

Excerpt from the Regulations on Entry and Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Russian Federation

From January 1, 2015, citizens of CIS member countries are required to have international passports to enter and exit Russia. These changes concern citizens of Tajikistan. The exception is citizens of the Customs Union member countries, Eurasian Economic Union member countries, and Ukraine. A visa is still not required for citizens of CIS member countries for entry into Russia.

Citizens of Ukraine are special case because of the complicated internal political situation in the country. Citizens of Belarus and Kazakhstan are not required to have international passports to cross the state border of the Russian Federation as these countries are members of the Customs Union.

“On June 17, 2014 the Government of the Russian Federation adopted a Decree No.555 Concerning 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", in accordance with which internal passports and birth certificates were allowed to be used along with international passports for crossing the state border of the Russian Federation” – said in the online statement by Foreign Ministry. On the introduction of such a restriction the countries that were 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, citizens of Uzbekistan continue to enter Russia on their biometric passports that are both their internal and international passports. Exit sticker stamp is not required for entry into Russia, since Uzbekistan and Russia have visa-free relations.

According to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan of July 1, 2014, Uzbekistan citizens travel abroad on their biometric passports. Since October 2011, Uzbekistan started to replace old passports with biometric ones. 1994 passports remain valid until December 31, 2015. Until the end of 2016, 20 million people from the country of 31 million people are to get new biometric passports.

Starting from January 1, 2015, citizens 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 international passports (visa-free). Entering Russia on internal passports remains possible for citizens of Eurasian Economic Union member countries: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Due to the difficult political situation in Ukraine, citizens of that country are still allowed to cross the border on their internal passports.

No special permit is required for the citizens of countries from within the CIS 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. Citizens of Tajikistan officially permitted to stay in Russia for 15 days without being registered with FMS, citizens of Belarus and Kazakhstan – for 30 days; citizens of Belarus are not required to complete immigration cards and get stamps at the border cross, that's why the border control question in this case remains open. All other nationals are required to complete a migration card and retain it because the data provided in the migration card is used by border control officers to document the foreigner's departure from Russia.

If a citizen of a CIS member country 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 foreigners who have a temporary residence permit, permanent residence permit, work permit, patent issued, military service contract signed, or those studying in Russia. In these cases period of stay in Russia is correspondingly limited by the duration of a temporary residence permit, permanent residence permit, work permit, or patent issued. Period of stay for studies and a military service is determined in accordance with the duration of a degree programme and the term of a military service contract respectively.

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