

# Information for Delegates

Delegates may check if a visa is required for their journey through the following web page:

<http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/check-irish-visa>

Delegates should be aware that Ireland is **not a member of the Schengen agreement** and so a Schengen visa **will not be sufficient** to enter Ireland. This includes a permit to reside in the Schengen.

Similarly, Ireland is **not a part of the United Kingdom**. A separate Irish visa will be required, except in limited circumstances. These circumstances will be outlined below in the section titled [Short Stay Visa Waiver Programme](#).

Delegates who require a visa should visit the web page below for full details on the process and documents required.

<http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Conference%20or%20Event%20Visa>

## Step One - Apply Online

<https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie/avats/OnlineHome.aspx>

The online application form is relatively simple, but there are certain sections to which delegates must pay particular attention as completing these sections incorrectly can result in the application being rejected or misfiled.

### Current Location

The delegate's current location indicates to the automated system where the application should be filed. It also tells the applicant to which office they should send their documents. If the location is recorded incorrectly, applications can be lost or documents can be sent to the wrong office. This obviously causes severe delays so should be avoided. Current location should be the country in which the applicant **currently resides** – not necessarily their country of origin.

For example, a delegate whose country of citizenship is Ukraine, but who currently lives in Belgium, should list their current location as Belgium. The system will then tell the applicant to forward their documents to the Irish Embassy in Brussels.

### Immigration History

The application form will ask for details about an applicant's immigration history, both in Ireland and elsewhere. It is vital that negative immigration history of any kind is declared by the applicant at this point as **failing to do so is grounds for an automatic refusal and a ban from making future applications for five years**.

### Passport Details

Applicants will be asked to provide details of up to three passports on the form, and copies should be submitted of any passports issued to the applicant within the past 20 years.

It is important that the **passport type** section is completed accurately, as holders of certain types of passport do not need to pay a fee.

## Application Summary Sheet

Once the application has been lodged, the applicant will be brought to a declaration page, followed by a page instructing the applicant to print and sign the Summary Sheet. The summary sheet will include details of where the applicant's documents are to be sent.

## Step Two – Application Fee

Each office accepts payment in different ways – some will only accept cheques or bank drafts, while others will accept cash. The vast majority of offices will not be able to accept any form of electronic payment, including cards or bank transfers. The applicant should contact the office listed on their Applicant Summary Sheet to find out how to submit the fee. Contact details are included on the sheet.

### Fee Exemptions

The list of applicants who are exempt from paying visa fees is included at the link below. It is important for applicants to provide evidence of the reason for their exemption, if appropriate. For example, an applicant claiming an exemption from the requirement to pay a fee on the basis of a marriage to an Irish national would be required to provide a copy of their spouse's passport and their marriage cert as evidence.

<http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/fees>

## Step Three – Documents Required

<http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Conference%20or%20Event%20Visa#send-documents>

The most important documents to include with the application are:

**Passport** – current original passport and copies of previous passports.

**Application letter**, outlining the relevance of the conference to the applicant, i.e. that the conference is on a subject relevant to the applicant's employment or studies.

**Employment/College letter**, corroborating the above.

**Invitation letter** from the conference organiser, stating that the applicant is due to attend the conference, the dates of the conference, and the extent to which the organiser will be funding the applicant's visit.

**Proof of obligations to return home.** This will differ for each individual applicant but usually would include employment, family or social reasons the applicant must return to their home country.

**Financial documents.** These fulfil two purposes, showing the visa officer that the applicant can support themselves while in Ireland, and also demonstrating that the applicant has a stable financial situation in their home country. This is a part of showing good obligations to return home. Three recent payslips and six months' bank statements should be submitted to show a regular pattern of stable earnings.

All documents should be originals where possible, and copies should be as clear as possible. All documents except bank statements should be in English or Irish, or include a translation into English or Irish.

Once the applicant's current passport has been verified by the visa office, it can be returned to the applicant while they await their visa. If applicants need to use their passport in the meantime this should be stated on their application letter or on a note attached to the passport, and the passport will be returned immediately.

## Step Four – Processing the Application

Processing for short stay visas can take up to eight weeks on average, depending on the office to which your application is submitted, the volume of applications on hand at the time, and the complexity of your case. During peak application times (summer, Christmas) applications can take up to 12 weeks.

The following can increase the length of time it takes to process an application:

- Necessary fee not submitted – it is policy to not begin processing on *any application* until the fee, or evidence that a fee is not necessary, has been received. There are no exceptions to this.
- Negative immigration history – applications with negative immigration history from any country are referred to INIS headquarters in Dublin for processing. The transfer of the application from one office to another understandably takes time and this can incur significant delays. If an applicant has ever been refused entry to, deported from, or refused a visa for **any country** they should apply as early as possible and include as many details as possible in order to speed up processing.
- Documents missing from application – The visa officer may request additional documentation from the applicant, and the applicant should be prepared to send anything further that might be needed. Applicants will usually be contacted by email. Missing documents or failure to submit requested documents will mean delays in processing and could result in the application being refused.

## Step Five – Decision

### Grant:

The applicant will be contacted by the office that processed their application and advised to collect their passport, or in cases where the passport has been returned during processing, to send it back to the office. A short stay, single entry visa will be placed in the applicant's passport, valid from the date of arrival until a few days after the conference begins. These are the dates on which the applicant may arrive in Ireland, **not the date by which they must leave.**

### Refuse:

A letter will be issued to the applicant by the office where their application was submitted. It will include the reasons for the refusal, as well as instructions on how the applicant may appeal the decision if they wish. If the decision is to be appealed, the applicant should check the refusal letter for details of why the application was refused and submit any documents they feel address those issues.

## Step Six – Border Control

Applicants should bring copies of their conference invitation letter, employment letter, hotel booking, return flights and evidence of obligations at home with them when presenting at the border. An Immigration Officer may request any and all documents they feel necessary in making a

decision to grant or refuse entry to Ireland at the border, and an applicant should be ready to answer questions about the event and their involvement in it.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Having been granted a visa is **not a guarantee** of entry into Ireland. A visa gives the holder permission to present at the border and apply for permission to enter the State.

## Points to Note

### Short Stay Visa Waiver Programme

<http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Irish%20Short%20Stay%20Visa%20Waiver%20Programme>

If you are a national of one of the countries listed at the web page above, you may qualify for the Short Stay Visa Waiver Programme. You must meet the following criteria:

- Holder of a **short stay** visa for the United Kingdom  
Eligible visas under this programme include visit and business. If you are unsure if your UK visa qualifies for this scheme, send a scanned copy of the visa to [visamail@justice.ie](mailto:visamail@justice.ie) indicating that you would like to avail of the waiver and giving details of your most recent travel to the UK and your planned travel to Ireland.
- Has current permission to remain in the UK which will not end before their date of departure from Ireland

Please note that this programme only applies to holders of **physical UK visas** – electronic visas do not qualify and holders will require a separate Irish visa.

### Some examples:

John is from Belarus and holds a UK C-Business visa. He most recently travelled to the UK on 20 November 2018 and received a stamp from an Immigration Officer allowing him to stay for up to 6 months, until 20 May 2019. He wishes to enter Ireland on 04 April and stay until 15 April 2019. As John's trip begins and ends before his permission to stay in the UK ends, he may travel to Ireland without an Irish visa.

Sarah is from Thailand and holds a UK Short-Term Study visa. This is not an eligible visa under the waiver programme, so Sarah will need an Irish visa.

Michael is from Bahrain and holds a UK C-Visit visa. He most recently travelled to the UK on 15 August 2018 and received a stamp from an Immigration Officer allowing him to stay for up to 6 months, until 15 February 2019. He wishes to enter Ireland on 13 May 2019 and stay until 19 May 2019. As Michael's trip begins after his permission to stay in the UK ends, Michael will not be able to travel directly to Ireland on this trip. Michael may either apply for an Irish visa or travel to the UK first, receive permission from a UK immigration officer to stay in the UK, then travel on to Ireland.