

Overview of Rules on Entry and Residence of Nationals of CIS Member Countries in the Russian Federation

As of January 1, 2015, nationals of CIS member countries are required to hold their travel passports to enter and exit Russia. These changes affect Tajikistan nationals. Nationals of the Customs Union member countries, Eurasian Economic Union member countries, and Ukraine are exempt from the requirement. Russian visa is still not required for the nationals of CIS member countries.

A special exception has been made for Ukraine nationals, because of the complicated internal political situation in the country. Belarus and Kazakhstan are member countries of the Customs Union, and consequently their nationals are not required to hold their travel passports to cross the Russian border.

“On June 17, 2014 the Government of the Russian Federation adopted a Decree No.555 On the Annulment of Decree No.574 of the Government of the Russian Federation of September 21, 2005 "On mutual trips of citizens of the Russian Federation and citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan", according to which internal passports and birth certificates were allowed to be used along with travel passports for crossing the Russian border” - said in the online statement by the Foreign Ministry. On the introduction of such a restriction the countries that are affected by it have been noticed in advance.

According to the official of the Department of Entry, Departure and Registration of Citizenship of Uzbekistan Interior Ministry, Uzbekistan nationals enter Russia on their biometric passports that serve as both their internal passports and travel passports. Exit stamp is not required for entry into Russia, because there is a visa-free regime between Uzbekistan and Russia.

According to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan of July 1, 2014, Uzbekistan citizens travel abroad on their biometric passports. In October 2011, the process of replacing old passports with new biometric ones has been started in Uzbekistan. The 1994 passports remain valid until December 31, 2015. By the end of 2016, 20 million people from the country of 31 million people are to be issued with biometric passports.

Starting from January 1, 2015, nationals of CIS member countries that are not members of Customs Union (Azerbaijan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) are allowed to enter Russia only on their travel passports (visa-free). Entering Russia on internal passports remains possible for nationals of Eurasian Economic Union member countries: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Due to the difficult political situation in Ukraine, Ukraine nationals are still allowed to cross the border on their internal passports.

No special permit is required for the nationals of CIS member countries to stay in Russia for a period of up to 90 days during six-month period, which totals 180 days of stay during 12 consecutive months without being registered with FMS. Tajikistan

nationals are permitted to stay in Russia for 15 days without being registered with FMS, for Belarus and Kazakhstan nationals such a period is 30 days. Belarus nationals are not required to fill in an immigration card and get a stamp when crossing Russian border. All other nationals are required to fill in a migration card and retain it until their departure because the details provided in the migration card are used by border control officers to document the foreigner's departure from Russia.

If a CIS member country national fails to meet the obligation to depart from Russia prior to the expiration of the period stipulated by law without any valid documented reasons (work, studies, illness, injury, inheritance issues, funeral), he/she shall be banned from entering Russia for the next three years. Entry ban period is calculated starting from the date of exit.

Period of 90 days is extended for those foreign nationals who have a temporary residence permit, permanent residence permit, work permit, patent issued, military service contract signed, or those who study in Russia. In such cases, the period of their stay in Russia is limited by the duration of the temporary residence permit, permanent residence permit, work permit, or patent respectively. Period of stay for studies and a military service is determined depending on the duration of a degree programme or the term of a military service contract respectively.

Important note: In all of the above cases migration cards must be stamped by FMS of the RF with the Extension of Stay stamp.