The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# More Than 1,000 Tourists Use Belarus' Visa-Free Regime in First 7 Days

February 20, 2017



Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko **Alexei Nikolsky / TASS**

More than 1,000 foreign nationals have⊠taken advantage of Belarus' new visa-free regime in its first week of⊠operation.

The new scheme, which allows tourists⊠from 80 different countries to visit Belarus without a visa for up to⊠5 days, was officially rolled out on Feb. 12

Some 1,108 tourists from 46 different countries⊠were able to use the new concessions, according to the Belarus State⊠Border Committee.
German nationals made the largest group
of foreign⊠visitors using the scheme, followed by Polish and Italian citizens.

**Related article**: Belarus, Europe's Hermit, May Be Opening Up: Here's What You Can Do There

Belarus' long-time president Alexander Lukashenko signed a decree allowing the citizens of the EU, the United States and 41 other states to visit Belarus for up to five days without a visa on Jan 9. The decree only applies to foreigners arriving in Belarus via Minsk Airport, and only if they have not arrived on a flight from Moscow.

The decree has sparked new tensions with Moscow and increased security of the Russian-Belarusian border.

The head of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) signed an order introducing border controls in Russia's Bryansk, Smolensk and Pskov regions from Feb. 7.

The Kremlin maintains that the changes will only apply to foreign nationals and will not effect free movement for Belarusian and Russian citizens.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/02/20/more-than-1000-tourists-use-belarus-visa-free-regime-in-first-7-days-a57205