

Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA): Stakeholder factsheet

Background

- Each year the UK welcomes millions of visitors from around the world. From holidays to short term study or business trips, the UK is a dynamic, diverse, and exciting destination.
- We are making improvements to deliver a more streamlined, digital immigration system which will be quicker and more secure for the millions of people who pass through the UK border each year.
- Electronic Travel Authorisations (ETAs) are being introduced worldwide for visitors to the UK who do not currently need a visa for short stays, or who do not already have a UK immigration status – an ETA is a digital permission to travel.
- Eligible non-Europeans can apply in advance from 27 November 2024 and will need an ETA to travel from 8 January 2025.
- Eligible Europeans can apply from 5 March 2025 and will need an ETA to travel from 2 April 2025.
- Gulf Cooperation Council visitors already need an ETA to travel to the UK.
- Visitors can apply in advance and find out when to do so on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
- An ETA costs £10 and permits multiple journeys to the UK for stays of up to six months at a time over two years or until the holder's passport expires – whichever is sooner.
- The introduction of ETAs is in line with the approach many other countries have taken to border security, including the US and Australia, and helps prevent the arrival of those who present a threat to the UK.

Eligibility for an ETA

- All visitors, including children, who do not [need a visa](#) for short stays or who do not have any other UK immigration status will need an ETA to travel to the UK or transit through the UK.
- An ETA is not a visa, it does not permit entry into the UK – it authorises an individual to travel to the UK.
- British and Irish citizens do not need an ETA.

Applying for an ETA

- Information on who can get an ETA and how to apply before coming to the UK is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
- The easiest way to apply for an ETA is through the 'UK ETA app', which can be downloaded from the [Google Play](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.gov.dta) or [Apple App Store](https://apps.apple.com/uk/app/uk-eta-app/id6447541100). People can apply on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) if they do not have access to a smartphone.
- The application process is quick and simple. Applicants usually get a decision within three working days but may get a quicker decision if they use the UK ETA app.
- To apply for an ETA, applicants need to:
 - Pay a fee
 - Provide contact and passport details
 - Provide a valid photo, complying with our rules for digital photos on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
 - Answer a set of questions
- Visitors must travel using the same passport they used when they applied for an ETA.
- An ETA costs £10. As with all our fees, the cost of an ETA is kept under review.

Frequently asked questions

How do people know if they need to obtain a visa instead of an ETA?

- If a person intends to visit the UK for longer than six months, they need to obtain a relevant visa. They may also need a visa for stays of less than six months for purposes other than visit, transit and some business visits.
- People can check if they need a visa by using the [visa checking tool on GOV.UK](#)

What happens if someone is not able to obtain an ETA?

- If an applicant's ETA application is rejected, they will be told the reason and can apply again.
- If an applicant's ETA application is refused, they cannot appeal and instead need to [apply for a visa](#) if they still wish to seek permission to come to the UK.

Sign up to email alerts on GOV.UK for the latest information:
[GOV.UK/electronic-travel-authorisation](https://www.gov.uk/electronic-travel-authorisation)