

EES

The Entry-Exit System for the Schengen Area

Business Travel



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the EES (Entry-Exit System)?

The Entry/Exit System (EES) is a new digital system that records the entry and exit of third-country (non-EU) nationals at the EU's external borders, tracking the duration of their stay. It requires both visa nationals and visa free nationals to provide fingerprints, have their photo taken and complete certain information about their travel when they enter or exit the Schengen area.

All information is provided at the border point, it should take only a few minutes and it will eventually replace passport stamping for the Schengen area.

When is EES being introduced?

The EES system has been on a phased implementation approach from **12th October 2025**. Implementation will be phased across Schengen entry-exit points (i.e. border crossings) until September 2026.

Who will need to provide information to the EES?

EES will apply to:

- Travellers entering the Schengen area for a short-stay (both leisure and business travel).
- Who are **not a national of an EU country or a country using the EES**. These countries are:

Austria,
Belgium,
Bulgaria,
Croatia,
Republic of Cyprus,
Czech Republic,
Denmark,
Estonia,
Finland,
France,

Germany,
Greece,
Hungary,
Italy,
Iceland,
Ireland,
Latvia,
Liechtenstein,
Lithuania,
Luxembourg,
Malta,

Netherlands,
Norway,
Poland,
Portugal,
Romania,
Slovakia,
Slovenia,
Spain,
Sweden,
Switzerland.

OR

- **Nor a residence-permit holder of a Schengen Member State or associated country.** These countries are:

Austria,
Belgium,
Bulgaria,
Croatia,
Czech Republic,
Denmark,
Estonia,
Finland,
France,

Germany,
Greece,
Hungary,
Italy,
Iceland,
Latvia,
Liechtenstein,
Lithuania,
Luxembourg,
Malta,

Netherlands,
Norway,
Poland,
Portugal,
Romania,
Slovakia,
Slovenia,
Spain,
Sweden,
Switzerland.

Important remarks:

- Cyprus and Ireland are not part of the EES system, but they are part of the EU. Therefore, Irish and Cypriot nationals do not need to provide their information to the EES system, but non-EU residents of these countries will have to provide it to enter Schengen.
- Nationals of Andorra, Monaco and San Marino and holders of a passport issued by the Vatican City State or the Holy See are also exempted.
- All other travellers from outside these groups of countries are considered third-country nationals under EES rules.

Why is the European Commission introducing the EES?

The EES is part of long-term plans by the EU to digitise the border and improve border security in the Schengen area. The EES will keep 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.

The system will also 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 90 over a 180-day rolling period in the Schengen area.

What's the difference between the ETIAS and the EES (Entry/Exit System)?

ETIAS stands for European Travel Information and Authorisation System. It is a digital pre-travel authorisation that will give an individual 'permission to travel' to the Schengen Area and Cyprus. It will apply only to visa free nationals travelling to the Schengen area for short term trips (for both business and leisure). It will be live on a phased approach from 2026, with exact dates and phases to be confirmed.

Is there a fee to use the EES?

No. There is no fee for EES registration.

How will the EES registration process be?

Travellers will be required to register the first time they cross an external Schengen border. This will typically take place at the port or airport in their country of entry. They will need to scan their passport, submit their fingerprints, reply to certain questions and/or have their photo taken. The same process may be requested when leaving the Schengen area.

Which information will be recorded?

The EU legislation prescribes the exact categories of data to be registered. Pre-registration kiosks used by Member States will present these fields as a short form, with some fields read automatically from the passport or captured via camera or fingerprint reader.

The basic data registered in the system will be:

- Family surname
- Given name
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Nationality
- Gender/Sex
- Passport number/travel document number.

- Passport number/travel document country of issuance.
- Passport number/travel document expiry date.
- Type of travel document.
- Enter or exit border crossing point with date, place and time.
- Facial image taken via photo capture.
- Fingerprints (normally right hand hour fingers).
- For visa nationals, they will be required to register their visa details.

During the phased implementation of EES over the initial 6 month period it is possible that travellers may not be asked to provide biometrics.

Which additional questions may be asked?

Registration kiosks or border guards may ask follow-up questions related to the trip and in alignment with the requirements in the Schengen Border Code to travel to the Schengen area. These are:

- Place of accommodation during the stay.
- Length/purpose of stay.
- Whether the traveller holds a return/onward ticket.
- Proof of sufficient means or insurance.

These follow-up questions may be asked at the booth and recorded in national systems when relevant.

Who will face further scrutiny?

Additional questions may be asked to a traveller who has previously been recorded in the Schengen Information System (SIS) for non-compliance with the Schengen Border Code. The most common examples are previous overstays in the period of stay (90 days in a 180-day rolling period), prior refusals of entry, having worked in the EU without work authorisation or any other infringement of the Schengen regulations.

Travellers under these circumstances should speak with an Immigration Specialist before attempting entry into the Schengen area.

Will travellers have to do this every time they travel?

No. In theory, travellers will only have to create a full digital record on their first visit to the Schengen Area or if more than 3 years have passed since the first entry. However, additional scrutiny may be imposed to certain groups or in cases of infringement of the Schengen regulations since last registration.

Does this mean that travellers can stay for longer in the EU?

No. Non-EU nationals 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. Regular travellers should track the duration of their stay to ensure they are not overstaying.

Can a traveller refuse to have their fingerprints scanned or photograph taken?

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 to officials at border control.

What are the practical changes for a business traveller program?

Instead of traditional stamping of passports, all non-EU nationals or residents will now have their entry and exit recorded in the Entry/Exit System (EES) upon crossing Schengen external borders.

With a registration process that is largely automated, Member States will be able to monitor the authorised duration of stay (the Schengen allowance) and other compliance requirements in real time. This includes tracking entries and exits, detecting overstays, recording refusals of entry, and cross-referencing with alerts in the Schengen Information System (SIS). Combined with biometric verification, the automated process enhances border security, facilitates accurate enforcement of the Schengen Border Code, and allows authorities to take timely action in case of non-compliance.

European authorities have now interconnected EU-wide systems (including SIS, ECRIS-TCN, VIS, and the upcoming ETIAS) and in some cases national labour, social security, and immigration systems, allowing comprehensive monitoring of entries, exits, and compliance. Consequently, all trips into the Schengen Area are now subject to close oversight.

How will this impact your business traveler programme?

In practice, the changes mean that overstays or performing activities beyond the scope of the permitted stay can result in sanctions for both the individual and the employer, recording of the incident in the Schengen Information System (SIS), and possible future restrictions on entry of up to 5 years for both leisure and business. It can also lead to further inspections and audits at company premises in EU countries.

What actions do I need to take now?

We recommend the following three steps to ensure smooth travel and compliance:

- 1. Map it:** Identify which employees are non-EU/Schengen nationals who will be subject to EES registration, how often they travel, and the purpose of their trips. Consider updating your current pre-travel arrangements and tools to capture information relevant to EES.
- 2. Plan it:** Since EES registration occurs automatically at the border, employees should be prepared with the necessary travel documents and supporting information to answer any additional questions that border authorities may ask. Ensure that travellers understand how to respond to any questions that may arise. For individuals with prior entries recorded in the Schengen Information System (SIS) due to overstays or other non-compliance, additional documentation or explanations may be requested.
- 3. Communicate:** Keep employees informed about EES requirements, what to expect at border control, and the importance of providing accurate and complete information. Advise them to carry supporting documents, such as proof of accommodation, return tickets, or evidence of the business purpose of their visit, and ensure they understand how their travel will be monitored under the system. Clear communication will help minimise delays, prevent entry refusals, and ensure compliance with Schengen rules.

How can Vialto support?

Vialto Partners can provide advisory services, assistance and technological tools to manage business travelers and their requirements when traveling to the Schengen area.

Our Vialto team can help you navigate complex governmental relations and rapidly changing immigration laws, so that your employees can move quickly and compliantly across borders. Our team also provides advisory, compliance, consular and tracking services.

Who at Vialto should I contact for more support?

Vialto Partners has a dedicated EES/ETIAS Team. If you have any questions or queries please reach out to us:

[Scherezade Maestre](#) — Director and Global Immigration Lawyer

[Lindsey Barras](#) — Immigration Partner and EES/ETIAS Lead

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