

Travel related issues

VISA POLICY – COMMUNITY CODE ON VISAS

Regulation (EC) No [810/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code)

Objective

This Regulation establishes the procedures and conditions for issuing visas for transit through or intended stays in the territory of the Member States not exceeding three months.

Relevance for the hospitality industry

A visa issued in line with this Regulation entitles its bearer to travel throughout the Schengen area.

State of progress

Adopted. The Regulation entered into force on 5 October 2009. Its rules shall apply as from 5 April 2010.

Content

This Regulation lays down the conditions for issuing a short stay visa for the Schengen area. Denmark shall decide by 25 December 2009, whether it will implement these rules. Travellers to the UK and Ireland have to ask for a UK or Irish visa to enter those two countries, as these countries maintain their own visa policy.

The main elements of the Regulation are as follows:

- The visa fee is 60 EUR (to be revised regularly);
- The fee for children between 6 and 12 years of age will be 35 EUR (which may be waived by Member States);
- Visa fees shall be waived for certain categories of people (e.g. school pupils, students on educational trips, children under the age of 6 years);
- Visa fees may be waived for young people under the age of 25 years participating in seminars, conferences, sports or cultural events, etc.;
- Biometric data (electronic photograph and fingerprints) will be taken from all applicants above the age of 12 years;
- Additional service fees may be charged (e.g. for the collection of biometric data);
- The travel insurance coverage will have to be at least 30.000 EUR;
- The period of validity should not exceed 5 years.

In order to facilitate the application for a visa, Member States shall endeavour to conclude arrangements of representation with other Member States that have consulates in the country/region/area of the applicant.

Member States may cooperate with commercial intermediaries (e.g. travel agencies) for the lodging of applications. However, because of the requirement for the collection of biometric identifiers, the applicants have to appear in person at the consulates when they apply the first time for a visa.

Specific timeframes for the handling of visa applications (decision should be taken within 15 days as a rule) are set and harmonised procedures, making visa applications less complicated, are imposed.

For a summary of the Community code on Visas you can visit the [SCADPlus](#) website (European Commission).

HOTREC position

HOTREC regrets that travelling to Europe is becoming more and more burdensome for some travellers, who may eventually renounce from their trip.

Official reference

Regulation (EC) No [810/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code), O.J. L 243 of 15.9.2009

See also:

Council Regulation (EC) No [539/2001](#) of 15 March 2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement, O.J. L 81 of 21.3.2001

Council Regulation (EC) No [1683/95](#) of 29 May 1995 laying down a uniform format for visas, O.J. L 164 of 14.7.1995

Council Regulation (EC) No [333/2002](#) of 18 February 2002 on the uniform format for forms for affixing visas, O.J. L 53 of 23.2.2002