

Travel to the UK: What EU & EEA EFTA Citizens Need to Know

There have been some substantial changes to travel rules and guidance. This guide is for EU and EEA EFTA citizens and their family members living in the UK who hold status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), or have a pending application, known as Certificate of Application (CoA).

We have summarised the key travel changes including changes to Home Office guidance and information on Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) enforcement.

Key points at a glance

- If you have EUSS status, i.e., pre-settled or settled status, you do not need an ETA. You already hold an eVisa which will provide permission to travel for carriers.
- The Home Office confirmed that from 14 January 2026 non-visa nationals with a CoA will have a 'permission to board' message when carriers conduct pre-travel checks and, where your UKVI account is linked to your current passport or ID document. You are not required to have an ETA but you may be asked for additional evidence at the UK border.
- There is no change for visa nationals, who must continue to hold a valid visa or visa exemption document, such as a valid EUSS family permit, to be permitted to travel to the UK, including whilst their EUSS application is pending. A Certificate of Application or Acknowledgement of an Application is not a visa or visa exemption document.
- Make sure your current passport/ID document is linked to your UKVI account and that you bring the right travel documents with you, including carrying any supporting evidence you may need. If you want to find out more about the evidence requirements, visit: [If you're from the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland - GOV.UK](#)
- If you are unable to update your UKVI account with your new passport or ID document before you travel, you should get a share code using the View and Prove service and be prepared to provide this to carriers if asked.



Timeline

- **11 Aug 2025** — IMA publicly raises concerns about travel difficulties for EUSS applicants with a CoA, including conflicting guidance and potential problems at the border.
- **24 Dec 2025** — Home Office clarification welcomed: CoA holders will be able to travel (subject to the usual conditions) when ETA enforcement starts in Feb 2026.
- **30 Jan 2026** — IMA welcomes Home Office intention to remove “do not travel” wording from CoAs issued from 18 Feb 2026; the new advice applies to all CoA holders.
- **6 February 2026** - GOV.UK updated to reflect that carriers (such as an airline or ferry operator) will be able to confirm that EU and EEA EFTA citizens (and other non-visa nationals) with a CoA have permission to travel.
- **18 Feb 2026** — CoAs start being issued without “do not travel” text although this change in information applies to all CoA holders.
- **25 Feb 2026** — ETAs enforced for non-visa nationals including EU and EEA EFTA citizens who do not already have UK immigration status. EUSS status holders and EUSS applicants with a pending application do not need an ETA. CoA holders can board with carrier instruction if their UKVI account is linked to their current travel document.

Topic	Before	After
Guidance to CoA holders	CoAs and some guidance advised applicants not to travel while their EUSS application was pending.	“Advice not to travel” wording removed on CoAs issued from 18 Feb 2026; <u>new advice applies to all CoA holders</u> . Evidence requirements at the border remain unchanged.
CoA holders at point of boarding	Risk of EU/EEA EFTA citizens with a CoA being unable to board once ETAs enforced because they were not eligible for an ETA and did not hold an alternative digital permission to travel.	Home Office digital system will notify carriers to allow boarding of non-visa national CoA holders from ETA enforcement date (subject to your valid ID document being linked to your UKVI account).
ETA requirement	ETAs introduced for EU/EEA EFTA citizens but not yet enforced. EUSS status holders do not require an ETA.	ETA enforcement from 25 Feb 2026. EUSS status holders have never required an ETA. non-visa national CoA holders do not need an ETA but may be required to show additional evidence at the border.

We’re keen to hear from citizens about their experiences and where they might be having difficulties travelling so we can keep these resources updated with useful information. If you have experienced any difficulties travelling, and you are a CoA holder, please email our dedicated inbox to help us understand what challenges are being faced: travel@ima-citizensrights.org.uk