

VISA FOR SWITZERLAND

Twentieth International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN)

7 – 10 February 2017

All meeting participants are responsible for making their **own** visa arrangements. Individual invitation letters for non-sponsored delegates are issued by UNMAS HQ. If you require a letter for visa purposes, please send a request to Ms. Larisa Khiryanova at khiryanova@un.org

Switzerland is a member of the Schengen Area and Schengen regulations apply.

Kindly note that it is your responsibility to allow sufficient time for the visa application process (including transit visas). We recommend that you contact the Swiss representation in your region as soon as possible for information about visa application procedures and documents to be presented. Please visit the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs website where you will find information about applications for Schengen visas and the list of Swiss representations abroad.

BIOMETRIC VISA

On 11 October 2011, the Schengen member states introduced the Visa Information System (VIS). The VIS is also used to store the biometric data (10 fingerprints and the facial image) of visa applicants. The diplomatic representations of the Schengen member states will be gradually connected to this system.

With this new system, visa processing may take longer (up to 30 working days) than through the previous system. Appointments must be arranged with the Swiss embassy in advance and applicants must appear **in person** to record the biometric data. This data remains valid for five years.

Several Swiss embassies already have started to work with the VIS. All Swiss embassies will start recording the biometric data of persons applying for Schengen visas. **It is therefore strongly recommended to contact the Swiss representation well in advance of your departure date and to take the necessary steps for starting the visa request process without delay.**

VISA APPLICATION FORM

You can download the visa application form on the [webpage of the Federal Office of Migration](#) where you can also find further information about entry to Switzerland.

Your main destination country must issue your Schengen visa. Therefore, because Geneva is your final destination, you must apply to Switzerland for the visa.

Please note that even if you plan to transit through or stop over in other Schengen countries during your trip, Switzerland must be the issuing country.

If you do apply for a Schengen visa in another country's embassy, you are usually required to enter the Schengen area via the country of the issuing embassy. It is therefore very important for sponsored delegates to inform the sponsorship programme administration that an application for a Schengen visa has been made at an embassy other than a Swiss one. This information must be taken into consideration when issuing the flight ticket.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Some visa applications might include an obligation to acquire travel insurance covering up to Euros 30'000. This insurance needs to be purchased by the participant.

DOCUMENTS TO BE PRESENTED IN THE VISA APPLICATION

Applications must contain all the required documentation. A complete file facilitates the rapid treatment of the visa application.

The following documents represent the minimum requirements for a visa application:

- a travel document whose validity exceeds that of the stay, including the period necessary for the return journey
- an application form for a Schengen visa
- two photos
- the letter of invitation to the meeting
- any other supporting documents concerning the purpose of the journey: eg. a "note verbale" duly initialed together with an order to perform the mission, confirmation of registration etc.

For information about meeting venue and arrival in Geneva, please consult the practical information page.