



•ALERT•

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# ETIAS – European Travel Information and Authorization System

The European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) is a new visa waiver program that has been created by the European Union to protect EU borders.

The reasons that brought to the creation of the ETIAS are basically the possibility to identify possible threats and risks associated with visitors traveling to the Schengen area.

The system will enter into full force on 2021, and by that date all visitors who currently do not need a visa to enter the Schengen area for tourism or business purposes shall apply for the ETIAS authorization to be able to enter a Schengen member country.

ETIAS countries are the 26 members of the Schengen area, among which 22 are members of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Italy, Greece, Czech Republic and Malta) and 4 belong to the European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland).

As of today, there are 60 countries (Albania, Andorra, Antigua e Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, El Salvador, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Kiribati, Macao, Macedonia, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Montenegro, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and



Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, Samoa, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Korea, Taiwan, East Timor, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela) whose nationals will need to apply for an ETIAS visa waiver when visiting the Schengen area, even if as time goes by, the visa waiver program shall be opened to further countries in the future.

The ETIAS visa waiver such as the ESTA visa waiver program of the United States – is meant to cover short-term stays of up to 90 days (in ETIAS' case, over 180 days), therefore it is designed for tourists and business travellers.

Once approved, the ETIAS can be used for three years or until the passport expires, whichever comes first.

The ETIAS travel authorization will be revoked when the conditions for issuing the travel authorization are no longer met, especially when there are grounds to believe that the travel authorization was obtained by providing misleading or fraudulent information.

In case of rejection during the automatic process, the application will be transferred to an ETIAS Central Unit in the European Border and Coast Guard to run a quick check of the application and determine if the information provided is correct and truthful. In case the application results to be suspicious or triggers an alert, it will be forwarded to the Member State responsible for giving the warning.



The aim of the ETIAS program is to reinforce EU internal security both (i) through the identification of persons who may be a security risk before arriving to the Schengen external border and (ii) by making available to national authorities and Europol information that can help prevent, detect or investigate a terrorist offence or other serious criminal offences.

Should the application be denied, the individual will have the chance to appeal to the Member State that did not grant the ETIAS visa waiver, through a proceeding that will be under the jurisdiction of such a Member State.

A special procedure for exceptional circumstances will be in any case available, such as in case of humanitarian grounds, reasons of national interest or in case of international obligations where ETIAS National Units may issue a travel authorization with limited territorial and temporal validity.

ETIAS National Unit may request more information and/or documentation from the applicant if the information provided at the time of the application is not enough for the officer of the ETIAS National Unit to decide. Applicants shall reply to the request of information within 7 working days and, by the 72 hours following the response, the ETIAS National Unit will complete the processing to the ETIAS application.

The application for the ETIAS is simple: applicants shall have with them at the time of the application a valid passport, an e-mail address and a debit/credit card to pay the application fees. The process will require the applicant to provide basic biographic information, passport details and answer some security and health questions.

Applications are processed within minutes and are checked across many databases, among which, SIS, VIS Europol Data, Interpol and others.

Once the application has been revised and approved, the applicant will receive it on the e-mail address provided.

Travelers will be required to carry the ETIAS obtained before the beginning of their trip in the Schengen area.

Lack of carrying the ETIAS during the travel may result in the denial of entry to the Schengen area.

The ETIAS will become mandatory by 2021. The European Commission and the EU Parliament will financially support the Schengen countries for the implementation of the ETIAS to start as soon as possible its development.

For the time being, therefore, all nationals of visa waiver countries may continue to travel to the Schengen area without a visa (for tourism or business), bearing in mind that once the ETIAS system becomes operational, they will need to submit an application before their trip.

LCA Corporate Immigration team will keep you posted on any further development of the ETIAS in Italy and will provide detailed updates in due time.

#### CONTACTS

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