

## **Information concerning visas issued by Polish Consuls before and after joining the Schengen zone.**

Polish visas, issued before the 21<sup>st</sup> of December are not Schengen visas. Their holders are not allowed to travel through the Schengen territory, these visas entitle them to stay only in Poland.

From the 21<sup>st</sup> of December Polish consulates will start issuing uniform Schengen C visas, which entitle third-country nationals to entry and stay in the entire Schengen territory or to several successive stays, not exceeding in total 3 months in a 6-month period, counted from the first entry.

From the 21<sup>st</sup> of December Polish national D visas (long-term visas i.e. valid for stays exceeding 90 days, national working visas, issued under art. 32 of the Aliens Act or visas issued under art. 33 and 34 of the same Act) will allow third-country nationals to enter and stay only in the territory of Poland.

Uniform Schengen short-stay C visas with limited territorial validity issued after the 21<sup>st</sup> of December will not allow their holders to travel in the entire Schengen territory. They will be valid only for Poland or for Poland and Schengen States indicated in the visa sticker.

### **1. When will Poland start issuing Schengen visas to third country nationals, and the new requirements?**

Poland will start issuing Schengen visas to third country nationals on 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2007.

The new requirements will be in accordance with the provisions of the Common Consular Instructions, which are based on the provisions of the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985.

### **2. Will the duration and the validity of Polish short-term visas be affected before and during the transition period (between December 21, 2007 and March 2008)?**

The (national) Polish short-term visas issued before December 21, 2007 will be still valid but only in the territory of Poland.

The Polish short-term Schengen visas issued in the transition period (between December 21, 2007 and March 2008 and after that) will allow the holders of such visas to entry and stay in all Schengen Member States. There will be no passport control at the internal land borders. The passport control at the airports will remain till March 2008.

### **3. Can a third country national and holder of Schengen visa or residence permit from the Schengen member states, enter Poland in January 2008 by air?**

Yes he/she can enter Poland and stay there for a period of maximum consecutive 90 days or enter and stay many times, provided the total number of days doesn't exceed 90 days in half year period, counted since the first entry.

**4. What will happen to third country nationals holding Schengen and / or Polish short-term visas, traveling to and from, or transit through Poland, (1) before December 21, 2007, (2) between December 21, 2007 and March 2008, and after March 2008?**

- a) Third country nationals holders of Schengen **and** Polish (national) short-term visas can enter the territory of Poland or transit through Poland in all above mentioned periods.
- b) Third country nationals holders of Schengen short-term visas need additionally Polish (national) short-term visas to enter and stay in the territory of Poland before December 21, 2007. For the purpose of transit through the territory of Poland they don't need any Polish transit visa. The time for transit through Poland can't exceed the period of 5 days.
- c) Third country nationals holders of Polish (national) short-term visas can enter Poland in all above mentioned periods for the time of the validity of such visas.

**5. What will happen to third country nationals holding Polish long-term visas or residence permits, traveling to and from Poland, (1) before December 21, 2007, (2) between December 21, 2007 and March 2008, and after March 2008?**

Third country nationals holders of Polish long-term visas, traveling to and from Poland:

- a) may enter and stay in the territory of Poland in all above mentioned periods; the passport controls at the land borders will remain till December 21, 2007 and the passport controls at the airports will remain till March 2008. After March 2008 there will be no more passport controls at the internal EU-borders (land + airports);
- b) need Schengen short-term visas to enter and stay in the territory of Schengen Member States in all above mentioned periods. The total number of days can't exceed 90 days in an half year period, counted since the first entry;
- c) need Schengen short-term visas to transit through the territory of Schengen Member States before December 21, 2007;
- d) don't need Schengen short-term visas or Schengen transit visas after December 21, 2007 to transit through the Schengen Member States traveling by land from / to one of the European airports.

Third country nationals holders of Polish residence permits, traveling to and from Poland:

- a) need Schengen short-term visas to enter and stay in the territory of Schengen Member States before December 21, 2007;
- b) need Schengen transit visas to travel to Poland through the territories of Schengen Member States before December 21, 2007;
- c) don't need Schengen short-term visas to enter and stay after December 21, 2007 in the territory of Schengen Member States for a period of maximum consecutive 90 days or enter and stay many times, provided the total number of days doesn't exceed 90 days in an half year period counted since the first entry.