

WAIVER OF VISA FEES FOR NONIMMIGRANTS

*Exchanges of notes at Brussels March 27 and November 23, 1946, and
January 17 and February 3, 1947*

Entered into force February 17, 1947

Terminated June 22, 1962, by agreement of May 3 and 23, 1962¹

61 Stat. 4117; Treaties and Other
International Acts Series 1879

The American Embassy to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

No. 149[631]

The American Embassy at Brussels presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, with reference to the Ministry's letter of January 31, 1946 (No. 2202/pr/ETATS-UNIS), concerning a proposed reciprocal visa fee waiver agreement for non-immigrant travelers, has the honor to quote below a communication dated March 11, 1946, which has been received from the Department of State on the subject:

"The Government of the United States is willing to grant gratis passport visas to qualified Belgian nationals who are bearers of valid Belgian passports and who are classifiable as bona fide nonimmigrants under the immigration laws of the United States, if the Belgian Government will waive passport visa fees for qualified nonimmigrants proceeding to Belgian territory and bearing valid passports issued by the Government of the United States. Such an arrangement must be concluded on a fully reciprocal basis in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Congress approved February 25, 1925,² and the Executive Order of May 15, 1925, which stipulated that arrangements for the waiving or the reduction of passport visa fees shall be accomplished by an exchange of notes and that the concessions granted shall be similar. No arrangement may be concluded affecting the issuance of immigration visas or the fees therefor.

"It is noted that the Belgian Government is prepared to waive passport visa fees in cases of applicants for visitor's visas but desires to limit the period

¹ 13 UST 1246; TIAS 5071.

² 43 Stat. 976.

of validity of such visas to a maximum of two months and good for several trips.

"The normal period of validity of a temporary visitor's visa issued by the Government of the United States is twelve months, provided the applicant's passport is valid for that period. Such period of validity could not be modified generally and limited to a period of two months without excessive administrative difficulties. It would appear, therefore, that the arrangement suggested by the Belgian Government could not be feasibly effected upon a reciprocal basis. It is the period of validity of the visa granted by a foreign country which must be equal to the period of validity of the visa issued by the Government of the United States, and not the period or the duration of the stay of the individuals in each country.

"The Government of the United States hopes that further discussions will lead to the conclusion of a reciprocal arrangement whereby bearers of passports issued by the Government of the United States, in possession of non-immigrant visas issued by the Belgian Government, may enter and reenter Belgium one or more times within a normal period equivalent to that of the validity of a passport visa issued by the Government of the United States, that is, one year."

BRUSSELS, *March 27, 1946.*

*The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce
to the American Embassy*

[TRANSLATION]

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND FOREIGN COMMERCE

No. 2202/Pr/United States

BRUSSELS, *November 23, 1946*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce has the honor to inform the Embassy of the United States of America in Brussels, with reference to its note No. 149[631] of March 27, 1946, that the competent Administrations, after examining the question, have agreed to extend from two months to a maximum of one year, on a basis of reciprocity, the period of validity of travel visas which could be issued directly and free of charge to United States nationals by Belgian career diplomatic and consular agents, by virtue of the new arrangement to be concluded between the two countries.

Notwithstanding the period of validity of their travel visa, United States nationals who do not wish to establish themselves in Belgium will not be required to have professional cards.

Therefore, from that point of view, they will, in fact, be placed in the same status as foreigners exempted from the formality of the visa.

The Minister would be grateful if the Embassy would notify it of the date on which the United States Government would be prepared to have the provisions of the aforesaid arrangement enter into force.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND FOREIGN COMMERCE

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Brussels

*The American Embassy to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
and Foreign Commerce*

No. 600

AMERICAN EMBASSY, BRUSSELS.

The American Embassy at Brussels presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce, and has the honor to refer to the Ministry's note of November 23, 1946, in which it was stated that the Ministry is agreeable to entering into an agreement with the United States Government to permit the reciprocal issuance of visitors' visas to nationals of both countries, valid for one year, without fees.

The Embassy is in receipt of instructions from the Department of State authorizing it to conclude arrangements for the reciprocal agreement and, if it is agreeable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce, the Embassy would suggest that the effective date for the reciprocal waiver of fees for visitors' visas be set as February 17, 1947.

The Embassy will appreciate it if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce will indicate whether this date is acceptable to the Belgian Government and takes this occasion to renew the assurances of its highest consideration.

BRUSSELS, *January 17, 1947*

*The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce
to the American Embassy*

[TRANSLATION]

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
No. 2202/Pr/United States

BRUSSELS, *February 3, 1947*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce has the honor to inform the Embassy of the United States in Brussels, in further reference to its note No. 600 of January 17, 1947, that the Belgian Government agrees that February 17, 1947, shall be fixed as the date of the entry into force of the arrangement concluded between the two countries in the matter of passport visas.

The necessary instructions will be transmitted to Belgian diplomatic and consular agents abroad.