



CONSULATE GENERAL
OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

PUBLIC NOTICE

Modification of Short Stay Schengen Visa application procedures

The Consulate General of Belgium in Los Angeles has the honour to inform the public of a new procedure for the issuance of Schengen Visa (Short Stay).

As of April 11, 2011, the visa issuance process will be accompanied by an identification procedure by means of the capture of **biometric data** (digital finger prints and digital photograph).

Applicants will be required to attend in person to provide a ten-finger scan and a digital photograph with their visa application. This applies to all Schengen visa applicants irrespective of location or nationality.

The Consulate General stresses that the identification process has no influence on the introduction, the treatment and the issuance of visa. The visa process remains as it used to be in the past and is based on the same documents.

This new measure is part of a more extensive European project which aims to create a database containing biometric and alphanumeric information of

visa applicants, shared by the Schengen Member States. The collection of biometric data will therefore be brought into general use and it will be applied to all Schengen visa applicants.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THE BIOMETRIC PROCEDURE

The following applicants shall be exempt from the requirement to give fingerprints:

- **Children** under the age of 12.
- Persons for whom fingerprinting is **physically impossible**.
- **Heads of State or government** and members of the national government with accompanying spouses, and the members of their official delegation when they are invited by Member States' governments or by international organisations for an official purpose.
- **Sovereigns** and other senior members of a royal family, when they are invited by Member States' governments or by international organisations for an official purpose.

All those not listed above will be required - **without exception** - to provide biometric data. A refusal to provide the relevant data will lead to the application being put on hold, or even rejected.