

BRUSSELS PROPOSES THE CREATION OF A “ROAMING VISA” TO ATTRACT RICH TOURISTS



The European Commission proposed to cut the terms and to reduce the procedures for the granting of visas to people who want to come to the EU for short stays with the goal of driving tourism and business trips, without reducing the level of security.

According to the facts from Brussels, in 2012, a total of 6.6 million potential travelers from six large countries were lost because of the complexity of the visa procedures. Making the visas more flexible will increase the journeys to the Schengen free circulation space between 30% and 60% which could generate up to 130,000 million in direct spending and 1.3 million job positions in tourism within five years.

The top EU destinations that grant the most entry visas for short stays are France (2.1 million), Germany (1.7 million), Italy (1.64 million), and Spain (1.63 million). The main benefactors are Russians, Ukrainians, Chinese, Belorussians, Turks, Indians, Algerians, and Moroccans. The Commissioner of the Interior, Cecilia Malmstrom, has dismissed that the current crisis in the Ukraine and Russia will decrease the number of citizens from those countries who travel for tourism to the EU.

“These changes will help the tourism sector to face the considerable foreseen increase in the flow of tourists that visit Europe. Tourism is the driving force of growth in Europe and has been the most important stronghold of the European economy during the recent crisis,” said Antonio Tajani, the vice president of the Commission responsible for Tourism.

In particular, the community executive has proposed to reduce the time for processing from 15 to 10 days and the adoption of a decision on the visa application. The maximum time for presenting an application will increase from three to six months before the trip so that travelers can make plans ahead of time and avoid the busy season. In addition, the list of supporting documents will be more simplified and matched up, while the documents will also lift the obligatory traveler's insurance.

In agreement with the proposal, the applicant will have the right to present the application in any of the present consulates.

Making Procedures Easier

In addition, the procedures will be considerably easier for frequent travelers, with the obligatory expedition of visas of multiple entries valid for three years and the introduction of a new type of visa of circulation that will allow travelers circulating around the Schengen space for a maximum of one year (without staying in a member state more than 90 days during a period of 180 days).

Finally, Brussels wants to simplify the application form and allow them to be submitted by internet, and it will authorize the member state to begin special systems for visa concession on the borders for a maximum period of 15 days in a Schengen country.

The proposals will now be debated and approved by the governments and the European Parliament, which the Commission hopes will happen in 2015.

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