



Fragomen survey finds few employers are prepared for UK ETA and EU ETIAS schemes but majority plan to support employees

The United Kingdom's Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme—part of the country's ambition to make its border fully digitalised by 2025—was implemented for Qatari nationals on 25 October for travel starting on and after 15 November and will roll out across the rest of the world throughout 2024. This new scheme requires travellers who do not usually need visas to visit the UK to obtain digital permission to travel or transit through the country.

A similar scheme for the European Union, the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS), was originally due to launch next year but is reported to be delayed until at least May 2025.



What is an ETA/ETIAS?

An ETA is a digital permission to travel to the UK. All non-visa nationals intending to visit or transit through the UK will need to obtain an ETA before travel. As such, proof of a valid ETA will be required before boarding a flight, train, boat, or other carrier into the UK.

ETIAS is an electronic travel authorization system for non-visa nationals in the Schengen Area, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania. Eligible travellers secure their ETIAS authorization online to grant the right to travel. ETIAS will work in tandem with the Entry/Exit System (EES) to monitor Schengen Area overstays and perform digital security checks on travellers entering the Schengen Area.

Fragomen survey methodology

Fragomen conducted this survey between 20 September and 11 October 2023, designed to evaluate the awareness and preparedness of various organisations ahead of the ETA and ETIAS requirements. The results outline responses from more than 100 companies of all sizes ranging from less than 500 to more than 50,000 employees across a range of sectors, including arts and entertainment, education, energy, finance, food and beverage, gaming, healthcare, manufacturing, professional services, technology and travel, among others.

0-499 employees: **19%**

500-999 employees: **7%**

1,000-4,999 employees: **23%**

5,000-9,999 employees: **8%**

1,0000 – 49,000 employees: **19%**

50,000+ employees: **24%**

Survey findings

The survey found that the larger the organisation, the greater the awareness of and preparedness for ETA and ETIAS requirements. However, the size of the organisation did not correlate with the level of planned employee support, as larger organisations did not intend to provide any more support than smaller organisations.



Most companies expressed the intention to support their employees.

Overall, a quarter of survey respondents were not previously aware of the upcoming requirements. 64% of respondents indicated an intention to support employees, but only 3% indicated they are fully prepared. 15% are in the process of taking action—such as implementing employee awareness campaigns—and a further 14% are in discussions.

Do employers intend to reimburse costs associated with ETA/ETIAS for employees?

- ▶ The cost of an ETA is £10 and ETIAS is due to be €7.
- ▶ 43% of employers indicated that they would reimburse this fee for their employees.

Do employers intend to track employees' ETA/ETIAS statuses?

It is not compulsory to track whether employees have an ETA or ETIAS and their statuses. However, knowing who is travel-ready is a critical data point for employers. Individuals are also likely to be managing multiple digital travel authorisations including ETA, ETIAS and ESTA (among others). As such, 18% of employers are planning to track the expiries of ETA and ETIAS for their employees.

How do employers intend to support their workforces?

- ▶ **The majority of employers (59%)** intend to make reference materials, such as an application guide, available to their employees.
- ▶ **Nearly half of companies (49%)** will conduct an employee awareness campaign. This could include town halls, email communications and internal reference resources.
- ▶ **Almost a third (27%)** intend to conduct training sessions.
- ▶ **29% of employers are interested in utilising a technological solution** to manage ETAs for their workforces, such as a digital travel wallet.
- ▶ **25% are considering assisting** with the completion and submission of the ETA application.

