024 and 2025: two countries.

Montenegro

- In **2022**, Montenegro had **nine** permanent visa-free agreements with third countries visa required for the EU: Armenia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cuba, Ecuador, Türkiye, Qatar, plus a visa exemption for foreign citizens who have a valid 10 years permit of stay in the United Arab Emirates. Montenegro had also **five** seasonal visa waivers, with Armenia, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan).
- In **2023**, agreements with Cuba and Ecuador were terminated, as well as the visa exemption for third-country nationals with a residence permit in the United Arab Emirates.
- In **2024**, the seasonal visa waiver for citizens of Uzbekistan was terminated (but reinstated in February 2025), a seasonal visa waiver was granted to foreign citizens holding a residence permit of the United Arab Emirates for at least three years prior, Bahrain was added to the list of permanent visa waivers and Saudi Arabia was transferred from the seasonal to the permanent visa list.
- As of February 2025 Montenegro has permanent visa-free agreements with **nine** third countries visa required for the EU: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, China, Kuwait, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye plus **four** seasonal visa waivers, with Armenia, Egypt, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Progress between 2022 and 2025: two countries less in the seasonal list / one more in the permanent one.

North Macedonia

- In **2022**, North Macedonia had **three** permanent visa-free agreements with third countries visa required for the EU: Botswana, Cuba and Türkiye and **one** seasonal visa waiver, with Azerbaijan.
- In 2023 visa-free agreements with Botswana and Cuba were terminated, as well as the seasonal visa waiver for Azerbaijan.
- As of February 2025, North Macedonia has only **one** permanent visa-free agreement with a third country visa-required for the EU, Türkiye, and no seasonal visa waivers.

Progress between 2022 and 2025: **two** countries for permanent visa-free agreements and **one** for seasonal visa waivers. North Macedonia achieved a nearly complete visa policy alignment with EU.

Serbia

- In 2022, Serbia had **twenty** permanent visa-free agreements with third countries visa-required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Bolivia, China, Cuba, Guinea Bissau, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Suriname and Türkiye. In December 2022, visa-free agreements with Guinea-Bissau and India were terminated.
- In 2023, visa-free agreements with Bolivia and Cuba were terminated. In December 2024, visa-free agreements with Kuwait, Oman and Qatar were terminated. Visa-free agreement with Mongolia was also terminated in 2024, but it will expire only in March 2025.
- As of February 2025, Serbia has **thirteen** permanent visa free agreements with third countries visa-required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, China, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Russia, Suriname and Türkiye. The expiration of the agreement with Mongolia in March 2025 will reduce this number to **twelve**.

Progress between 2022 and 2025: **seven** countries, soon (in March 2025) to be **eight**.

Georgia

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- In **2022**, Georgia had **twenty-four** visa-free agreements with third countries visa required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- In April 2024, Georgia signed a visa-waiver with China.
- As of February **2025**, Georgia had **twenty-five** visa-free agreements with third countries visa required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Progress between 2022 and 2025: **regression by one country.**

Moldova

- In 2022, Moldova had **twelve** visa-free agreements with third countries visa required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cuba, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, Russia, Tajikistan, Türkiye and Uzbekistan.
- No changes in 2023. In April 2024, the visa-free agreement with Ecuador was terminated.
- With the entry in force of the EU visa requirement for Vanuatu, as of February 2025 Moldova has **twelve** visa-free agreements with third countries visa required in EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, Russia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Uzbekistan and Vanuatu.

Progress between 2022 and 2025: no progress, as result of introduction of visa requirement by EU for Vanuatu.

Ukraine

PUBLIC

In 2022, Ukraine had visa-free agreements with fifteen third countries visa required for the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Türkiye and Uzbekistan.

As of February 2025, Ukraine has the same fifteen agreements.

There has been no changes since 2022.