

Gradual Roll-out of Entry/Exit System Started



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News

On 12 October 2025, the EU's Entry/Exit System (EES) started to be operational. The system will register data, including biometric data such as facial images and fingerprints, of third-country nationals entering and leaving the Schengen area on short-stay visas. The aim is to reduce the likelihood of identity fraud and visa overstaying (thus improving security), and to speed up border checks.

Alongside the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) and the Automated Border Control (ABC) systems, the EES forms the cornerstone of interoperable databases for EU's border management and security. Authorities in EU countries will have real-time access to third-country nationals' personal data, travel history and information on whether they comply with the authorised period of stay in the Schengen area. For the underlying legal framework on EES adopted in 2017, →[euclid 4/2017, 164-165](#).

As the initial deadline to launch the EES by the end of 2024 could not be met and due to concerns that launching the system simultaneously in all countries could compromise it, the [Council](#) and the European Parliament (EP) agreed on a gradual roll-out. Following a [Commission proposal](#) tabled in December 2024, the EP and the Council reached an agreement on the gradual launch of the system. [Regulation \(EU\) 2025/1534](#) "on temporary derogations from certain provisions of Regulations (EU) 2017/2226 and (EU) 2016/399 as regards the progressive start of operations of the Entry/Exit System" was adopted on 18 July 2025 and entered into force on 26 July 2025. On 30 July 2025, the Commission set 12 October 2025 as the [launch date](#) for the start of operations of the Entry/Exit System (EES).

This gives Schengen countries a six-month period in which to implement the EES gradually. The adopted legislation gives countries sufficient flexibility and adjusts the plan's timeline: By the end of the first month (i.e, 11 November 2025), 10% of border crossings must be recorded in the system though no biometric data need be created or updated. After three months, Schengen countries should be operating the EES with biometric functionalities at a minimum of 35% of their border crossing points. The system should be fully operational by 10 April 2026. However, the states can also choose to implement the system all at once. The EP and Council have finally agreed contingency measures in case of problems with the system's central roll-out.

Until the end of the transition period, Schengen states will continue to manually stamp travel documents, a practice that will cease once the EES is fully operational.

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