

Worldwide/Russia: Update on Visa Suspensions for Russian Citizens

May 18, 2022

Countries



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Immigration Update: Ukraine Crisis

At a Glance

- As an update, some European countries continue to temporarily suspend visa issuance and restrict other immigration rules for Russian citizens. Employers with Russian citizen employees should take these suspensions into account for in-process and upcoming moves, and notify their employees of any travel implications.
 - Since the situation is fluid, we will consolidate further updates on this alert page.
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The situation

As an update to the previous alert, many countries continue to temporarily suspend visa issuance and restrict other immigration rules for Russian citizens.

A closer look

- **Visa suspensions.** Several European countries have temporarily suspended issuance of visas to Russian citizens, including (but not limited to) the below countries:
 - **Bulgaria.** The only Russian citizens who can currently apply for Short-term visa type-C (for stays in Bulgaria up to 90 days within a 180-day period) are those eligible for a consular fee payment exemption, which include (but is not limited to) family members of Bulgarian/EU citizens, children under 12, service passport holders, students, schoolchildren and persons accompanying the travellers for educational/training purposes, participants in scientific and creative activities, including university and other exchange programs, and researchers traveling to Bulgaria for the purpose of conducting scientific research (among others). Short-term visa type-C applications for other Russian citizens will not be accepted until further notice due to a temporary suspension of issuance.
 - **Czech Republic.** New visa issuance is temporarily suspended for Russian citizens (except in humanitarian cases) as of May 16, 2022 (though Belarus and Russian citizens holding valid Czech entry visas for the purpose of collecting a residence permit in the Czech Republic can collect their residence permit).

- **Denmark.** Denmark's visa service provider in Russia has temporarily suspended the submission of biometric data and issuance of entry visas. It is not yet clear whether individuals with pending applications (who already submitted biometric data) will still be permitted to collect their entry visa if approved. Although work permit applications can still be submitted on behalf of Russian citizens, government processing will remain on hold until biometric data is submitted. Schengen visa holders can still submit biometrics in Denmark; Russian citizens with long-term residence in another country can submit their biometric data in their country of residence; other travelers do not have an alternative option to submit biometrics.
- **Latvia.** Issuance of initial and renewal temporary residence permits to Russian and Belarusian nationals continues to be suspended until at least June 30, 2023 (except for family reunification, international protection, employment, studies, internships, national interest, or humanitarian considerations, among limited other purposes).
- **Netherlands.** The Dutch consulate in Moscow has stopped issuing short-term visas for the Netherlands.
- **Poland.** Standard national visa (work visa and entry visa) issuance is still suspended for Russian citizens. Additionally, issuance for initial Schengen visas, and Poland Harbour visas is also suspended for Russian citizens. Other visa category applications are subject to strict scrutiny for Russian citizens.
- **Romania.** Romanian consulates in Russia are not issuing short-stay visas (for tourism and business travel purposes) for Russian citizens.
- **Spain.** Visa and permit applications for investors, entrepreneurs and business project representatives is temporarily suspended until further notice as of March 15, 2022.
- **Golden visa suspension.** Issuance of investor visas for Russian citizens is temporarily suspended in many countries including the Czech Republic, Greece (suspension on renewals of Golden visas has been lifted), Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Portugal and Spain. The United Kingdom closed its Tier 1 Investor route for all applicants on February 17, 2022. The EU Council of Ministers has committed to measures to limit the sale of golden passports to Russian nationals. Affected Russian citizens should check with their consular post for specific information on investor visa issuance.
- **UK processing delays.** In the United Kingdom, visa issuance to Russian citizens is not formally suspended but various steps of the immigration process are delayed. Specifically, tuberculosis testing locations and visa application centres in Russia face lengthy appointment wait times; and English language testing (required for Skilled Worker visa applications) is largely suspended in Russia, causing limited available spots and corresponding delay. Additionally, as previously reported, overseas priority visa processing is suspended and entry clearance application is delayed for all foreign national applicants applying from outside the United Kingdom (not just for Russian visas), as immigration staff is reallocated internally to support with Ukraine humanitarian applications.
- **Suspension of facilitated Schengen visas in the European Union.** The European Council has partially suspended the agreement on the facilitation of visa issuance for certain Russian visas. This means that Russian diplomats, other Russian officials and Russian businesspeople who previously qualified for the visa facilitation will no longer benefit from special processing, and instead need to follow the standard non-streamlined procedures when applying for a short-term Schengen visa. This may cause visa issuance delays.
- **Travel impacts for Russian citizens.** The United States, the European Union, other European countries and Canada have closed their airways to Russian flights, and several airlines have limited travel over Russia, causing delays in travel routes. Travelers should check with their specific airline for more information.

Impact

Employers with Russian citizen employees should take these suspensions into account for in-process and upcoming moves, and notify their employees of any travel implications.

Affected individuals should contact their immigration professional for specific information.

Looking ahead

Since the situation is fluid, we will consolidate further updates on restrictions for Russian citizens on this alert page. Further visa suspensions and immigration rule changes for Russian citizens are expected. Check our Spotlight page on the evolving situation and firm resources.

This alert is for informational purposes only. If you have any questions, please contact the global immigration professional with whom you work at Fragomen or send an email to emea@fragomen.com.