



SWITZERLAND IMPLEMENTS THE SCHENGEN-DUBLIN ASSOCIATION AGREEMENTS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

On 12 December 2008, Switzerland implemented the Schengen-Dublin Association Agreements with the European Union. The agreement signifies that Switzerland will apply the Schengen regulations covering the issuance of visas to enter the territory of all Schengen member states. This will also apply to Schengen visas issued by other Schengen states such as Germany, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Hungary. Visas valid for the Schengen area are also valid for Monaco.

The following are the key provisions of the Schengen-Dublin Association Agreements:

- The Schengen regulations apply to the examination of requests for short-term visas whose validity does not exceed three months, including transit visas valid for the Schengen area. The issuance of long-term visas for more than three months will remain subject to national procedures. **These visas will permit only entry to the territory of the issuing state and transit via another Schengen state. Holders of these visas subsequently obtain a residence authorization entitling them to travel freely for short stays throughout the Schengen area.**
- The main country of destination is responsible for issuing a Schengen visa. Only embassies/consulates staffed by career consular personnel are authorized to issue a Schengen visa.
- The time for the processing of short-stay visas may vary. It is suggested that processing be requested at least three months before the departure date.
- Interns, consultants, and experts who have a contract with an organization with whom Switzerland has concluded a headquarters agreement or who are mandated by a government to carry out duties within a diplomatic or consular representation for a

period of less than three months will also receive a short stay visa valid for the entire Schengen area.

- When exceptional or urgent circumstances make it necessary, particularly in connection with Switzerland's international obligations or if Switzerland has issued an official invitation, the embassies/consulates may issue visas of limited territorial validity in accordance with Schengen Acquis. These visas permit the holder only to enter and stay on Swiss territory. They do not permit the holder to visit another state and must enter and depart via Switzerland.
- Persons required to stay in Switzerland for more than three months who may need to enter other Schengen area countries before receiving their Swiss residence permit may request a national visa of equivalent value together with the short stay visa.
- Visa applicants must show proof that they are in possession of valid individual or group insurance.

For more information, please log on to the website of the Federal Office for Migration, www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/themen/schweiz-eu/schengendublin.html.