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"Safe Travel – Help us help you"

As the summer period approaches and on the occasion of the "European Day of Safe Travel Abroad", the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation repeats the importance of being well prepared when travelling abroad: reading the travel advice, registering on Travellers Online, checking the travel documents, having the necessary vaccinations, taking out a travel insurance, and having the useful numbers and documents at hand.

Every year, many Belgians travel abroad to enjoy their holidays, to visit family or for work. In the summer, the number of trips increases significantly. In an increasingly unstable world, these journeys can sometimes be a real challenge. When faced with major problems abroad, Belgians can turn to Foreign Affairs, which has an extensive network of 118 posts and more than 300 honorary consuls worldwide. Consular assistance is an essential part of our mission, but is nevertheless regulated and limited by the consular code. It is aimed at the most serious situations, such as e.g. a death, a serious accident, a worrying disappearance, a crime, an arrest or a child abduction. It is these difficult and sometimes dramatic situations that mobilise our teams. Yet everyone remains primarily responsible for his or her own journey.

As Joris Salden, Director-General Consular Affairs, points out: *"With good preparation and by following our advice, help us help you! Foreign Affairs is there to help when a major problem arises abroad, but there are limits to the possibilities for intervention. A knowledgeable traveler is therefore better prepared."*

As the summer period approaches, which includes the Football World Cup, and on the occasion of the "European Day of Safe Travel Abroad", Foreign Affairs therefore takes the opportunity to recall some simple but essential principles, so that everyone can prepare their trip in the best possible way and everything takes place under the best conditions:

1. It is important to read the travel advice on the [Foreign Affairs website](#), which provides practical guidance for all travel destinations.
2. Systematic registration on [Travellers Online](#) allows Foreign Affairs to keep in touch with fellow citizens when needed, and to reassure their family members when they make contact.
3. Checking the validity of identity and travel documents and the need for a visa or travel permit prevents unpleasant last-minute surprises.
4. Proper vaccination, depending on the destination, as well as taking the necessary medications, will prevent a number of medical worries.
5. A travel insurance allows travelling with peace of mind, without worrying about exorbitant costs in the event of an accident or return.
6. Keeping relevant phone numbers and a copy of the identity documents at hand will make help all the smoother in case of a problem.

The message to travelers is therefore clear: "Inform yourself, register, prepare." As such, everyone can leave with peace of mind, and this allows Foreign Affairs, using its network of diplomatic and consular posts worldwide, to support our fellow citizens in the best possible way in case of an emergency.





FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development
Cooperation - Press service (P&C/P)
Rue des Petits Carmes 15
1000 Brussels
Belgium
+32 2 501 81 11
<http://diplomatie.belgium.be>

Pierre Steverlynck
Spokesperson
+32 2 501 87 16
+32 471 44 06 04
pierre.steverlynck@diplobel.fed.be

David Jordens
Spokesperson
+32 2 501 80 50
+32 477 40 32 12
david.jordens@diplobel.fed.be

Florinda Baleci
Spokesperson
+32 2 501 84 29
+32 478 92 09 37
florinda.baleci@diplobel.fed.be

