
EU Parliament: ban on travel documents issued by Russia in occupied regions in Ukraine and Georgia

(Strasbourg) Travel documents issued by Russia in the regions it occupies in Ukraine and Georgia should not be accepted. This is the view of MEPs, who have today approved the mandate for negotiations on a legislative proposal on the non-recognition of travel documents issued by Russia in occupied Ukrainian regions and the so-called breakaway territories of Georgia, for the purpose of issuing a visa or when crossing the EU's external borders. The legislative text was adopted by 540 votes in favour, 6 against and 36 abstentions. According to MEPs, "the Russian annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in Ukraine is illegal". The EU also condemned Russia's decision to recognise the independence of the so-called breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia. Therefore, EU member states and EEA allies "should no longer accept travel documents issued by Russia in these regions". MEPs also adopted amendments to the Council's position in order to protect everyone's right to flee the conflict in Ukraine and enter the EU on humanitarian grounds. Parliament and Council will now negotiate on the final form of the act. Once adopted by both institutions and published in the Official Journal of the EU, it will enter into force on the day after its publication.

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