



Do you need a new travel document?

From 1 March 2010

Do you need a new passport? If so, please read this information sheet. It contains important information for you.

Passports issued prior to 1 March 2010 will remain valid even after introduction of the new passport in 2010, subject to any entry restrictions in force in the country to which you are travelling.

History of the Swiss passport

The familiar red passports have gone through three generations: "passport 59", "passport 85" and "passport 03" – the numbers denote the year of introduction. All of them contained biometric data such as a photo, height or hair and eye colour. The further development of the passport 03 into the electronically readable passport 06 brought the Swiss passport into line with the latest standards in 2006.

Why is a new passport necessary?

The recording of biometric fingerprints and facial images in travel documents is being introduced on the basis of an EU ordinance issued in 2004, which Switzerland, as an associate member of the Schengen countries, has adopted. Around 90 countries – including all of Switzerland's neighbours – already issue biometric travel documents, known as "e-passports".

The definitive introduction of the electronically readable Swiss passport with biometric data is planned for 1 March 2010. This adjustment to international standards means that you can continue to use your Swiss passport to travel freely around the world, as the misuse of passports and travel documents will be virtually eliminated and your travel security will also be increased. Swiss citizens with a "passport 10" will still be able to travel to the USA without a visa.

Application for the issuance of travel documents abroad

Outside Switzerland you may apply for a passport or ID card at over 130 diplomatic and consular representations. Please consult the list for the diplomatic or consular representation that is responsible for you:

<http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/reps.html>

You may now submit your application via the Internet. Please note that you must have your biometric data (fingerprints, facial image and signature) recorded at the international representation that is responsible for you. In exceptional cases, your representation may approve the recording of your biometric data by another Swiss issuing office.

Online passport application and appointment reservation

With the new passport website we are offering you a practical, up-to-date solution that cuts out unnecessary waiting times in the passport application process. You can find the link and additional information at:

www.schweizerpass.ch

As soon as the representation that is responsible for you has checked and approved your online application, you will be given access to the online appointment reservation system – Please check with your representation if the system has been set up for your country.

You may also apply for a passport or ID card by telephone or in person at the international representation that is responsible for you.

Reservations for the recording of biometric data will be accepted as of 24 February 2010 and the international representations will be able to record your biometric data **from 1 March 2010**.

Submit your application in good time

The Swiss travel documents will be produced centrally in Switzerland, and this usually takes between 2 and 4 weeks. Please keep an eye on your travel document's validity so that you apply for a new document in time.

Delivery of the travel document

The company producing the passport will check the quality of the new passports before they are mailed. The passport will be sent to your address by post.

Do you have any questions?

Please contact the international representation that is responsible for you.

You can find additional information on the following website of the Federal Department of Justice and Police: www.schweizerpass.ch