

# Insecure ID cards phased out as travel document to strengthen UK borders

- UK Border Force introduces new rules to limit use of insecure ID cards from 1 October.
- Change will prevent organised crime gangs and others who seek to abuse the system.
- ID cards are some of the most abused documents seen by Border Force officers.
- New approach will strengthen UK borders and means many EU, EEA and Swiss citizens now follow the same rules for entering the UK as travellers from the rest of the world.

From today (Friday 1 October 2021), most EU, EEA and Swiss citizens will need a valid passport to enter the UK as the government stops accepting national identity (ID) cards as a travel document.

These ID cards are some of the most abused documents seen by Border Force officers and, last year, almost half of all false documents detected at the border were EU, EEA or Swiss ID cards.

They can be easily abused by people attempting to come into the country illegally and by stopping accepting these forms of ID, the government can prevent organised criminal gangs and illegal migrants using them to enter the UK unlawfully.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UK has a proud history of being open to the world, and Global Britain will continue in that tradition. But we must clamp down on the criminals that seek to enter our country illegally using forged documents.

By ending the use of insecure ID cards we are strengthening our border and delivering on the people's priority to take back control of our immigration system.

We are doing this as part of our New Plan for Immigration, which will be firm on those who seek to abuse the system, and fair on those who play by the rules.

ID cards are a notoriously insecure form of travel document, because:

- Some cards do not have biometric data, making it easier to falsify the data recorded.
- They are more difficult to cross-reference with criminal record databases than passports.
- Although a new ID card security standard is being introduced across the

EU, cards will still be in circulation for the next 5 to 10 years which do not conform to these standards.

- Inconsistencies in the design and security features of the cards make them easier to counterfeit than passports.

The move was first announced in October 2020.

This change fulfils our commitment to take back control of our borders and means EU, EEA and Swiss citizens now follow the same rules for entering the UK as travellers from the rest of the world. However, the government remains committed to protecting the rights of EU citizens who have made their lives in the UK, and as we agreed when we left the EU, those in the EU Settlement Scheme or with equivalent rights will be able to continue using ID cards until at least 2025.

The move also marks an important step in the government's long-term strategy to deliver a fully digitised border, providing a more streamlined and seamless customer experience for travellers entering the UK.

Those without a passport from 1 October are liable to be refused entry to the UK – although Border Force officers will retain the right to exercise discretion on individual cases.