



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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United Kingdom – Electronic Travel Authorisation Update

The Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme was announced in March 2023 and further details continue to be released by the U.K. Home Office about its operation. As a reminder, visitors and individuals transiting through the U.K. who do not need a visa for short stays, or who do not already have an immigration status prior to travelling, will be required to obtain an ETA to enter the United Kingdom. An individual who requires an ETA to travel and does not have one will be refused boarding by the carrier, or if that does not happen for some reason, will be refused entry upon arrival to the United Kingdom.¹

The purpose of the scheme is to secure the U.K.'s borders and therefore, anyone wanting to travel to the U.K. (except British or Irish citizens) will need to have permission to do so in advance of travel.

WHY THIS MATTERS

These changes will impact the cross-border movement of travellers and prescribe the actions that need to be taken before any travel to the United Kingdom.

As the rules are changing frequently, travellers and employers with workers from overseas should stay in touch with their travel agents and qualified immigration counsel to make sure they mitigate disruption to travel and business plans, as well as to remain compliant with U.K. immigration laws.

Further Details

Who Needs an ETA?

- The ETA scheme will launch this autumn and is expected to be in place for all non-visa countries by the end of 2024.

- Initially the scheme will be introduced for a few countries: from 15 November 2023, Qatari nationals will need an ETA to enter the U.K. The application process will go live from 25 October 2023.
- The scheme is currently due to extend to nationals of the following countries from 22 February 2023 (they will be able to apply for an ETA in advance from 1 February 2024):

- Bahrain	- Jordan	- Kuwait
- Oman	- Saudi Arabia	- United Arab Emirates
- Individuals who hold a British or Irish passport will not require an ETA. Neither will individuals who already have permission to live, work, or study in the U.K., or a valid visit visa.
- An ETA will also not be required for individuals who are legally resident in and entering the U.K. from Guernsey, Jersey, or the Isle of Man.

What Is the Application Process?

The process has been outlined by the Home Office, however detailed guidance is not yet available. In summary:

- Applications for an ETA will be made using the ETA App or online. The U.K. ETA App is not yet available, and the online forms will become visible from 25 October 2023. To apply for an ETA, individuals will need to:
 - Pay a fee;
 - Provide contact and passport details;
 - Provide a valid photo, complying with Home Office rules for digital photos on gov.uk;
 - Answer a set of questions.
- It will cost £10 per person to make the application and a decision on the application should be made within three working days of the application being submitted.
- An ETA will be issued electronically and the applicant will receive an email to confirm that the application has been approved.
- An ETA will be linked to an applicant's passport and will be valid for a period of two years or until the passport expiry date (whichever is sooner). It is important therefore, that when travelling to the U.K. on an ETA, to use the passport to which the ETA is linked for travel.

An individual will be able to enter the U.K. as many times as desired with a valid ETA. It will not be necessary to apply for a new ETA each time an individual travels subject to the ETA remaining valid (and being linked to the passport being used to travel).

The Home Office continues to monitor and amend timing, countries, and dates as it rolls out the ETA; therefore it is recommended that employers and globally-mobile workers continue to check the Home Office website for the latest updates: [Electronic Travel Authorisation \(ETA\)](#) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

KPMG INSIGHTS

The proposed ETA application process and associated costs are indicative of the U.K. government's commitment to securing its borders, whilst remaining open to business and tourism. Through a phased implementation of the ETA, it is expected that the Home Office will be able to address any feedback before the scheme goes live globally.

As the go-live date for the initial phase approaches, employers should consider implementing a firmwide communication strategy to inform their employees of the upcoming changes and the implications for their pre-travel planning.

For further information about the upcoming changes and how they may impact your business and employees, please consult with a qualified immigration counsel or a member of the KPMG Immigration Team in the United Kingdom (see the Contacts section).

FOOTNOTE:

1 See, U.K Government, "[Guidance, Electronic Travel Authorization](#)" (updated 7 June 2023).

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Contact us

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