

SHORT STAY VISA WAIVER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BAHAMAS AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The Bahamas Ministry of Foreign Affairs is pleased to announce that on, 28 May 2009, at a Ceremony at the Council of the European Union in Brussels, Belgium, H.E. Mr. Paul H. Farquharson, Ambassador of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to the European Communities (based in London), signed the "Short Stay Visa Waiver Agreement" between The Bahamas and the European Community.

Therefore, with immediate effect, holders of valid EU passports will be able to travel without a visa for short stays of up to three months to The Bahamas.

The following European Union countries which apply the Schengen agreement do not need visas for entry into The Bahamas.

1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Bulgaria
4. Cyprus
5. Czech Republic
6. Denmark
7. Estonia
8. Finland
9. France
10. Germany
11. Greece
12. Hungary
13. Italy
14. Latvia
15. Lithuania
16. Luxembourg
17. Malta
18. Netherlands
19. Poland
20. Portugal
21. Romania
22. Slovakia
23. Slovenia
24. Spain
25. Sweden

Length of stay

Under current rules regarding travel to The Bahamas, a short stay is defined as a stay not exceeding three months, within a six month period, following the first date of entry into The Bahamas.

Purposes of travel

For the purposes of this agreement, short stays are considered as visits for the following purposes:

- Tourism
- Business travel, e.g. conferences, meetings etc. [but **not** paid employment]
- *Ad hoc* sports activities, artists' activities
- Journalism [media professionals sent by media organizations in The Bahamas]

The agreement does **not** cover students or persons seeking employment. These persons must continue to secure the necessary visas and permits for educational or employment purposes.

This information will be updated as further agreements are concluded and additional arrangements are put in place

5th August, 2009