

Russian Travelers Face Lengthy British Visa Delays

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The British Embassy in Moscow issued a statement noting that some Russian citizens had experienced delays in the visa application process.

Russian tourists planning to vacation in London this summer may want to consider other options as lengthy visa-processing delays continue to jeopardize British travel.

The British Embassy in Moscow issued a statement noting that some Russian citizens had experienced delays in the visa application process following the outsourcing in March of visa processing to the private firm Teleperformance Ltd.

But the Russian Union of Travel Industry reported last month that the situation had "only worsened." According to the Union, many Russians have had to wait between 10 and 12 weeks to obtain a British visa. These delays are especially problematic given that applicants for British visas are only able to submit their documentation 12 weeks ahead of their intended travel date.

The Russian Union of Travel Industry has called on British officials to improve the situation and requested the provision of "delay certificates" which could facilitate insurance payouts for any Russian citizen whose visa is delayed beyond the date of departure.

Although 97 percent of general visa decisions in Moscow are made within 10 days, processing can take up to three months, according to a set of guidelines published by the UK Home Office's Visas and Immigration division.

The processing of British visas can take even longer at the four other application centers in Russia. Only 40 percent of decisions on applications processed in St. Petersburg are made within 10 days. In Rostov, a mere 29 percent of decisions are made within this time period, according to the guidelines.

UK Visas and Immigration has recommended that applicants submit their documents as early as possible within the three-month window preceding the intended date of departure, and that travelers avoid committing to any non-refundable travel to the UK.

The British Embassy in Moscow declined to further elaborate on the situation when contacted by The Moscow Times on Monday.

See also:

[Wealthy Russians 'Prefer British Visas' Despite Possible Sanctions](#)

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