EN
E-000716/2026
Reply
(15.6.2026)

The conclusion of a bilateral “Enhanced Border Security Partnership” (EBSP) with the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was announced by the US as a new requirement for all countries participating in or aspiring to join the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) in February 2022. The US requires operational EBSPs to be in place by 31 December 2026. The background to this is the fact that visa reciprocity with the US is in the EU’s interest, and that each country is in a position to set the criteria enabling individuals to enjoy visa-free access to its territory.

On 16 December 2025, the Council adopted a *Decision authorising the opening of negotiations on a framework agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on the exchange of information for security screenings and identity verifications relating to border procedures and applications for visa,* together with negotiating directives. The Decision and negotiating directives demonstrate the European wish to continue to move towards full visa reciprocity with the US. At the same time, they reflect the Union’s interests and the principle of reciprocity: the Framework Agreement would also enable EU Member States to receive information from the US for the security screening and verification of the identity of persons travelling to the EU’s territory.

In line with the Decision, negotiations are conducted in consultation with the competent Council preparatory body and subject to any guidance which the Council may subsequently issue to the Commission. All relevant considerations are taken into account in that context. This will also be the case when examining any Commission proposals at the next stages in the process provided for by Article 218 TFEU.