

Mobility: Immigration alert

September 2023



United Kingdom

UK publishes Statement of Changes to Immigration Rules

Executive summary

On 7 September 2023, the UK government published a [Statement of Changes](#) to the Immigration Rules in relation to the enhancement and expansion of the Youth Mobility Scheme (YMS), along with further clarifications to the Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) scheme and EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

Youth Mobility Scheme

The UK government is planning to introduce enhancements to the YMS as part of the existing bilateral arrangements with Australia and Canada, and a new arrangement with Andorra. The following enhancements are expected to come into force on 31 January 2024:

- ▶ The age range for Australian and Canadian applicants will be expanded to 18 to 35 years (from 18 to 30 years).
- ▶ For Australian and Canadian nationals, the permitted duration of stay under the YMS will increase to three years (from two years).
- ▶ Nationals of Andorra will be able to apply under this route.
- ▶ The maximum total allocation of places available for use by Andorran nationals applying under the YMS in 2024 will be 100.
- ▶ Andorran nationals will be required to provide a certificate of criminal records issued no more than six months prior to the date of application.

Electronic Travel Authorization

The [ETA](#) scheme aims to strengthen the security of the UK border. It will be launched in October 2023 and apply to nationals of certain countries in a phased manner. The Statement sets out the following changes:

- ▶ Applicants who are lawful residents of Ireland and travel to the UK from another country in the Common Travel Area will not need to obtain an ETA.
- ▶ The UK government will remove NHS debt as a ground for refusal of ETA applications. However, successful ETA applications do not guarantee that individuals will be granted permission to enter the UK. As such, travelers who seek permission to enter the UK, have outstanding NHS debts and do not take the necessary steps to settle their debts in advance of travel may be refused entry.

EU Settlement Scheme

The UK government plans to introduce changes to remove the right of administrative review for all decision types under the EUSS, EUSS Family Permit and S2 Healthcare Visitor Visa. However, the right of appeal in connection with these decisions will be maintained. The changes are expected to apply to all relevant decisions made on or after 5 October 2023.

All changes above are subject to change at the discretion of the authorities.

Impact on employers

The enhancements to the YMS may offer potential flexibility in available immigration routes for prospective applicants coming to work and live in the UK. Organizations that seek to send visa-exempt business travelers to the UK may consider the phased rollout of the ETA scheme and its impact on their employees.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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