

Duma to Vote on U.S. Visa Deal in July

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Duma is set to vote on an agreement with the U.S. that would make three-year multi-entry visas the norm for most travelers between Russia and the U.S. Above, the Duma building in Moscow. **Andrei Makhonin**

The State Duma is to vote early next month on a far-reaching visa facilitation agreement with the United States, a senior lawmaker said Friday.

The vote is scheduled for July 6, said Leonid Kalashnikov, a first deputy chairman of the foreign relations committee and member of the Communist party.

Kalashnikov said the bill was approved by his committee earlier in the week, and he does not expect serious obstacles in parliament. "There is agreement among all parties that everybody will benefit from this," he said by telephone.

The deputy also said that the draft law would go through only one reading in parliament, instead of the usual three.

The bill, a [copy](#) of which is published on the Duma website, stipulates that Russians and Americans traveling to each other's country will get three-year multi-entry visas as a rule, provided that their visa applications are successful.

Originally stated to go into effect last summer, the agreement has been held up in the government's bureaucracy for practically a year. It will become law in Russia after it has been approved by the Federation Council and signed by President Vladimir Putin.

Once the law is published in Rossiiskaya Gazeta, the government newspaper, diplomats from both countries need to exchange another set of notes for the agreement to come into force 30 days later. U.S. law does not require ratification for it.

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