

Mobility: Immigration alert

March 2023



United Kingdom

Electronic Travel Authorisation scheme to be launched in phases starting in November 2023

Executive summary

On 9 March 2023, the UK Home Office confirmed that individuals traveling to the UK without a visa will soon need to obtain an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA).

Background

The [ETA](#) is a new requirement for travelers who do not need a visa to enter the UK. The system, which will be electronically linked to visitors' passports, will authorize them to transit through the UK or enter the UK for up to six months for the purpose of tourism, visiting family and friends, business or study, or for up to three months pursuant to the Creative Worker visa concession.

Key developments

Effective 15 November 2023, Qatari nationals will be required to apply for an ETA if they seek to travel to the UK as visitors. Effective 22 February 2024, the ETA will become available to nationals of Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. It is expected that more countries will be added to the scheme over time.

The following categories of travelers will be exempt from the requirement to obtain an ETA:

- ▶ British and Irish nationals
- ▶ Individuals who have permission to live, work or study in the UK, or a visa to enter the UK
- ▶ Residents of Ireland who do not need a visa to enter the UK and enter via Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey or the Isle of Man

An ETA will be valid for two years and authorize holders to make multiple visits to the UK. However, an ETA does not guarantee entry to the UK or confer authorization to work in the UK.

Impact on employers

The ETA will allow visitors to enter the UK for a short stay and expand access to business visitors from impacted countries.

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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