



In summary

As a citizen of the European Union, you can expect an Embassy or Consulate of another European Union country to:

- issue a travel document;
- contact your relatives and national authorities, if you so wish;
- visit you if possible and help you get the information you need to obtain legal advice and appropriate medical assistance;
- ask your national authorities to take the necessary steps for your evacuation or repatriation.

Remember that fees - in particular consular fees - may have to be paid for some services provided by the Embassy or Consulate. Furthermore, some services cannot be provided, such as:

- payment of your bills (e.g. lawyer, hospital, hotel, restaurant, etc.);
- payment for or booking of travel tickets;
- tourist information;
- legal assistance and intervention in judicial proceedings.

Some suggestions before you go:

- get information about your destination by consulting the website

[www.travel-voyage.consilium.europa.eu]

- tell your tour operator who to contact if there are problems while you are abroad;
- let your family and friends know where you will be going when you are abroad;
- before going on holiday, remember to take out travel insurance;



and if, while you are abroad

the internal situation of the country worsens or if there is a natural disaster and your State is not represented:

- notify an Embassy or Consulate of a European Union Member State that you are there;
- listen to their advice and follow it;



and now ...
have a good trip!

This brochure is a summary of the Decision of the Council of the European Union of 19 December 1995. The complete legal text may be consulted on the website mentioned above.

EN
COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

European
Consular
Assistance

Did you know that?

Every one of us is a citizen of his or her own country, and of the European Union.

Did you know that?

In countries outside the European Union, there will always be an Embassy or Consulate of a Member State which will be able to give you help if you need it.

You are a citizen of the European Union!

European citizenship is recognised by the Treaty establishing the European Community. It appears in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union and was formally reconfirmed in the text establishing a Constitution for Europe which was signed in Rome on 29 October 2004.

“Every national of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to national citizenship and shall not replace it.”

Diplomatic and consular assistance of citizens of the European Union in third countries is provided for in the Treaty establishing the European Community.

“Every citizen of the Union shall, in the territory of a third country in which the Member State of which he is a national is not represented, be entitled to protection by the diplomatic or consular authorities of any Member State, on the same conditions as the nationals of that State.”

This protection derives from the Treaties and is governed by a Decision of the Governments of the Member States of the European Union adopted on 19 December 1995.

If your passport has been lost or stolen ...

If you need help ...

If you want to be repatriated ...

If a serious accident or health problem has disrupted your trip ...

If you have been arrested by the police or detained ...

If you have been the victim of violence ...

If you find yourself in one of these difficult situations in a country outside the European Union, and if your country does not have any diplomatic or consular representation there, you can always ask for help and consular assistance from another European Union Member State, under the same conditions as the help it provides for its own citizens.

Of course, there are some conditions which you have to fulfil to benefit from consular assistance:

- You must have the nationality of the one of the Member States of the European Union
- You must be in a country which is not part of the European Union
- Your country must have no Embassy or Consulate there.

In such cases, all you have to do is prove your nationality to enjoy the protection and assistance provided by the Treaty establishing the European Community. To do that, you have to produce your passport or some equivalent identity document.

In the event of accident or serious illness: you can ask an Embassy or Consulate to inform your relatives. As far as possible, you may receive visits and advice to ensure that you receive suitable medical treatment. If your state of health requires medical evacuation, remember that this is subject to the explicit approval of your national authorities.

If you are the victim of violence: the Embassy or Consulate will provide the necessary information for you to obtain medical assistance and appropriate legal advice.

If you are arrested or detained: once the Embassy or Consulate has been notified, it will inform your national authorities, if you want it to. As far as possible, you may receive visits. The conditions of your imprisonment will be closely monitored by the Embassy or Consulate, which will also ensure that you have been duly informed of your rights in relation to the national authorities.

If you have lost your documents or they have been stolen, it is for you to provide proof of your nationality and identity, which will be checked by national authorities. You can obtain a temporary European Union travel document from the Embassy or Consulate, which will enable you to return home. Its issue is subject to prior authorisation by your national authorities.

Aid and repatriation in case of difficulties: the Embassy and Consulate are there to help you. However, advances of funds and repatriation can take place only in very urgent situations. In any case, prior authorisation is requested from your local authorities.

In the event of death: the diplomatic or consular mission will inform your national authorities, which will then contact the deceased person's next of kin. With the agreement of the next of kin, the diplomatic or consular mission will help to obtain the death certificate and will make the necessary arrangements for the body to be buried, cremated or repatriated to the home country. The diplomatic or consular mission will also take the steps required to obtain the death certificate.