

N.B. Unofficial translation, legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish.

DECREE OF THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
on Fees for Services Produced by the Foreign Service
(872/2008, amendments up to 227/2010 included)

Issued in Helsinki on 16 December 2008

In accordance with a decision of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, by virtue of section 8 of the Act on the Charge Criteria of the State (150/1992) enacted on 21 February 1992, as amended by Act No 348/1994, by virtue of section 34 of the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999), as amended by Act No 495/2005, and by virtue of section 39 of the Consular Services Act (498/1999), be it enacted as follows:

Section 1

Scope of application

This Decree provides for the fees to be charged for services produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and by the Finnish missions abroad.

This Decree shall apply to honorary consulates insofar as the public services produced by them are concerned.

Section 2

Services free of charge

Subject to the provisions of subsection 2, the following services produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or the missions abroad shall be free of charge:

- 1) official acts which do not directly address any individual person or company or any otherwise specified group;
- 2) measures of executive assistance which concern an individual person and which are taken in the public interest;
- 3) measures taken in cases concerning persons who have been granted legal aid under the Legal Aid Act (257/2002);
- 4) necessary services produced in accordance with sections 12, 19, 20 and 22 of the Consular Services Act for persons who are in distress or are arrested, prosecuted or detained abroad, as well as small amounts of financial assistance;
- 5) measures related to the establishment of paternity, child welfare, child custody and maintenance, which fall within the competence of social welfare authorities, and assistance in issues related to child abduction, as well as measures related to the recovery of maintenance which, under international conventions or on the basis of reciprocity, are free of charge;
- 6) authorisations for the export of dual-use items, export certificates, and international import certificates;
- 7) transmission of applications and declarations made by individual persons to Finnish authorities, where this is a statutory duty of missions;

- 8) transmission of pensions paid to foreign citizens, based on employment within the foreign service, or other comparable allowances paid by the state;
- 9) reciprocal exchange of information and training relating to cooperation between authorities and other reciprocal services;
- 10) commissioning or preparation of reports on the legislation of foreign countries to a Finnish government authority;
- 11) communications services;
- 12) provision of advice and guidance which only generates minor costs;
- 13) transmission of information between Finland and other states or international organisations;
- 14) use of library services and research services of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; and
- 15) provision of documents, extracts, copies or certificates relating to employment, and other comparable services.

Any necessary additional expenses shall be subject to reimbursement under section 20.

On the basis of international custom or reciprocity, the following services shall be free of charge:

- 1) replies to inquiries made by foreign states concerning Finnish legislation;
- 2) service of foreign judicial documents and other foreign documents in Finland; and
- 3) issue of identity cards to members of the staff of a diplomatic mission or a comparable representation accredited to Finland or of a consulate headed by a career consular officer functioning in Finland and to their family members, as well as to honorary consuls of foreign states functioning in Finland.

Exemptions from the payment of fees for services subject to a fee are provided for in section 4, subsection 5, section 5, subsections 3 and 4, section 6, subsection 4, section 7, subsection 3, section 11, subsection 2, section 12, subsection 2, section 15, subsection 2, section 16, subsection 2, and section 20, subsection 2.

Section 3

Public services subject to a fee

Public services for which the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the missions abroad charge a fee shall include:

- 1) the issue of travel documents;
- 2) the issue of visas;
- 3) the issue of residence permits;
- 4) the issue of certificates;
- 5) approvals and authorisations under section 4, subsection 2, of the Act on the Use of the Kyoto Mechanisms (109/2007), and
- 6) other notarial and comparable public services.

Public services shall be subject to fixed fees provided for in sections 4 to 9, and any additional related expenses shall be subject to reimbursement as provided for in section 20.

Section 12 of the Act on the Health Care Abroad of Civil Servants and Employees (176/1987) provides for the reimbursement of such expenses accruing to the foreign service as arise from the organisation of the health care and occupational health service referred to in the said Act.

Section 4
Travel documents (227/2010)

A fee of 100 euro shall be charged as a processing fee for the issue of a passport, diplomatic passport, service passport or identity card. A passport may be issued as a fast track passport, the processing fee for which is 120 euro, and as an express passport, the processing fee for which is 145 euro. Any additional expenses due to the mode of delivery shall be subject to reimbursement.

The processing fee for a temporary passport is 145 euro. However, a fee of 100 euro shall be charged for the issue of a temporary passport granted exceptionally to citizens of Finland as an emergency passport for one journey and written by hand.

A fee of 100 euro shall be charged for the issue of a seamen's national identity card, a temporary alien's passport or a laissez-passer travel document, and for the issue of a temporary emergency travel document to citizens of the European Union for their return home.

A fee of 50 euro shall be charged for the issue of a passport for more than one year, a diplomatic passport, a service passport or an identity card to veterans of wars in Finland or persons who participated in demining in the years 1945–1952. A processing fee under subsection 1 shall be charged for the issue of a fast track passport or an express passport to the above-mentioned persons.

The fee shall be charged upon filing the application for the travel document, and shall be charged even in the event that the application is refused. If the passport is delivered to the recipient by post, the postage shall be subject to reimbursement.

No fee shall be charged for a passport which is issued to

- 1) the President of the Republic or his or her family members;
- 2) members of the Government; or
- 3) persons employed by the foreign service or their family members.

Section 5
Visas (227/2010)

A visa fee under Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council shall be charged for the issue of visas.

A fee of 10 euro shall be charged for a sheet for affixing a visa for persons holding travel documents not recognised by Finland. However, the fee shall not be charged if the persons are not charged a visa fee.

Section 6
Residence permits

Residence permits shall be subject to a fee based on a decree of the Ministry of the Interior. The fee shall be charged even in the event that the permit is refused.

The transfer of a valid permit onto a new travel document shall be subject to a fee of 45 euro in respect of each permit.(227/2010)

No fee shall be charged from:

- 1) members of the staff of a diplomatic mission or a comparable representation accredited to Finland or of a consulate headed by a career consular officer functioning in Finland or their family members;

- 2) persons who are received by Finland under a Government decision as refugees, because of need for protection or for an important humanitarian reason; and
- 3) persons participating in a youth exchange programme under a bilateral agreement or other international arrangement on the basis of reciprocity.

Section 7

Certificates and extracts

The Ministry shall charge a fee of 20 euro and the missions a fee of 30 euro for a certificate included on an existing document or on a separate paper and for an extract from a document. In case several certificates are included on the same document, a fee shall be charged for each certificate.

By way of derogation from the provisions of subsection 1 above, a notary's certificate attesting a real-estate transfer shall be subject to a fee of 160 euro and a provisional certificate of nationality of a merchant ship shall be subject to a fee of 200 euro.

No fee shall be charged for:

- 1) certificates required for the purpose of applying for social support or assistance; or
- 2) certificates to be issued to members of the staff of a diplomatic mission or a comparable representation accredited to Finland or of a consulate headed by a career consular officer functioning in Finland.

Section 8

Approvals and authorisations under the Act on the Use of the Kyoto Mechanisms

A fee of 105 euro shall be charged as a processing fee for an approval or an authorisation under section 4, subsection 2, of the Act on the Use of the Kyoto Mechanisms (109/2007).

Section 9

Other public services

Measures other than those referred to in section 2 and sections 4 to 8 which, according to an act of Parliament, a decree or an international agreement, fall within the competence of the foreign service, shall be subject to a fee of 40 euro. However, measures related to the authentication of a new ship's logbook or to the reception of a maritime declaration shall be subject to fees of 160 euro and 300 euro, respectively.

Section 10

Other services subject to a fee

Other services for which a fee is charged shall include:

- 1) service of a document abroad;
- 2) search for a document or address;
- 3) services relating to the estate of a deceased person;
- 4) transmission of funds and financial assistance;
- 5) provision of photocopies or other copies of a document, a technical record or other material;

- 6) provision of printed matter which is not meant for the purposes of communications services;
- 7) use of the courier and transportation services of the foreign service;
- 8) use of the data network of the foreign service;
- 9) training, lecturing, interpretation, translation, research, information and other expert services;
- 10) use of premises, furniture and equipment which are in the possession of the Ministry or a mission, as well as office services;
- 11) transmission and invoicing of materials on the basis of an assignment, where it is not included in the fee charged for the materials; and
- 12) other services which are based on an assignment or comparable services falling within the competence of the foreign service.

The said other services subject to a fee shall be charged at the fixed rates provided for in sections 11 to 19, at an hourly rate or on other economic criteria.

Section 11

Service of documents abroad

The service of a judicial document or other document shall be subject to a fee of 100 euro. The fee shall be charged even for an attempt to deliver a document.

No fee shall be charged:

- 1) in cases subject to public prosecution;
- 2) in cases falling within the scope of application of the Aliens Act (301/2004);
- 3) in cases where public legal aid has been granted under the Legal Aid Act (257/2002) prior to the request for service of a document; or
- 4) in cases initiated ex officio by the social welfare authorities.

Section 12

Search for a document or address

The search for a birth certificate or any other document abroad as well as for the address of a person residing abroad shall be subject to a fee based on economic criteria, amounting, however, to at least full cost recovery. The fee shall be charged even for an attempt to obtain a document or to find an address.

No fee shall be charged from social welfare authorities or from public law entities having duties relating to the protection of general interests.

Section 13

Services related to the estate of a deceased person

For services related to the estate of a deceased person abroad, the following fees shall be charged:

- 1) for small-scale assistance, 100 euro;
- 2) for inquiries concerning the estate of a deceased person as well as for receiving and transmitting the assets of the estate to the heirs, 2% of the assets, however no less than 100 euro and no more than 6,000 euro; and
- 3) for the assistance referred to in paragraph 2 above including the acquisition, preparation and translation of the necessary documents, a total of 5% of the assets, however no less than 150 euro and no more than 10,000 euro.

A mission producing services related to an estate may enter into an agreement with an honorary consulate concerning the production of the said services and the compensation to be paid to the latter. The compensation paid to the honorary consulate shall not be more than 50% of the fees charged under the above paragraphs.

Section 14

Transmission of funds and financial assistance

The transmission of funds and financial assistance shall be subject to a fee of 40 euro, unless the total amount of assistance is 40 euro or less.

Section 15

Photocopies, copies and printed matter

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs shall, in view of the provisions of section 34 of the Act on the Openness of Government Activities, decide on the amount of fees charged for the search for information referred to in section 34, subsection 2, of the Act, and for the copies and printouts referred to in section 34, subsection 3, of the Act.

Copies shall be subject to the following fees:

- 1) 0.50 euro per page for a paper copy of size A4 and 1 euro per page for a paper copy of size A3;
- 2) 20 euro per a data storage medium;
- 3) 20 euro for a photograph on which the Ministry or a mission holds the copyright and 50 euro for each publication of the photograph in compensation for its use.

No additional fee shall be charged for a copy if the provision of the copy is part of other services for which fees are already being charged.

Printed matter relating to the foreign service, except for information materials, shall be subject to a fee amounting to full cost recovery.

Section 16

Use of the courier and transportation services of the foreign service

A processing fee of 5 euro may be charged for the use of the courier services of the foreign service, together with a transportation fee amounting to full cost recovery, based on the weight and destination of the dispatch, in accordance with the regulation on the private courier dispatches of staff members of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The fee may also be charged from the receiver of the dispatch.

No fee shall be charged from the Office of the President of the Republic.

Section 17

Use of the data network of the foreign service

A fee of 100 euro per month for each external user name shall be charged for the use of the Ministry's data network, unless otherwise decided by the Ministry on the basis of reciprocity.

Section 18

Expert services

A fee based on economic criteria shall be charged for training, lecturing, interpretation, translation, research and information and other expert services, or comparable services, however no less than 100 euro for each hour used for the production of the service.

Section 19
Other services

The use of premises, furniture and equipment owned by the Ministry or a mission and their office services and other services based on an assignment shall be subject to a fee based on economic criteria, amounting, however, to at least full cost recovery.

Section 20
Reimbursement of additional expenses

Apart from the fixed fees provided for in sections 4 to 17, necessary additional expenses accrued to the foreign service from the production of services shall be subject to reimbursement as follows:

- 1) compensation for travelling expenses and work performed outside the regular working hours to be paid to personnel of the foreign service under the general provisions of collective agreements, as well as other direct expenses accrued to the foreign service unit from the production of the services; and
- 2) expenses arising from the purchase of external services in full, excluding normal postage.

Reimbursement of additional expenses shall be claimed even in the event that a fixed fee is not charged under the provisions of this Decree. However, no reimbursement shall be claimed in cases where the expenses of recovery would exceed the amount of payment to be recovered.

Section 21
Currency of payment

A mission shall charge the fees in euro (EUR) or in other freely convertible currency, depending on what the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided on the currency to be used in payment transactions by the mission. Payments shall, however, be accepted in the currency of the country where the mission is located if it is required under the currency regulations of that country.

If a visa fee is charged in a currency other than euro, the exchange rate shall be the reference rate set by the European Central Bank in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council. In other cases the exchange rate shall be the account rate confirmed by the Ministry. The amount of the payment in the currency in question shall be rounded up or down to the nearest full currency unit commonly used in local payment transactions.(227/2010)

Section 22
Fees charged by honorary consulates

Fees referred to in sections 4 to 6 above charged by honorary consulates shall be entered as income to the state. The honorary consulates may keep other fees charged under this Decree in compensation for the services rendered, unless otherwise agreed.

Section 23
Entry into force

This Decree enters into force on 1 January 2009. Measures necessary for the implementation of this Decree may be undertaken before its the entry into force.