

# France Unveils 5-Year Visas With Russia

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**The  Moscow Times**

France and Russia announced Friday that they would introduce five-year multiple-entry visas by the end of this year, Interfax reported.

After a meeting with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, visiting French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe confirmed France's decision to cancel short-term visas between the two countries as soon as possible, the report said.

The visa allows entry into countries of Europe's Schengen zone, which consists of 25 members and includes Italy, Spain, Switzerland and others.

In early June, Russia signed an agreement with the European Union about the five-year visas, which would be given to Russians who previously visited EU countries on short-term visas.

The United States announced last month that an agreement for five-year visas would be signed with Russia in July.

During Friday's meeting, Juppe also confirmed France's interest in constructing tourism infrastructure in the North Caucasus, the report said.

France is among the top five countries whose citizens visit Russia, according to the Association of Tour Operators of Russia, Interfax said. In the first quarter of 2011, about 10,300 French tourists visited Russia.

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