



Ad-Hoc Query on issuance of visas to children who do not have their own travel documents

Requested by LT EMN NCP on 26 May 2010

Compilation produced on 21 July 2010

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom (15 in Total)







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1. Background Information






Lithuanian authorities face a problem of children who do not have their own travel documents. In some third countries children are not issued with their own travel documents; instead their names are written into the travel documents of their parents. Lithuania recognises such documents issued by Russia. When such children need to travel to Lithuania, their visa is put into passports of their parents. Sometimes, when the children reach Lithuania, their parents leave them and depart from Lithuania alone. In such case children are left without any identity document and any other document proving their right to stay in Lithuania. In order to avoid such situations and to prevent possible trafficking in human beings, Lithuanian authorities are considering the possibility not to recognise “group” documents and strictly apply the principle “one person – one passport”. With this view we would like to see what the situation is in other EU Member States.

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2. Responses

	Query	Wider Dissemination? ¹	<p>1. Does your country recognise “group” documents; that is, adults’ documents which also serve as documents for their children.</p> <p>2. If you recognise such documents, do you require to have photos of children pasted in them?</p> <p>3. What is the practice of enforcing authorities, when adults enter the country together with their children, but leave the country alone, without the children?</p>
	Austria	No	This EMN NCP has provided an answer, however, they did not wish this answer to be further disseminated.
	Belgium	Yes	<p>1. Yes. In Belgium every citizen needs a passport to travel to countries that require a passport (under age or not). For countries that issue group documents, we accept them.</p> <p>2. We accept passports when they are genuine/valid.</p> <p>3. It depends: when a visa is required, it is written on the visa whether this visa is also valid for the child(ren) included in the passport. This makes it possible to check/ follow-up the situation of the children. When no visa for entry is required, a systematic check/follow-up is not possible. Of course, migration officials may question somebody in case they suspect fraud/ child smuggling.</p>
	Estonia	Yes	<p>1. Yes, it is possible to apply visa or residence permit of child to parent passport, but it is used only for children less than two year’s of age.</p> <p>2. Yes applying visa or residence permit has to submit list of application documents and photo (of child) is required.</p> <p>3. There is no special regulation, that the parent are not allowed to leave alone the country, but usually visa or residence permit is in parent passport only then if child is too small to leave him alone.</p>
	Finland	Yes	<p>1. Yes</p> <p>2. No</p> <p>3. Should not return without children.</p>
	Hungary	No	This EMN NCP has provided an answer, however, they did not wish this answer to be further disseminated.
	Latvia	Yes	<p>1. Yes, we recognize such documents.</p> <p>2. Yes, we require photos of children pasted in them.</p> <p>3. There have been such problems, but not recently. In case if a parent tries to leave a country without a</p>

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			child, State Border Guard officials inform that this is not acceptable and the parent should return only together with a child. If s/he refuses, State Border Guard visits a place of stay of the child and 1) fines a person who is responsible for the child (grandparent, for example) on the ground that s/he have ensured an illegal stay of the foreigner in the country; 2) informs visa issuing authorities to prevent issuance of repeated visa. Latvian authorities have organized quite active information campaign in the territory of the country and in our representations abroad and it have diminished such cases.
	Lithuania	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Yes, if such documents are issued by Russia. 5. Yes. 6. At the moment, the state border guards allow parents to leave without their children, but this causes many problems. Therefore we are looking for ways to improve the situation.
	Malta	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes. 2. Yes, we do. 3. The parents are allowed to leave. However, if anything is suspected investigations are carried out.
	Netherlands	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes. 2. Yes, but only if the national law of the country involved prescribes that a photo of the child must be placed in the passport of the parent. Anyhow, in compliance with the Visa code the travel document of the parent must always contain separate Schengen visas of the persons included in his/her travel document. Therefore, the passport will always contain a photo of the child which is travelling together with the holder of the travel document. 3. There are no indications for similar problems at our border.
	Poland	No	This EMN NCP has provided an answer, however, they did not wish this answer to be further disseminated.
	Portugal	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Portugal only recognises collective passports issued in accordance with the European Agreement on Travel by Young Persons on Collective Passports between the Member Countries of the Council of Europe of 16 December 1961 (for a maximum of 25 persons). Please see the "Table of travel documents entitling the holder to cross the external borders and which may be endorsed with a visa - Part I" - Doc 5705/10, VISA 25, COMIX 80 2. No. 3. On departure, foreigners are inquired about the children entered with them. Eventually they could be prevented

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			from leaving the country without those children.
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Slovak Republic recognises passports where the names of the children are written in their parents passports. 2. The Slovak Republic does not require photos of children to be pasted in the travel document. Depending on the requirements of the issuing country and specimen provided the photo might be required. 3. If parents leave the country with their children they are supposed to return with them and vice versa. For the mentioned cases we recommend parents to get individual passports for the children. The parent however could leave the country without a child but only in serious cases.
	Spain	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, in order to prove identity, it is necessary to present an individual, family or group passport that is current and has been validly issued. Children under 16 years may appear in the passport of their father, mother or guardian where they have the same nationality as the passport holder and they are travelling with that person. 2. Yes, family passports are allowed; they must contain a photograph of the children included, and they are only valid when children travel with their parents. Otherwise, it is necessary for the children to carry individual passports. 3. No. The regulations state that group passports, as well as group visas, require all the holders to enter and leave at the same time.
	Sweden	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes. 2. Yes 3. They have to leave Sweden together
	United Kingdom	Yes	<p>1-2.</p> <p>The UK Border Agency do accept travel documents with the details of children added as official endorsements with a date of birth. There is no requirement for a photograph of each child in the travel document. However the passengers must prove their nationality and identity to the respective Border Agency Officer. If there are any concerns about the endorsement in the travel document or if it relates to the child who has travelled, then further checks will be made to establish the identity of all the passengers on the document.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>UKBA try to ensure that children's details are recorded at the time visas are issued in order to improve the prospect of a return if they are left in the UK when the parents return. Leaving children behind could of course still happen</p>

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			<p>if they have their own passport.</p> <p>With regards to tracking the movements of the family group, upon arrival the travel document will be endorsed with the number of people travelling. When they leave the United Kingdom they may be examined by a UK Border Force Officer who will question anyone leaving with less people than they had entered with. It is not an offence to leave the UK without a child who is endorsed on the travel document and there are many plausible reasons why someone would do this, which do not relate to child trafficking. If there were any suspicions that the passenger may be involved in illegal activities the passenger would be referred to the police.</p>
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