

INDIA: TOWARDS THE EVOLUTION OF E-VISA



Whether it concerns the number of eligible nationalities, the list of available arrival points, the types of possible stays, or even its price, the Indian e-visa has been in constant evolution since its creation in 2014. India now plans to increase the number of countries eligible for e-visa.

Indian Ministry of Tourism is currently in discussion with the Ministry of the Interior in order to consider extending the validity of the electronic visa as well as its possible number of entries, thus wishing to come closer to the characters of the paper visa affixed in the passport, valid up to 6 months for multiple entries, and inspired by the American ESTA, valid two years to make several trips of up to 90 days.

When questioned by a local media, the Indian Minister of Tourism, Mr. Shri Alphons Kannanthanam, said: "**We want long-term e-Visa, like the United States.** It should be easier to obtain, with multiple entries and longer. We are currently discussing this issue with the Ministry of Interior. The e-visa should be much more accessible and for longer trips as in countries like the United States, this will make it even more convenient and the country can be perceived as a more accessible destination."

Already under study over the past year, the reduction of visa and e-visa fees during off-peak tourist periods is still under discussion: "We have approached the Ministry of Internal Affairs to obtain a waiver regarding electronic visa fees for off-peak seasons in India. This decision could increase the sector's revenues and help increase the number of tourist arrivals in the country.

Statistics from the Ministry of Tourism show that 10.2 million foreign tourists were welcomed in 2017, an increase of 15.6% compared to 2016. The number of travelers using e-visa reached 1.7 million, up 57.2% compared to 2016. These statistics also show that India has lost shares in many of its source markets, particularly France, over the past three years.

As a reminder, the e-Input Visa for India is available for a very large number of nationalities, for arrivals at one of the 26 airports and 5 seaports and for exit via all authorized Indian immigration control posts. It can be claimed twice a year, at least 4 working days before departure and up to 120 days before travel. **It allows you to stay up to 60 days in India to make two (Tourism and Business) or three (Medical Tourism) entries into the country within 60 days of the first entry.** Depending on nationality, the e-Visa fees are US\$0, US\$25, US\$80 (for French people in particular) and US\$100 plus a bank tax of 2.5% of the e-visa price.

Date: 2018-11-12

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/india-to-widen-the-offer-of-e-visa-news10818>