

FORM A – NOTE I & NOTE II.

MFEA | VISA information for government officials

CONSULAR SERVICES OFFICE | VISA ADVISORY UNIT Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad

Preliminary

Form A is meant to be utilized by Maltese Public Officials who may or may not be required to travel abroad on official duty **outside of the EU's Schengen Area** in order to enquire with the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs' *Visa Advisory Unit* well in advance of possible date of departure (ideally at least 3 to 4 weeks in advance) about whether they require a visa for travelling or otherwise.

The use of FORM A as early as possible allows the official to know which is the correct procedure to follow in order to obtain a visa in good and sufficient time.

Most officials may require the direct intervention of the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs (Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad Directorate's *Visa Advisory Unit*) with the issuance of a Note Verbale and presentation of documentation for the procurement of a visit visa for official duty, and foreign Embassies **may** take days to weeks to issue visas for Maltese officials due to work load and the need to vet applications with state immigration authorities. Moreover, not all Embassies accredited to Malta are resident in Malta, adding further technical issues to the delivery of visa applications and documents and their receipt back to Malta in time.

Officials' visa requirements may differ depending upon the country being visited, the type of passport being utilized, the purpose of the visit, the inviting authority, and the duration of the visit.

This service seeks to surpass all these possible pitfalls to ensure that all Maltese Government officials travelling on official duty abroad are informed well in advance and not deterred from performing their duties abroad by missing out on their visa requirements.

Notes (I and II) on the use of FORM A:-

NOTE I:-

FORM A is to be filled in all circumstances as soon as any official suspects that s/he might be required to travel on official duty outside of the European Union, even if such duty is not yet formally confirmed. The filling in and sending of Form A to the Consular Services Office (CSO) Visa Advisory Unit should always take place at least 3 to 4 weeks prior to potential travel abroad or even earlier if possible. Once filled in in all its applicable sections, FORM A is to be sent to CSO Visa Advisory Unit on consular.mfea@gov.mt

NOTE II:-

Note II contains *instructions* which are applicable to all public officials who are informed that a visa and a Note Verbale from the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs is required. Any questions should be directed to 'Visa Advisory Unit' on 22042331 or by written e-mail to consular.mfea@gov.mt

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NOTE I:-

‘FORM A’ IS TO BE FILLED IN WHENEVER A PERSON EMPLOYED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE NEEDS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION AS TO WHETHER A VISA WILL BE REQUIRED FOR OFFICIAL TRAVEL TO THE COUNTRY/COUNTRIES BEING VISITED FOR TEMPORARY OR LONG-TERM STAYS.

This information needs to be submitted as early as possible and at least 3 to 4 weeks prior to the scheduled date of potential departure in all of the following circumstances:

- a) Whether the official duty abroad is highly likely to take place or simply a possibility;
- b) Whether the duty abroad is officially confirmed or not yet not confirmed;

Directors who have not yet confirmed the personnel who are to attend a meeting may also send a general enquiry leaving some of the boxes logically empty.

Form A questions 1 to 10 should be filled in and the form is to be sent by the Official/Director as early as practicable in order to determine whether a visa is necessary and if so, which procedure and time frame need to be taken into consideration to procure a visa for official travel in good time before such travelling.

Filled in Form A should be sent by e-mail at your earliest to the Consular Services Office (CSO)’s Visa Advisory Unit within the Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad (MFEA) [18, Zachary Street, Valletta] on the following e-mails: consular.mfea@gov.mt

In line with General Data Protection Rules (GDPR), all information contained in FORM A will not be shared with any other entity or official and will not be used for other purpose beyond the intended use by the office. No further personal information shall be kept by the office after it is utilized.

NOTE II

INSTRUCTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE TRAVELLING OFFICIAL WHEN THE PRESENTATION OF VISA DOCUMENTATION THROUGH THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IS REQUIRED AS INFORMED BY VISA ADVISORY UNIT AFTER SUBMISSION OF ‘FORM A’.

These instructions are applicable when an official, after presentation of Section I has been informed that he has to present visa applications and related documentation at the CSO Visa Advisory Unit within the Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad, MFEA at 18, Zachary Street, Valletta at least 3 to 4 weeks prior to the scheduled date of departure.

These instructions are to be followed if the public official has been instructed that:-

- (i) A visa is required for the specific official duty abroad; AND
- (ii) The procedure for obtaining the visa requires the presentation of documentation by the official to a foreign Embassy through the assistance of the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs of Malta by the drafting of a *Note Verbale* (formal note between one government and another); AND

(iii) Attendance by the official is highly likely to be formally confirmed or already confirmed.

WHEN A NOTE VERBALE IS REQUIRED TO BE ISSUED BY MFEA:

1. Send well in advance of planned date of departure and before visiting our offices a SCANNED COPY OF THE PASSPORT'S DETAILS' PAGE ensuring that such is the passport being actually used for travelling (Send to: consular.mfea@gov.mt);
2. If **two or more officials** are travelling for the **same duty**, please **coordinate** and **submit** the required information and documentation to the Office by referring to the fact that you will be forming part of the same delegation. Kindly also submit the required documentation around the same time or on the same day (whether via a messenger or by one of the delegates, or any person of trust who must identify himself/herself) at 18, Zachary Street, Valletta (CSO - Visa Advisory Unit). A personal visit or a visit by every member of the delegation to our office is not necessary.

Should there be any non-officials joining the Delegation, such as photographers/videographers/journalists, please inform CSO - Visa Advisory Unit in advance since a Special type of visa and documentation as to Professional Equipment being carried for the visit may also be necessary.

3. Always present **all the documentation required** for the visa and **any visa fees due** (as directed by MFEA's CSO - Visa Advisory Unit) including the **original passport** as early as possible. Information as to documentation required will be passed to the official by means of an official e-mail.
4. Officials should ensure that any **photos** required are **recent, taken against a white background, are not copies from your computer on photo paper**, and that they present the **required number of photos** (which should all be the same) and that any **foreign Embassy's standards for photo requirements** are strictly adhered to.
5. **Fees (if due to Embassies)** are to be **provided in cash and in exact amount** if foreign Embassies directs that it only accepts cash. Where Embassies offer the possibility of other methods of payment (eg. via bank transfer), this information will always be notified to the officer as a part of normal procedure.

REFUND OF VISA FEES

6. **For purposes of refund of visa fees disbursed in connection with official duty by the employing line Ministry/Authority**, please note that the **original receipt of payment** can only be issued by the foreign Embassy which issues the visa. CSO Visa Advisory Unit (MFEA) can until such time, only send a formal **e-mail notifying** the presentation of a certain amount of fees for onward transmission to the foreign Embassy for the issuance of a visa.

TRANSFER OF DOCUMENTATION TO EMBASSIES

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7. Please note that MFEA can only assist with the **free transfer of documentation** when visas are required from foreign Embassies accredited to Malta, from Malta, Rome, Brussels or London. When the Embassies are not based in either Malta, Rome, Brussels or London, courier service fees are to be borne and settled by the line Ministry/authority.
8. Also, when MFEA's diplomatic mailbag (which departs on a set day and time) cannot be utilised in view of time considerations (in relation to the presentation of the documents and the time it takes for the issuance of a visa and its receipt back in Malta), all costs associated with the use of a courier service will be borne by the official's line Ministry/authority.

The Ministry will not be held responsible for any loss, theft or any other faults which may occur during the transfer of visa applications and ancillary documents, including money via mailbag.

TIMELY PRESENTATION OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND FEES

9. All documentation should ideally reach our Office at 18, Zachary Street, before a Tuesday morning, latest by 09:30am in view of Diplomatic Mailbag Schedules and at least 3 weeks prior to planned date of departure for official duty to ensure the timely issuance and receipt of the passport with visa before departure.

THE CONSULAR SERVICE OFFICE – VISA ADVISORY UNIT OPENING HOURS AND COORDINATES

CSO - Visa Advisory Unit opening hours for Maltese public servants requiring visa service for travel on official duty abroad:

Monday to Friday from 08:30hrs until 17:15hrs

Address for presentation of documents:

**The Consular Services Office
Visa Advisory Unit
Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad
Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs
18, Zachary Street,
Valletta**

For any queries contact: **2204 2331**

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