

Immigration Solutions Lawyers – Questions on Notice – Public Hearing 13 June 2014

Please note that below information is obtained from the official website of the Portuguese Immigration and Border

Services: <http://www.sef.pt/portal/V10/EN/asp/apoiocliente/detalheApoio.aspx?fromIndex=0&idLinha=6269> - see FAQ

1. Mrs O'Donoghue: It gives you less confidence in trying to tell clients: 'You can definitely have an outcome by a certain date.' We are competing on the world stage to get business people to come to Australia. When you have got countries like Portugal, which is much smaller than we are, competing and getting applications approved much faster—

Mr CRAIG KELLY: When you say 'much faster', what comparison times are you looking at?

Mrs O'Donoghue: I actually have some dates here.

CHAIR: If you have any other countries' processing times too, that would be useful.
(p. 28)

An application will be validated within a maximum of 72 hours from the time of lodgement. A decision on the visa application is usually done in about 2 weeks, being the maximum processing time 45 days.

<http://goldenvisa-portugal.com/FAQ.html> (non-official information: Law firm)

Although the Portuguese government's official websites do not specify the processing time, information is readily available to suggest that the processing time for Portuguese's golden visa is as above. 3 days for validation and between 14 to 45 days for a decision.

2. CHAIR: That is fine. So Portugal offers permanent residency; after what period of time can they obtain citizenship?

Mrs O'Donoghue: I could not give you the actual date as to when; I would have to take that on notice and provide that to you. (p. 29)

The "Golden visa" is a full temporary residence permit that allows the visa holder and family to live, study and work in Portugal.

After the first 5 years, the visa holder may be eligible for permanent residence.

After the first 6 years, the visa holder may be eligible for citizenship.

3. CHAIR: I wonder whether it is full access or limited access.

Mrs O'Donoghue: I do not know whether it is limited or full; I would have to take that on notice. (p. 29)

The “Golden visa” is a temporary residence permit. Nevertheless, it allows the visa holder to live, study and work in Portugal and also to enter and travel freely in Europe within the Schengen area.

The Schengen area is constituted by 26 countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The holder of a “Golden visa” is entitled to travel freely within these countries, without having to show a passport or go through border control.