

Pending Applications Submitted Locally

For pending applications submitted locally – e.g., for an extension of the residence permit – a biometric document will have to be presented as well. If an individual needs to arrange for the biometric passport during the application proceeding, the authorities should issue an official request to remedy deficiencies in the application with a reasonable deadline. If the individual fails to comply with the stipulated requirements on time, the application will be rejected, and the proceedings will be discontinued.³

Applications Prior to the End of the Transitional Period

Moreover, if the visa and residence permit application proceedings are concluded before the end of the transitional period, the obligation to have a biometric passport will remain. Russian citizens staying in the Czech Republic based on a residence permit and holding a non-biometric passport are obliged to apply for a new biometric document. Since the Embassies of the Russian Federation work according to a restricted regime, a transitional period has been set until 31 December 2024, for said Russian citizens to comply with this obligation.⁴

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However, it can take up to six months for a new document to be issued and thus we highly recommend resolving the passport situation as soon as possible.

Possible Travel Issues

Russian citizens who applied for an extension of the residence permit and whose applications will not have a final decision by 15 September 2024, will be prohibited from travelling outside the Czech Republic. In such cases, “Bridge Visa” is usually being stamped in the foreign national’s passport to make him/her eligible to travel even with an expired permit as his/her extension application is still ongoing. However, Russian non-biometric passports will not be accepted as a valid travel document even with the Bridge Visa previously stamped in.⁵

Exemptions

Several exemptions have been introduced: for children under 15 years of age, persons enrolled in the Civil Society programme, and holders of visas and residence permits granted in the interest of the Czech Republic. Such persons are therefore exempt from the obligation to hold biometric passports and are not required to arrange for them.⁶

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It is clear that the Czech Republic aims to scrutinise more robustly Russian citizens travelling to the Czech Republic or applying for visas and residence permits than in the past. It will not be possible to receive a visa or permit without meeting the new conditions and even individuals staying in the Czech Republic will need to take action, which may come as a surprise to them.

These new rules will also make travelling of Russian non-biometric passport holders more challenging. The Czech Republic is not the only country that has stopped accepting such travel documents; thus it is necessary to keep abreast of the rules of entry for Russian citizens to their destination countries.

FOOTNOTES:

1 For the text of *Sdělení Ministerstva zahraničních věcí*, see: *Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí České republiky*, "Rusko: Nebiometrické pasy" at:

https://mzv.gov.cz/jnp/cz/informace_pro_cizince/aktuality/rusko_nebiometricke_pasy.html.

2 Ibid.

3 For information on the rules for non-biometric passport holders, see: *Oficiální informační portál pro cizince Ministerstva vnitra České republiky*, "Změny v uznávání cestovních dokladů vydávaných Ruskou federací" (17.7.2024) at: <https://frs.gov.cz/zmeny-v-uznavani-cestovnich-dokladu-vydavanych-ruskou-federaci/>.

4 For the text of *Sdělení Ministerstva zahraničních věcí*, see: *Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí České republiky*, "Rusko: Nebiometrické pasy" at:

https://mzv.gov.cz/jnp/cz/informace_pro_cizince/aktuality/rusko_nebiometricke_pasy.html.

5 For information on the rules for non-biometric passport holders, see: *Oficiální informační portál pro cizince Ministerstva vnitra České republiky*, "Změny v uznávání cestovních dokladů vydávaných Ruskou federací" (17.7.2024) at: <https://frs.gov.cz/zmeny-v-uznavani-cestovnich-dokladu-vydavanych-ruskou-federaci/>.

6 Ibid.

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Contact us

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