

EES / ETIAS - Formalities in the EU

A brief guide for non-EU visitors



Upcoming changes in EU travel regulations will significantly impact non-EU nationals.

The **Entry/Exit System (EES)** and the **European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)** will introduce new requirements for short stays and visa-exempt travellers travelling in 29 European (Schengen) countries. EES will record biometric data at Schengen borders. ETIAS will mandate pre-registration for visa-exempt travellers.

These systems aim to streamline border crossings and enhance security.



The implementation of these systems will impact non-EU short-term travellers whether they are traveling for business or personal reasons. However, these measures are also meant to ease border crossing for identified and pre-registered frequent travellers.

These new systems will help authorities detect overstays and other non-compliant behaviours and keep these on their radar for longer. With the increase in internal border checks, infringements may now also be detected when travelling within the Schengen Area.

From a business perspective, it will mean planning ahead, increased monitoring of individual travel and larger group of business travellers, and possible updates to your business travel policies to avoid any risk of overstay, travel friction or business disruption.

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1. What is the EES?

The EES is an automated system for registering non-EU nationals traveling for a Short Stay (up to 90 days within any 180-day period) that will record each time they cross external Schengen area borders. This period is calculated as a single period for all the European countries using the EES.

Non-EU national refers to a traveller who is not a holder of a nationality of any EU Member State or of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland.

2. Who needs the EES?

Whether you will need to be registered in the EES will depend on a) your nationality and b) why you are coming to the EU.

You need the EES if you are:

- a non-EU national traveling for a Short Stay to an EU country using the EES, and you are
- a Short-Stay visa holders, or
- a visa exempt traveller.

The EES is scheduled to launch on 12 October 2025. EU Member States will introduce it gradually with full implementation by 10 April 2026.

3. When does the EES not apply?

The EES does not apply, e.g., to:

- non-EU nationals who hold a residence card and are immediately related to an EU national, or
- non-EU nationals travelling to Europe as part of an intra-corporate transfer or for the purposes of research, studies or training;
- holders of residence permits and long-stay visas;
- crew members of passenger and goods trains on international connecting journeys.

4. What about frequent travellers?

Pre-vetted regular visitors benefit from the facilitation of border controls. E.g. cross-border workers who are well-known to the border guards owing to their frequent crossing at the same border crossing point.

Additionally, each EU Member State can set up an optional domestic Formalities reduction programme.

5. What is the ETIAS?

The **European Travel Information and Authorisation System ("ETIAS")** is an entry requirement for visa-exempt nationals prior to travelling to 29 listed European (Schengen) countries for a Short Stay. Non-EU travellers, including UK travellers, will become liable under the ETIAS obligation.

Under the ETIAS, non-EU travellers will also need to apply by submitting details on health, education, and criminal convictions. It will be valid for up to three years or until the traveller's passport expires, whichever comes first

The ETIAS is expected to start in the **last quarter of 2026**.



ETA - Formalities in the UK

A brief guide for EU visitors



1. ETA

In April 2025, the UK government introduced the electronic travel authorisation (ETA) when travelling to the UK for tourism, visiting family or other reasons, up to 6 months. An ETA does not guarantee entry into the UK.

To obtain an ETA, you can apply for it via the UK ETA app (available on Google Play or the App Store) or online.

Once obtained, an ETA lasts for 2 years or until your passport expires, whichever comes sooner. You can travel to the UK multiple times using the same ETA.

An ETA costs £16 each and cannot be refunded.

2. Who is it for?

Whether you require an ETA will depend on a) your nationality and b) why you are coming to the UK. For the purpose of this guidance, all EU visitors (with the exception of Irish and British passport holders, individuals with an existing UK visa or EU settlement status) are required to have an ETA before visiting the UK for the above purposes.

If you are travelling as a group, each person requires an ETA – this includes children and babies.

3. When do you need an ETA?

- You come to the UK for up to 6 months for tourism, visiting family and friends, on a business trip or for short-term study
- You come to the UK for up to 3 months on the Creative Worker visa concession
- You come to the UK for a permitted paid engagement
- You transit through a UK airport if you'll pass through border control - check with your airline if you are not sure

4. What you cannot do with an ETA

With an ETA, you cannot:

- stay in the UK for longer than 6 months
- do paid or unpaid work for a UK company or as a self-employed person, unless you're doing a permitted paid engagement or event or work on the Creative Worker visa concession
- claim public funds/benefits
- live in the UK through frequent or successive visits
- marry or register a civil partnership, or give notice of marriage or civil partnership - you need to apply for a Marriage Visitor visa

5. When do you not need an ETA?

As mentioned previously, British and Irish passport holders (including dual nationals) do not need an ETA.

You do not need an ETA if:

- you have a UK visa
- you have permission to live, work or study in the UK (including settled or pre-settled status or right of abode)
- you're transiting through a UK airport, and you will not pass through border control
- you're travelling with a British overseas territories citizen passport
- you live in Ireland and you're travelling from Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey or the Isle of Man
- you're a child travelling on the France-UK school trip travel information form
- you're exempt from immigration control or do not need to get permission to enter

