The Introduction of the Entry/Exit System in Europe

A Guide for Business Travellers

What is the EES?

The Entry/Exit system **(EES)** is a new electronic system implemented by the European Union to strengthen and streamline border management across the Schengen Area. It replaces the traditional passport stamping process with a digital system that records the entry and exit data of non-EU travellers.

Key Changes for Business Travellers

1. Biometric Data Collection

What to expect:

Upon entering or exiting the Schengen Area, non-EU travellers will be required to provide biometric data, including fingerprints and facial images.

Impact:

This process will be quicker than manual passport checks but will require travellers to allow for additional time at border control points.

2. Digital Record of Entries and Exits

What to expect:

Your entry and exit will be recorded electronically, and your stay will be automatically tracked to ensure compliance with visa requirements.

Impact:

The 90/180-day rule for short stays will be closely monitored. Overstaying can result in fines, bans, or future visa issues. Be mindful of your travel days within the Schengen Area.

3. Simplified Border Crossings

What to expect:

Automated gates at major airports and border crossings will facilitate faster entry and exit for travellers.

Impact:

Frequent business travellers may find this system speeds up border crossings. However, there may be initial delays as travellers and border personnel adapt to the new system.

4. Advance Information Requirement

What to expect:

Airlines and other carriers will need to submit passenger information in advance, including travel documents and biometric data.

Impact:

Ensure your travel documents are up-to-date and match the information provided to airlines to avoid delays or complications.

5. Compliance with Visa Rules

What to expect:

The EES will enhance the enforcement of visa regulations, including short-stay visas and visa waiver programs.

Impact:

Business travellers should ensure they comply with visa requirements, as the system will automatically flag overstays. This makes it crucial to accurately plan your travel schedule.

6. Visa Waiver and Multiple Entries

What to expect:

The EES will apply to travellers from countries with visa waiver agreements, as well as those with multiple-entry visas.

Impact:

If you frequently travel to Europe for business, consider how the EES will track your cumulative days within the Schengen Area.

7. Data Privacy and Security

What to expect:

The EES will store biometric data and travel records securely within the EU's data protection frameworks.

Impact:

While data security is a priority, be aware of the information being collected and how it might be used, particularly in cases of legal or immigration disputes.

Tips for Business Travellers

1 **Plan Ahead**

Allow extra time at borders for the biometric data collection, especially during the initial rollout period.

2 **Track Your Days**

Keep a personal log of your days spent within the Schengen Area to avoid overstaying.

3 **Ensure Document Accuracy**

Double-check that all travel documents are correct and up-to-date to avoid delays.

4 **Prepare for the Transition**

Familiarise yourself with the new procedures, especially if traveling frequently.

5 **Consult Your Company's Travel Policy**

Ensure your company is aware of the changes and adjusts travel policies accordingly.

Conclusion

The introduction of the EES is a significant change for non-EU business travellers to Europe. While the system aims to improve security and efficiency, it requires travellers to adapt to new procedures, particularly in managing their travel schedules and complying with visa regulations. By staying informed and prepared, you can ensure a smooth transition to this new system and continue your business activities in Europe with minimal disruption.

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