**Beginning in 2023, travelers will be screened before departing for Europe**

(Details from ***Forbes***-February 2022)

Soon there will be an extra step for US citizens and citizens of 58 other countries to take before leaving for Europe.

Currently, a U.S. passport is enough to gain entry to European countries for periods of less than 90 days. But that’s going to change next year. Beginning in spring 2023, American citizens, as well as [travelers from 58 other countries](https://etias.com/what-is-etias/who-needs-etias), will require an [European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)](https://etias.com/etias-requirements/etias-for-american-citizens) visa waiver to travel to any of the Schengen-zone countries for short stays.

In January 2022, Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, [announced](https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/first-batch-of-etias-central-unit-operators-graduate-WxILjJ) an expansion of the ETIAS staff. Authorizations will begin in May 2023, according to the statement.

**What is ETIAS?**

In late 2016, the European Commission approved developing ETIAS as a screening tool to help thwart terrorism and illegal immigration. The automated electronic screening measure is “created to identify security, irregular migration or high epidemic risks posed by visa-exempt visitors,” according to the ETIAS website.

Although American travelers will still not need a Schengen visa, they will be prescreened before arrival into European Union countries. No biometric data will be collected; Americans will need to provide their passport information and answer “a series of security questions in regards the traveler’s health, and whether they have been to conflict zones in the past,” per ETIAS.com.

The United States Customs and Border Protection has run a similar visa-waiver program since 2008, called the [Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA)](https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/). The U.S. visa-waiver program requires citizens from 40 countries in Europe and elsewhere to apply online for a visa waiver and pay $14 to enter the U.S. for short stays of less than 90 days.

**European Countries Requiring ETIAS Authorization**

The new travel authorization will be required for every to every member country in Europe’s Schengen Zone. Right now, that includes 22 EU member countries, four non-EU countries and four European microstates.

ETIAS registration will be necessary to enter Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The same goes for trips to the microstates of Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and Vatican City.

Four countries — Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania — are not Schengen countries yet but are in the process of joining. Once they are admitted to the zone, they will require travelers to have an ETIAS authorization, too.

**European Countries Not Requiring ETIAS Authorization**

While Ireland is a member of the European Union, it is not part of the Schengen Zone. Since Brexit, the United Kingdom — England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland — are no longer part of the European Union.

Travelers will also not need ETIAS authorization to enter Eastern European countries outside the Schengen Zone, which means Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

**ETIAS Application for American Travelers**

Filling out the ETIAS application online should only take about 10 minutes and “in the vast majority of cases,” travelers will receive a travel authorization “within minutes,” according to the ETIAS website, which recommends applying at least 96 hours before departure. Once approved, an ETIAS travel authorization will be good for three years and can cover multiple trips to EU countries.

Travelers between the ages of 18 and 70 will need a valid passport, an email address, and a debit or credit card to pay the nonrefundable €7 (roughly $8) application fee. Children and teens under age 18 and seniors over age 70 will need to fill out an ETIAS application but will not be charged the fee.

Once the ETIAS goes live, Europe-bound airlines will be required by law to check passengers’ ETIAS authorizations before allowing them to board.