

European travel information and authorisation system (ETIAS): Council confirms agreement with European Parliament

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On 25 April, EU ambassadors confirmed an agreement reached between the Council Presidency and the European Parliament representatives on the proposal for a European travel information and authorisation system (ETIAS).

Today's agreement is another important step in protecting the EU's external borders. By knowing who is coming to the EU before they even arrive at the border, we will be better able to stop those who may pose a threat to our citizens.

Valentin Radev, Bulgarian minister of interior

ETIAS will allow for advance checks and, if necessary, deny travel authorisation to visa-exempt third-country nationals travelling to the Schengen area. It will help improve internal security, prevent illegal immigration, protect public health and reduce delays at the borders by identifying persons who may pose a risk in one of these areas before they arrive at the external borders.

Functioning of the system

The system will apply to visa-exempt third country nationals. They will need to obtain a travel authorisation before their trip, via an online application. For each application, the applicant will be required to pay a travel authorisation fee of 7 euros.

The information submitted in each application will be automatically processed against EU and relevant Interpol databases to determine whether there are grounds to refuse a travel authorisation. If no hits or elements requiring further analysis are identified, the travel authorisation will be issued automatically and quickly. This is expected to be the case for most applications.

If there is a hit or an element requiring analysis, the application will be handled manually by the competent authorities. In this case, the ETIAS central unit will first check that the data recorded in the application file corresponds to the data triggering a hit. When it does or where doubts remain, the application will be processed manually by the ETIAS national unit of the responsible member state. The issuing or refusal of an application which has triggered a hit will take place no later than 96 hours after the application is submitted or, if additional information has been requested, 96 hours after this information has been received.

Before boarding, air carriers and sea carriers will need to check whether third country nationals subject to the travel authorisation requirement are in possession of a valid travel authorisation. From three years after the entry into operations of ETIAS this obligation will also apply to international carriers transporting groups overland by coach.

The travel authorisation will not provide an automatic right of entry or stay; it is the border guard who will take the final decision.

A travel authorisation will be valid for three years or until the end of validity of the travel document registered during application, whichever comes first.

Next steps

Now that the agreement has been confirmed by EU ambassadors, on behalf of the Council, the regulation will be submitted to the European Parliament for a vote at first reading, and subsequently to the Council for adoption.

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