



•ALERT•

20 DECEMBER 2022

# Croatia has joined the Schengen Area

Less than two weeks ago, the **Council of the European Union** (Internal Affairs) adopted the unanimous decision that formally allowed **Croatia to join the Schengen Area**, marking the first enlargement of such area in 10 years.

In the eyes of the Council of the European Union Croatia has satisfied all the necessary condition of the Schengen acquis, after having already enforced the External Controls, Police Cooperation and the Schengen Information System usage.

Croatia's path to the Schengen area was not an easy one. The **government in Zagreb began the application process in 2016** after the Country was admitted into the European Union in 2013, and many doubts were raised so that **Croatia had to fulfill 281 conditions**.

Despite all that, **starting from January 1st, 2023, Croatia will officially be part of the Schengen Area** and will use the Schengen Information System (SIS) to its full capacity, as well as the Visa Information System (VIS) to stamp Schengen visas. Furthermore, border and customs check will be abolished for all people travelling between Croatia and other Schengen member States by road, rail or water.

**Border controls on those travelling by air will instead cease on March 26th, 2023**, given the particular schedule and organization of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), that needs more time to adjust to Croatia's entering the Schengen Area.

It is to be noted, also, that **Croatian residence permits** will become more valuable in light of the fact that their holders will be able to use them to travel freely inside the Schengen



Area for travels up to 90 days over a 180-day period.

Croatia's entrance in the Schengen Area implies an increase in the number of people free to travel under the 1985 Agreement, less controls, and more easiness in reaching one of the **new tourism's hotspots**. Also, it means that all the acquis in terms of freedom of movement in the EU acquire even more value thanks to the simplification of movement to and from Croatia.

*LCA Corporate Immigration team is available for any request of clarification or assistance and will keep you posted on any development on immigration matters.*

## CONTACTS

### Team Immigration

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