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“The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.

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# EU Visa Facilitation for Armenia



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# European Union Advisory Group to the Republic of Armenia

## What is EU Visa Facilitation for Armenia?

The EU and Armenia initiated the Agreement on facilitation of the issuance of visas on 18 October 2012 in Brussels. The purpose of the Agreement is to facilitate the issuance of short-stay visa (a maximum of 90 days per period of 180 days) to the Armenian citizens.

### Which facilitations are offered to whom?

- › **Simplification/less** documents to be provided to prove the purpose of the journey for certain categories of persons (e.g. journalists, students, pupils for the purposes of study or training, international sport events participants, business people, persons participating in scientific, academic, cultural or artistic activities, persons travelling for medical reasons, representatives of civil society organisations and persons invited by Armenian community non-profit organisations registered in the Member States, etc);
- › Reduction of the visa fee to 35 Euro for all Armenian citizens;
- › **Gratis visa** for certain categories of citizens (e.g. pensioners, children under 12, students, journalists, persons with disabilities, pupils, post-graduate students, journalists, participants in international sport events, representatives of civil society organisations, persons invited by Armenian community non-profit organisations registered in the Member States, persons participating in scientific, academic, cultural or artistic activities etc);
- › **Reduced processing time of all visa applications.** A visa decision will be taken within 10 calendar days in general. If further research is required, the total waiting period can be extended up to 30 calendar days in individual cases;
- › Issuance of multiple-entry visa between **1, up to 5 years** for certain categories of persons (e.g. close relatives, members of official delegations, students, journalists).

## Which EU Member States will apply the EU Visa Facilitation Agreement with Armenia?

- › Member States that fully apply the Schengen Acquis\* by facilitating the issuance of short-stay Schengen visa.
- › Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania, not yet fully applying the Schengen Acquis, by facilitating the issuance of national short stay visa\*\*.

The EU Member States Denmark, the United Kingdom and Ireland will NOT apply the EU Visa Facilitation agreement with Armenia.

### What the facilitation does NOT provide for:

The visa facilitation agreement does not provide for facilitation of the requirements on supporting documents for proof of:

- › Accommodation;
- › Possession of sufficient means of subsistence both for the duration of the intended stay and for the return, and;
- › Applicant's intention to leave the territory of the Member States before the expiry of the visa applied for (e.g. reservation of return flight ticket).

This means that the visa applicant will still be requested to provide additional supporting documents to prove the above, in order for the respective EU Member State to process his/her visa application.

\* AT, BE, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, DE, HU, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, SL, SK, SE

\*\*And Croatia but only after accession to the EU on 1 July 2013

## Is Visa Facilitation linked to Biometric Passports?

There are **no** provisions in the Visa facilitation agreement concerning Biometric Passports. This means that Armenian citizens are **not** required to hold a Biometric Passport to be able to benefit from visa facilitation.

### What is EU-Armenia Readmission Agreement?

The EU-Armenia Readmission agreement is a bilateral instrument with the purpose to establish rapid and effective procedures for the identification and safe and orderly return of persons who do not, or no longer, fulfil the conditions for entry to, presence in, or residence on the territory of Armenia or one of the EU Member States.

### Is there a link between Readmission and Visa Facilitation?

Yes! Travellers benefitting from visa facilitation who:

- › Overstay their visa or;
- › Do not fulfil other entry conditions (e.g. insufficient means of subsistence).

will become subject to the readmission agreement and will be returned to their home country.

