

The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) is aware that holders of Irish visas may have had their travel arrangements disrupted in recent days by flight restrictions and cancellations resulting from the presence of volcanic ash over European air space. Through no fault of their own, many such people may be in possession of visas which have just expired or which are about to expire shortly. INIS also recognises that a certain level of disruption will continue after air space is reopened and that it may take some time for normal airline services to be resumed. INIS intends to adopt the following approach in such cases:

1. For visas which would have been valid on or after 15 April, 2010, and where the visa holder can produce evidence of a cancelled flight which was due to fly within the original period of validity of the visa, INIS will extend recognition of such visas up to and including 16 May, 2010, or the original date of expiry of the visa, whichever is later.
2. This should afford all such visa holders whose travel was disrupted by the presence of volcanic ash a reasonable period in which to rearrange flights or to make alternative travel arrangements.
3. INIS will adopt a policy of not seeking to impose penalties or fines on carriers who facilitate such visa holders.
4. Holders of such visas must present to an Immigration Officer in the normal way on arrival in Ireland and normal entry requirements will apply. Any person adversely affected by the recent disruption should be in a position to show evidence of any cancelled flight to the Immigration Officer at the airport or port of entry.