

Global Immigration alert

March 2025

United Kingdom

UK to expand ETA to EU and EEA nationals effective April 2025

Executive summary

Effective 2 April 2025, nationals of the member states of the [EU and the European Economic Area](#) will be required to obtain an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) prior to traveling to the UK.

Background

The [ETA](#) scheme impacts travelers who do not need a visa to enter the UK. The extension of the scheme to EU and EEA nationals is the final stage of the ETA rollout, which started in November 2023. The ETA, which is electronically linked to visitors' passports, authorizes them to transit through the UK (if passing through border control); enter the UK for up to six months for the purpose of tourism, visiting family and friends, business or study; and/or enter for up to three months pursuant to the Creative Worker visa concession.

Key developments

Effective 5 March 2025, the ETA was opened for EU, EEA and Swiss nationals. These individuals must apply for an ETA in advance of travel if they seek to enter the UK as visitors on or after 2 April 2025.

The following categories of travelers will be exempt from the requirement to obtain an ETA:

- Irish nationals
- Individuals who have permission to live, work or study in the UK, or hold a visa to enter the UK
- Residents of Ireland who do not need a visa to enter the UK and enter via Guernsey, Ireland, the Isle of Man or Jersey

An ETA is valid for two years or until the expiry of the individual's passport, whichever is earlier. It authorizes holders to make multiple visits to the UK but does not guarantee entry or confer authorization to work in the country.

ETA applications are submitted online or via the "UK ETA" app, and decisions are expected within three working days unless further checks are required. Each applicant (including children) must obtain their own ETA. The fee is GBP 10 per applicant (this may increase to GBP 16 in the coming weeks subject to parliamentary approval of a proposed fee increase).

Impact on employers

The ETA allows visitors to enter the UK for short-term stays and streamlines the admission process for business visitors from impacted countries. Impacted individuals may consider ETA processing times when planning their travel to mitigate business disruptions.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.



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