

Start of operations of the Visa Information System (VIS). This only applies to applicants of Schengen visas (short stay visas):

Please be informed that nationals of Malaysia and Brunei are exempted from having to obtain a visa when travelling into the Schengen territory for short stays. Therefore, the following information does not apply to them.

On November 14th 2013, the Visa Information System (VIS) started operations in all the Consular Sections and Consulates of all Schengen States accredited to Malaysia, including the Embassy of Spain in Malaysia.

Since then, the VIS also started operations in Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The VIS has previously been implanted and has already started operating in other parts of the world.

The VIS is a central database for the exchange of data on short-stay (up to 90 days within a period of 180 days) visas between Schengen States. The main objectives of the VIS are to facilitate visa application procedures as well as enhancing security through identity checks at the border.

The start of operations of the VIS has brought about the main following changes in the visa handling process of Schengen visa or short term visa applications:

-Visa applicants lodging their applications will be required to provide their 10 fingerprints and a digital photograph for their first application. Therefore, visa applicants will be required to lodge these applications in person.

-However, fingerprints collected from the applicant will be valid for a period of 5 years. Therefore, applicants that have already given their fingerprints in previous applications will not be necessarily requested to come in person at the time of lodging subsequent visa requests within a period of 5 years.

-When entering the external Schengen border, the officers in charge of border control might verify the identity of travelers by using the VIS central database.

-The following visa applicants are exempted from the requirement of providing their fingerprints when applying for a Schengen visa:

- Children under the age of 12;
- Persons for whom fingerprinting is physically impossible. However, should the impossibility be temporary, the applicant shall be required to give the fingerprints at the following application. The authorities shall be entitled to ask for further clarification of the grounds for the temporary impossibility.
- Heads of State and members of National Governments, together with their respective spouses and members of their official delegation when invited by the Member States' governments or by an international organization for an official purpose.
- Sovereigns and other senior members of a royal family, when they are invited by Member States' governments or by international organisations for an official purpose.

For more information about the VIS, fingerprints, data protection and legal background, please follow this link:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-information-system/index_en.htm