

European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)

Effective management of the European Union's external borders is key to ensuring internal security and preserving freedom of movement in the Schengen area. The lack of information related to non-EU citizens entering the EU also needs to be addressed. The European Parliament and Council have reached agreement in trilogue negotiations on the Commission's proposal to set up a system to gather specific information on those third-country nationals who do not require a visa, when travelling to the Schengen area. The agreement reached in April 2018 is scheduled to be voted by Parliament at first reading during the July plenary session.

Background

According to [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/399](#), both 'visa-obliged' and 'visa-exempt' travellers are subject to border controls when entering the Schengen area. They need to comply with conditions for short-term stay, such as not being a threat to public order and security, holding valid travel documents, justifying the purpose and conditions of the intended stay, not being the subject of any alert in the Schengen Information System (SIS) and having sufficient means of subsistence. However, unlike the transfer of detailed information required for the visa application procedure of visa-obliged travellers, no such information is required from visa-exempt third-country nationals arriving in the EU. This means that their access to the Schengen area is granted or refused without prior knowledge regarding any risks associated with them.

European Commission proposal

On 16 November 2016, the Commission adopted a [proposal](#) for a European Travel Information and Authorisation System. It aims to create an automated online system that would gather information on visa-exempt third-country nationals prior to their arrival at the Schengen external borders, in order to determine any irregular migration, security or public-health risks associated with them. The proposal follows similar models existing in the US, Canada and Australia, among others, and will also apply to family members of EU citizens and of nationals of a third-country enjoying the right to free movement, who do not hold a residence card.

European Parliament position

Following a decision by the Council to [split the proposal](#) into two distinct legal acts, with separate legal bases, the Parliament's Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) on 19 October 2017 adopted two separate reports: one on [ETIAS](#) and another on amending the [Europol Regulation](#). The EP proposed several changes: exclusion of carriers transporting travellers overland; access to ETIAS for border guards conducting second-line checks; establishment of an ETIAS ethics board; exclusion of information on education or current occupation of applicants; clearer alignment of provisions on data security and data protection with the legal bases of other information systems; and greater transparency and accountability of the system. The [Council](#) wanted to include transit passengers in the scope of ETIAS and for international carriers transporting groups overland by coach to fall under the obligation to check whether third-country nationals have a valid travel authorisation. A [compromise](#) text agreed in trilogue was endorsed in the Council and approved in the LIBE committee meeting of 25 April 2018, and now needs to be voted during the July plenary session.

First-reading reports: [2016/0357A\(COD\)](#) and [2016/0357B\(COD\)](#), Committee responsible: LIBE; Rapporteur: Kinga Gál (EPP, Hungary). For further information see our 'EU Legislation in progress' [briefing](#).

