

Russia Looks to Extend Tourist Visa Stay Period to 6 Months – Izvestia

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International tourists have frequently cited visa difficulties as a barrier to visiting Russia. **Sergei Fadeichev / TASS**

Russia is considering extending the maximum length of tourist visas from 30 days to six months to attract tourism, the pro-Kremlin Izvestia newspaper [reported](#) Wednesday, citing the Foreign Ministry.

The relaxed visa rules would allow visitors from anywhere in the world to apply with a hotel reservation, the ministry was cited as saying. Current legislation only [allows](#) tourist visas for those who apply with an invitation letter from a tour agency listed in the Russian government's database.

Related article: [Russia to Offer Electronic Visas by 2021, Putin Says](#)

The Foreign Ministry is expected to submit the legal changes easing tourist visa rules to lawmakers in December 2020, according to the government's legislative [schedule](#).

Tourists around the world have frequently [cited](#) difficulties with obtaining visas as a barrier to visiting Russia.

“Any action — whether liberalization, visa abolition or easing administrative barriers — will lead to an increase in tourism by 10–30% or more,” Yury Barzykin, the vice president of Russia’s travel industry union, was quoted as saying.

All but one political party represented in Russia’s lower house of parliament has reportedly backed the Foreign Ministry’s proposal.

The Communist Party, Izvestia reported, argued that lawmakers should prioritize improving the domestic tourism industry.

President Vladimir Putin has [ordered](#) to offer electronic visas to visitors from a limited set of countries by 2021.

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