



EU Entry-Exit System (EES) 2025 FAQ

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What is EES?

Q: What is EES?

A: EES, or the EU Entry/Exit System, is a new digital system being introduced by the EU to strengthen its external Schengen border.

It will mean most non-EU citizens, including British citizens, will need to register their biometric details – providing fingerprints and having their photo taken – when they enter or exit the Schengen area. Travellers do not need to provide information in advance of travel – this will all be done at the border point.

This should only take a few minutes for each person to do and will eventually replace manual stamping of passports.

Q: When is EES being introduced?

A: EES will be introduced from 12 October 2025. Implementation will be phased across Schengen border crossing points, (i.e. airports, seaports) over a six-month period, meaning until April 2026 you may encounter different border requirements at different ports where you enter and exit across the Schengen area.

Q: Who does EES apply to?

EES will apply to non-EU citizens and non-EU residents entering the Schengen area for a short stay. This means any traveller not holding the nationality or residence permit of any EU country or the nationality of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland.

EES does not apply to holders of residence permits and long-stay visas. For further information from the EU on this please see [here](#).

**Q: What countries are included in EES? What is the Schengen area?**

A: The countries in the Schengen area are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

EES is not applicable when travelling to the Republic of Ireland and Cyprus

Q: Why is the EU introducing EES?

A: EES is part of long-term plans designed by the EU to digitise the border and improve border security in the Schengen area by keeping a digital record of everyone entering and exiting the Schengen area. The taking of fingerprints and a facial image assigns a traveller's biometrics to a particular passport and thereby prevents the fraudulent use of multiple/false passports.

It will in due course replace the current system of manual passport stamping with automated border control checks. This will help the EU ensure that visitors do not overstay the existing 90/180-day maximum stay period in the Schengen area.

Q: Is this because of Brexit?

A: The EU's decision to implement EES is not related to Brexit. The purpose of EES is to strengthen the EU's Schengen border and plans to implement EES were initially decided in 2017, before the UK left the EU. EES applies to citizens of all non-EU non-Schengen countries, not just the UK.

Q: Does EES apply when travellers visit Ireland?

A: No, EES does not apply to Ireland. Please follow [existing guidance](#) on travelling to Ireland.



EES process

Q: Do travellers have to pay for EES?

A: No. There is no charge for travellers for EES registration. Any requests for payment to comply with EES are incorrect and/or fraudulent. The EU will later be introducing an advance permission to travel system, the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS), which will require a payment. This scheme is a separate system to EES and is not expected to launch until Autumn 2026.

Q: Where will EES registration take place?

A: Travellers will be required to undertake EES registration the first time they cross an external Schengen border. This will typically take place at the port or airport in their country of entry, where they will scan their passport, submit their fingerprints and/or have their photo taken, but could also take place upon exit.

Passengers may be asked Schengen Border Code questions, which are basic questions about their trip. One of the most common questions that travellers are asked upon reaching the EU is whether they have a return ticket to their home country or an outward ticket to another third country once their trip in the Schengen Zone ends.

[For travellers using juxtaposed controls prior to departure at the Port of Dover, Folkestone, and St Pancras] French Border Control will conduct the EES registration in the UK before you board your train/ferry/shuttle.

Q: Will the process be the same at every port of entry?

A: No. Your details may be taken by a border guard, or you may be asked to enter your details directly using a handheld tablet or at a kiosk. Travellers should follow signs and instructions from port staff. During the phased implementation of EES over the initial 6 month period it is possible that travellers may not be asked to provide biometrics.



Q: What happens if travellers enter into one Schengen country and exit through another? Will there be EES requirements when travelling between Schengen area countries?

A: Travellers will be required to complete their EES registration on their first entry to and their final exit from the Schengen area.

There is no requirement to complete EES when travelling within the Schengen area e.g. if you are travelling from Switzerland to France.

Implementation will be phased for the first six months of EES, with full implementation by 10 April 2026. During this period, you may experience different requirements when travelling in and out of the Schengen area, particularly at different ports.

Q: How will travellers complete their new EES registration on arrival in the Schengen area?

A: You should follow arrival signs at ports as you usually would depending on your nationality or residency.

Regular travel into the Schengen area

Q: Will travellers have to do this every time they travel?

A: Travellers will only have to create a full digital record on their first visit to the Schengen Area, or if it is more than 3 years since their last record creation.

If you return to the Schengen area within 3 years, travellers will have a faster process by only needing to update their existing digital record and provide one biometric (i.e. fingerprints or a facial image) at the point of entry and exit.



If you don't return to the Schengen area for more than 3 years, or you get a new passport, you will need to create a full new record.

For example, a British traveller visiting a country in the Schengen area for the first time following the implementation of EES will create a digital record at the Schengen border. They will have their photo taken and fingerprints scanned, and these biometrics need to be verified by a border guard. Each subsequent entry/exit the individual makes to/from the Schengen area within 3 years of their digital record being created will only require one biometric record (e.g. fingerprints). If the traveller has not entered/exited the Schengen area for 3 years or is travelling on a new passport they must complete the record process in full, having a new photo taken and fingerprints scanned again.

If your appearance has significantly changed then you may be instructed to have another photo taken by border guards.

Q: Will EES prevent me travelling to the EU?

A: No, but once the system is launched you will need to complete the EES process every time you enter or exit the Schengen area.

Trip duration

Q: Will I need a visa to travel to the EU?

A: At this time, British citizens do not need a visa for short trips to the EU or countries in the Schengen area if both of the following apply:

- you're staying for 90 days or less in a 180-day period
- you're visiting as a tourist or for certain other reasons



Your total stay in the Schengen area must be no more than 90 days in every 180 days. It does not matter how many countries you visit. This is a rolling 180-day period; this means that every time you visit the EU you should count backward 180 days from the date you plan to leave the Schengen area at the end of your visit and ensure that you will have spent no more than 90 days in the Schengen area during that period.

Q: Does this mean travellers will be able to stay in the EU for longer?

A: British travellers who are not residents in the Schengen area are only permitted to stay for a maximum of 90 days in a rolling 180-day period. The launch of EES does not change this rule, but EES means it will be easier to enforce due to the new digital border system. The 180 days are calculated as a rolling period which you can count backwards from your entry or exit date to the Schengen area. Regular travellers should carefully track the duration of their stay, but may be able to ask border guards at external borders to check the duration of how many days they have stayed.

Q: What happens when a traveller has already entered the Schengen area prior to the EES launch date, but exits the Schengen area after EES has been launched?

A: Travellers who are in the Schengen area prior to EES implementation may be registered for EES on exit, depending on their departure port. They will not need to do anything to prepare for this.

Q: What will happen if travellers travel and have stayed more than 90 days in a rolling 180-day period?

A: Border control is a matter for the relevant EU or Schengen country; however, travellers may be subjected to further enquiries by the border guard and could potentially be fined or refused entry, which means you will have to return to the UK. A ban could be imposed of between 1-3 years. Following the implementation of EES, individuals overstaying the 90 in 180 day rule will be automatically identified by the system.



Accessibility

Q: Will kiosks be accessible for all passengers? Will there be other accessibility arrangements?

A: Individual member states have responsibility for readiness preparations at their border crossing points. As such, accessibility arrangements may vary between EU ports. If you have any concerns, we recommend that you contact your carrier or port of entry ahead of travel or speak to port staff on arrival.

Q: What about babies and small children?

A: Children under 12 will not be fingerprinted but all travellers, including babies, will be photographed and have a digital record created.

Q: Is there an upper age limit for EES?

A: No. Every traveller will be required to have a digital record taken.

Q: What if travellers can't queue for long periods of time or have accessibility requirements?

A: Travellers should contact their carrier and / or speak to staff at the port concerned for accessibility information and support.

Travel practicalities

Q: Do travellers need to bring any additional documentation when they travel?

A: Most British citizens will not need anything other than their usual travel documentation. However, British citizens resident in a Schengen country under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement for EU Member States, EEA-EFTA Separation Agreement for Norway, Iceland



and Liechtenstein or the Citizens' Rights Agreement for Switzerland will need to carry their residence document issued in the EU's uniform format. They should check with their local embassy for the name of this document in each country.

Q: Is there anything travellers can do in advance of travelling?

A: No. Travellers will need to submit their biometric details at the Schengen border, and only once EES is introduced. It is not currently possible to register biometric details in advance of the border.

Q: Will there be an app?

A: The EU has plans for a mobile app where travellers can upload some information ahead of travel to expedite EES processes at the border. However, it will be for each individual Schengen country to decide whether to make an app available, and is unlikely to be available for travellers to use when EES is first launched.

Q: Do travellers have to arrive early to prepare for EES registration?

A: The majority of British citizens will encounter EES in their destination when arriving at their port of entry.

Travellers using the juxtaposed ports (Eurotunnel, Port of Dover and St Pancras International) will complete their EES registration before boarding and should check with their travel operator to understand when to arrive at the port and any potential impacts to their journey.

In general passengers are advised follow instructions from their travel operator and/or port as they will be most familiar with EES arrangements.

Q: What happens if travellers are delayed and miss their connection?



A: Travellers should contact their operator or travel agent for information on any missed connections.

Q: What happens if travellers are transiting through an EU port? Should they leave longer for transit?

A: If travellers need to pass through border controls as part of a transit stop, they will be required to complete EES registration. Travellers should check with the port concerned or contact their travel agent for specific information on their journey.

Security

Q: What will happen if travellers refuse to have their fingerprints scanned or photograph taken?

A: Registration for EES will be a requirement for all non-EU citizens and non-EU residents wishing to enter the Schengen area. Travellers who refuse to provide their biometric data will likely be denied entry and required to return to their country of departure or origin.

Travellers who are unable to provide a fingerprint scan may be exempted and should declare this on arrival.

Q: How is my biometric data being stored in the EU?

A: The data stored in the EES is protected against abuse and access to it is restricted to specific staff within national authorities. The EU will be using technology in a way that ensures the fundamental data privacy rights of individuals are protected. More information can be found [here](#).



Nationality and passports

Q: Will EU Citizens need to go through checks too?

A: Whilst EU Citizens will not be required to register for EES, all passengers will be subject to standard border and security checks.

Q: What if travellers are a dual UK-EU citizen? Do they have to comply?

A: UK-EU dual citizens will be exempt from EES if they enter and exit using their EU passport. It is recommended that you carry both passports with you when travelling.

Q: What if travellers are a dual citizen of other third countries (not a member of the European Union)?

A: If travellers are a third country citizen and do not hold dual nationality with an EU Member State or fall into another exemption category, they will need to register with EES.

Q: What if travellers have another third country passport, but with a UK visa? What do they need to consider when travelling?

A: All non-EU citizens or visa holders will need to register with EES when entering the Schengen area.

Q: What if travellers have more than one passport?

A: If a traveller has an EU/EEA/CH passport they will not need to register for EES and should travel to the Schengen area using that passport. It is recommended that individuals bring all their passports when they travel and speak to a border guard if they need more information.



Q: What if travelling by vehicle, with both EU and non-EU citizens inside?

A: Any vehicle with both EU and non-EU (i.e. British) citizens inside will need to proceed to the EES registration area, so that non-EU passengers can complete EES registration.

Q: What if travellers are a British Citizen covered under the Withdrawal Agreement (WA)?

A: As residents of an EU country, British citizens covered under the WA are exempt from EES if they can produce their WA residence document issued in the EU's uniform format. Other documents issued prior to Brexit under the Free Movement Directive will not exempt from registration in EES. The UK government strongly urges all UK citizens covered under the WA to obtain their WA document. They should check with their local embassy for which document they need.

If they cannot produce this document, they are likely to be registered in the EES and face difficulties when travelling. Please speak to a border official and state that they are covered by the Withdrawal Agreement.

The name of the WA document allowing exemption from EES varies by country. British citizens should contact the embassy or consult their country's Living in Guide for more detail.

Q: What happens if travellers are travelling on an Emergency Travel Document?

A: Travellers will be able to use their Emergency Travel Document to enter the Schengen area. They should visit a border guard and we advise they keep a photo or photocopy of their regular passport to show the border guards if needed.



Travel disruption

Q: Will travellers be delayed?

A: While EES registration itself should only take around one to two minutes for each person to do, they may lead to longer wait times at Border Control upon arrival in the Schengen area. These are likely to vary from location to location and will depend on traveller volumes and processing capacity at the point at which EES processing is carried out.

At some locations, particularly the Port of Dover, Eurotunnel, and St Pancras - where French authorities operate juxtaposed immigration checks in the UK prior to departure - registration will take a few minutes per passenger, prior to leaving the UK. This may lead to longer waits at busy times.

Passengers travelling through one of these points of entry should check with their travel operator before departing, to understand when to arrive at the port and any potential impacts to their journey.

Q: What happens if the technology or kiosks are not working, do travellers still have to complete EES?

A: In the event of technology not working, border agents will be able to manually complete all border checks, including EES. You should follow instructions from border staff at your port of entry.



Cruises

Q: What about cruise ships?

A: EES requirements for cruise ship passengers will vary depending on their departure and arrival ports. Those arriving and departing from the UK will generally be exempt from EES registration, unless they disembark the cruise and travel onwards into the Schengen area.

Q: What happens when a cruise departs/ from the UK and visits the Schengen area?

A: Passengers travelling on cruises that board and disembark in the UK will not normally need to complete their EES entry or exit registration for EU day trips that are part of their itinerary.

Q: What if travellers have multiple stops in the same country throughout the cruise?

A: Passengers travelling on cruises that board and disembark in the UK will not normally need to complete their EES registration for EU day trips that are part of their itinerary.

Q: Does EES apply to travellers disembarking a cruise within the Schengen area?

A: Travellers who disembark a cruise within the Schengen area, and travel on to a further destination, including an alternative port, by other means, will need to complete EES registration when leaving the ship.



Other border schemes

Q: What is ETIAS?

A: The European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) is an entry requirement for visa-exempt citizens travelling to the 29 countries in the Schengen area, plus Cyprus. It will require most people travelling to the Schengen area or Cyprus who are not EU or Schengen area citizens or residents, and who do not currently require a visa to visit the Schengen area, to submit information about themselves and their travel plans in advance of travel.

Non-EU citizens will be required to pay a fee and apply for authorisation to travel before they leave for the Schengen area. An ETIAS authorisation lasts for 3 years.

ETIAS is not scheduled to launch until Autumn 2026. No payments should be made before then. The EU has already set out more information on its own [website on ETIAS](#), including what information will be required from each nationality.

Q: What is the difference between EES, ETA and ETIAS?

A: EES (Entry/Exit System) is the EU's new digital border system that records entries and exits at the Schengen border and collects biometric data. It will in due course replace passport stamping when entering the Schengen area.

ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorisation System) is a separate system launching in late autumn 2026 that will require pre-travel authorisation and a fee for visa-exempt travellers visiting the Schengen area. ETIAS will cost €20 and be valid for multiple entries for up to three years.



ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation) is a UK system that for inbound travellers who are non-UK citizens or residents, permitting entry to the UK for tourism, visiting family or for certain other reasons for up to 6 months. An ETA costs £16 and is valid for multiple visits for up to two years.