

CAMARA INFO: Notices

ADVISORY TO FILIPINOS TRAVELLING TO EUROPE: Expansion of the Schengen Region

Filipinos travelling to Europe are advised that beginning 21 December 2007, the number of Schengen countries will increase to 24, with the expansion of the Schengen area to nine (9) other European countries. Beginning that date, holders of a valid Schengen visa may also travel to the following countries:

1. Czech Republic
2. Estonia
3. Hungary
4. Latvia
5. Lithuania
6. Malta
7. Poland
8. Slovakia
9. Slovenia

The abovementioned countries will join the fifteen (15) other Schengen States: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, plus Iceland and Norway.

The public is advised that the relaxation of passport controls and obligatory security checks that will take place on 21 December in the aforementioned nine countries shall only cover land border crossings and seaports. For airports and air travel, the relaxation of controls shall commence only on 30 March 2008.

Please bear in mind that NOT all European Union (EU) countries are members of the Schengen arrangement. Separate visas must be secured for travel to the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Separate visas will still be required when travelling to or transiting through European destinations such as Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Filipinos are requested to always verify visa requirements with the Embassies and Consular Offices of the countries they intend to visit. Filipinos are also advised to ensure that their travel agencies and tour operators are in possession of updated information on the entry and transit regulations of European countries.

More information may be obtained at the website of the European Union (www.europa.eu) and the European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu>). Please also refer to the Department of Foreign Affairs website: www.dfa.gov.ph