



Vietnam: The Vietnamese Passport

29 February 2024

Danish National ID Centre

Birkerød Kongevej 2
DK-3460 Birkerød
Denmark

Phone +45 61 98 39 00
Email nidc@nidc.dk
Website www.nidc.dk

Introduction

This note describes the application procedure and requirements for applying for a Vietnamese passport domestically as well as from abroad. The note further introduces the new design of the Vietnamese passport first issued 1 July 2022 and modified 1 January 2023.

The note is primarily based on information obtained during interviews with the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) in Hanoi in April 2023, and open source information.

The Vietnamese passport

The issuance of Vietnamese passports is currently regulated by the country's first passport law; Law on Exit and Entry for Vietnamese Citizens No. 49/2019/QH14, which was enforced in July 2020 and is implemented by the Ministry of Public Security. Until this date the issuance of Vietnamese passports was regulated by a decree from 2007 (Decree on Vietnamese citizens' exit and entry).¹

The Vietnamese passport exists in three variants: Regular passport, official passport, and diplomatic passport (illustrated below).² The Vietnamese government also issues an alien travel document for stateless persons residing in Vietnam called "Entry and Exit Permit", a laissez-passer booklet for nationals wishing to return to Vietnam, and a seaman's passport.³

The Vietnamese passport is issued with a 10-year validity period for people above 14 years of age and five years for people below 14 years of age (including infants).⁴

¹ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023; Landinfo, 9 November 2020.

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, 17 March 2023.

³ Landinfo, 9 November 2020; Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, April 2023.

⁴ Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens, November 2019.



Image 1: Diplomatic passport as of 15th April 2023 (NIDC reference material).



Image 2: Regular passport as of 1st of January 2023 (NIDC reference material).

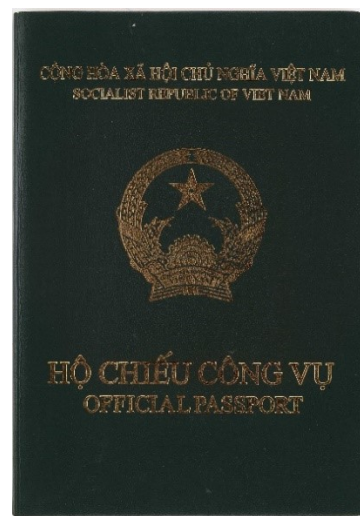


Image 3: Official passport as of 15th April 2023 (NIDC reference material).

For people of Vietnamese origin (but not citizens) or family members to Vietnamese citizens living abroad, it is possible to have a visa exemption certificate issued which allows visa free travel to Vietnam for a certain period (maximum five years). Visa exemption certificates can be in the form of a visa sticker inserted in the person's foreign nationality passport or travel document, or it can be a separate booklet as seen below.⁵

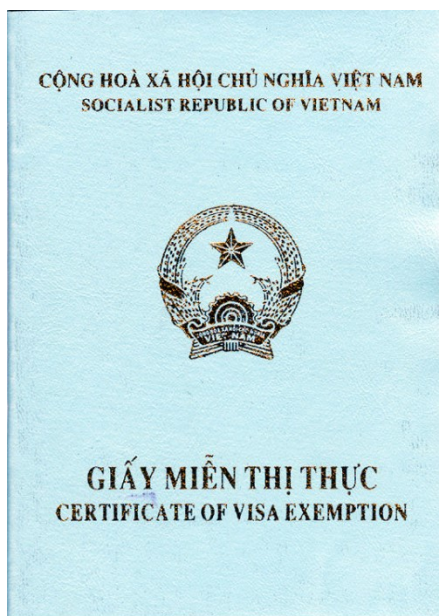


Image 4: Cover visa exemption certificate (Immigration and Naturalisation Service of the Netherlands. Document and Identity Investigation Office Zwolle).

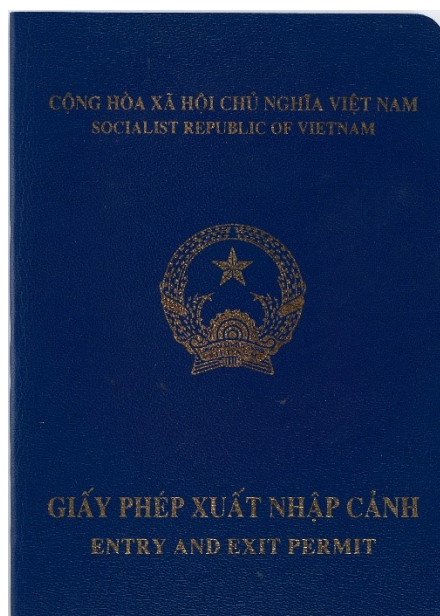


Image 5: Entry/exit permit (NIDC reference material).⁶

⁵ Vietnamese Embassy in Denmark B, 2023.

⁶ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

A new regular passport design in dark navy colour was launched 1 July 2022 replacing the dark green preceding versions. The new passport model was initially issued without place of birth of the passport holder as opposed to previous models (see below images).⁷



Image 7: January 2023 version (NIDC reference material).

⁷ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.
⁸ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.
⁹ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

E-passports (series E)

Vietnam launched its first ordinary e-passports with biometric chips from March 1st 2023.¹⁰ To this date these can only be issued in Vietnam and not on diplomatic missions abroad and only to people above 14 years of age.¹¹ According to MPS, the chip contains information about the individual including biometric information such as face and fingerprints.¹² Since Vietnam is still continuing the issuance of non-biometric versions of the ordinary passport, applicants are given the choice of choosing between the regular passport (without chip) and the e-passport (with chip) when applying for a new passport.¹³

The e-passport is scheduled to become more expensive than the regular passport, but for the time being, the ministry is subsidising the biometric version so that the price for both versions is the same when applying within Vietnam, which is specified by law to be 200.000 VND or USD 8.50.¹⁴ The price for a regular passport at a Vietnamese embassy abroad is, however, higher and it is currently not possible to get the e-passport at Vietnamese embassies.¹⁵

Application requirements when applying domestically

The 2019 passport law (Law on Exit and Entry for Vietnamese Citizens No. 49/2019/QH14) specifies the application requirements for the different passport types domestically as well as abroad.¹⁶ For first-time applications without ID cards it is important that the application is done at the immigration department of public security in the province where the person is registered as temporarily or permanently residing.¹⁷ With the new law, a Vietnamese passport applicant possessing a citizen identity card can however apply at the local immigration department of public security at any city or province. They can also submit the application in the national office of the department of immigration in Hanoi.¹⁸ This is opposed to previous practise where citizens could only apply at the locality where they had a temporary or permanent address.¹⁹

A new digital population database has made it possible to apply for a renewal of a passport online. In order to do so the person has to have a public services account on the website: <https://dichvucong.bocongan.gov.vn>, that MPS is also responsible for. The applicant has to type in their ID number and upload the passport application form and a photo of themselves online. Based on the new national database register MPS are able to match the uploaded picture with their ID database picture and issue the passport.²⁰

¹⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, 2 February 2023.

¹¹ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

¹² Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

¹³ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

¹⁴ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

¹⁵ Vietnamese embassy in Denmark A, 21 August 2023.

¹⁶ Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens No. 49/2019/QH14, 22. November 2019.

¹⁷ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023; Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens No. 49/2019/QH14, 22. November 2019.

¹⁸ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

¹⁹ Landinfo, 9 November 2020; Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

²⁰ Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

Applications for passports from abroad (Q-series)

The Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for handling applications for Vietnamese passport issuance abroad. They are called Q-series as the passport number begins with a Q. When applying for a Vietnamese passport abroad the documentation requirements are in general equivalent to applying in Vietnam. For first-time applications it is important that the application is submitted to the Vietnamese embassy in the country where the person has their permanent residence. If they wish to renew a passport they can submit their dossier in any Vietnamese embassy or consulate abroad and not necessarily in the country where they have residence.²¹ According to the law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens, the Vietnamese missions must issue the passport or refusal within three or five working days respectively for *renewal* or *first time* applications. This is on the condition that the applications contain the required supporting documents.²² According to the law, a completed application form consists of the following documents:

- Passport application form.
- Two photos of the applicant.
- Most recent passport (if it is not a first-time application).
- Photocopies of ID cards or Citizens Identity cards.
- Copies of birth certificate or extracts of the birth register (for first-time passport applications).²³

In order to apply for a Vietnamese passport it is important to prove ones Vietnamese nationality through for example ID cards or a previous passport. For first-time passport applications the nationality can be proved by the applicant's birth certificate as Vietnamese birth certificates state the nationality of the bearer.²⁴ In some cases (e.g. if the applicant is born abroad) the parents' birth certificates are requested as documentation in connection to the passport application.²⁵ For Vietnamese children born abroad the birth should be registered at an embassy before a passport can be issued. If the applicant has no proof of Vietnamese nationality (e.g. birth certificates or proof of retention of citizenship) the authorities will need to look into records to try to establish the nationality before a passport can be issued.²⁶

²¹ Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens No. 49/2019/QH14, 22. November 2019; Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, April 2023.

²² Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens No. 49/2019/QH14, 22. November 2019.

²³ Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens No. 49/2019/QH14, 22. November 2019.

²⁴ Vietnamese Ministry of justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

²⁵ Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens No. 49/2019/QH14, 22. November 2019.

²⁶ Vietnamese Ministry of justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

References

Oral sources

Vietnamese Ministry of Justice (April 2023): Interviewed in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security (April 2023): Interviewed in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Written sources

Landinfo (9 November 2020): Vietnam: Pass og underlagsdokumenter,

<https://landinfo.no/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Temanotat-Vietnam-Pass-og-underlagsdokumenter-09112020.pdf>, retrieved 18 March 2021.

Law on Entry and Exit for Vietnamese citizens No. 49/2019/QH14 (22. November 2019).

Vietnamese embassy in Denmark A (NXNXN) : [vnembassy-copenhagen.mofa.gov.vn/vi-vn/Consular Services/Consular Fees and Charges/Trang/default.aspx](https://vnembassy-copenhagen.mofa.gov.vn/vi-vn/Consular%20Services/Consular%20Fees%20and%20Charges/Trang/default.aspx), retrieved 21 august 2023.

Vietnamese embassy in Denmark B (NXNXN): <https://vnembassy-copenhagen.mofa.gov.vn/vi-vn/Consular%20Services/H%C6%B0%E1%BB%9Bng%20d%E1%BA%ABn%20th%E1%BB%A7%20t%E1%BB%A5c%20l%C3%A3nh%20s%E1%BB%B1/Mi%E1%BB%85n%20th%E1%BB%8B%20th%E1%BB%B1c/Trang/default.aspx>, retrieved 21 august 2023.