



Home Office

Electronic Travel Authorisation: Irish resident exemption

Version 1.0

Contents

Contents.....	2
About this guidance.....	3
Contacts	3
Publication.....	3
Changes from last version of this guidance	3
Purpose of guidance.....	4
Relevant legislation and legal framework	4
Nationality and Borders Act 2022	4
Immigration Rules	4
Immigration Act 1971	4
The status of Irish Citizens in the UK	4
Immigration (Control of Entry Through Republic of Ireland) Order 1972	5
Background.....	6
What is an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)?	6
Who does not need an ETA?	6
The ETA rollout.....	6
Exemption for Irish residents travelling to the UK from within Common Travel Area .	8
ETA rules: Exemption for Irish residents.....	8
Children.....	8
Documents that show lawful residence in Ireland	10
Permanent Residence Certificate.....	10
European Health Insurance Card.....	10
Irish driving licence and Irish learner permit	11
Medical Card and GP Visit Card	11
National Age card	11
Irish Residence Permit.....	12
Absence of documentary evidence	12

About this guidance

This guidance provides details on how to assess whether the exemption from the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) requirements for non-visa nationals lawfully resident in Ireland applies. This exemption does not apply for travel to the UK from outside on the Common Travel Area (CTA).

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors, then email the Passenger Checks policy team.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance Rules and Forms team.

Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **1.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **20 July 2023**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This is the first version of this guidance.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Purpose of guidance

This guidance is for decision makers to assess whether the exemption from the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) requirements for non-visa nationals that are lawfully resident in Ireland applies. It can also be used by individuals who are considering whether they need an ETA.

Relevant legislation and legal framework

Nationality and Borders Act 2022

Section 75 of the [Nationality and Borders Act 2022](#) provides the legal basis for the Secretary of State to require individuals of a description specified in the Immigration Rules (including those who do not need a visa, entry clearance or other specified immigration status) to obtain permission to travel, in the form of an ETA, in advance of their journey to the UK.

Immigration Rules

The detailed provisions relating to the ETA requirements are set out under Appendix: Electronic Travel Authorisations of the [Immigration Rules](#). This includes the exemption for non-visa nationals resident in Ireland, see ETA 1.3 and ETA 1.4.

Immigration Act 1971

Section 1(3) of the [Immigration Act 1971](#) sets out the legal position on the CTA.

The CTA is an immigration arrangement between the UK, Ireland and the Crown Dependencies (Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey).

The UK's approach to the CTA means there are no routine immigration controls on routes from within the CTA to the UK. The UK's approach is for border checks to normally be undertaken at the first point of entry to the CTA. However, the UK may undertake intelligence led controls on arrivals in the UK from within the CTA.

If an individual is subject to one of the following exceptions under the Immigration Act 1971, they require permission to enter from elsewhere in the CTA:

- persons subject to a deportation order
- persons whose exclusion has been deemed conducive to the public good
- people without permission who have previously been refused permission to enter the UK

The status of Irish Citizens in the UK

Section 3ZA of the Immigration Act 1971 (as inserted by the Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Act 2020), came into force from 11pm on 31 December 2020. This ensures that Irish citizens can enter and stay in the UK without

requiring permission regardless of where they have travelled from. There are some limited exceptions to this, where they are subject to any of the following:

- a deportation order made under section 5(1) of the Immigration Act 1971
- an exclusion decision, or an exclusion order made under regulation 23(5) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016
- a travel ban implemented under section 8B of the Immigration Act 1971

See section 3ZA of the Immigration Act 1971 for the complete legislation.

Immigration (Control of Entry Through Republic of Ireland) Order 1972

[The Immigration \(Control of Entry through Republic of Ireland\) Order 1972 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) creates a system of automatic statutory permission, known as “deemed leave”, for those travelling to the UK via Ireland. The Order also sets out further exemptions to section 1(3) of the Immigration Act for journeys to the UK from Ireland. Where these exemptions apply the individual requires permission to enter.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Background

This section tells you about the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) requirements and who these apply to.

What is an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)?

An ETA is an advance travel permission required by specified non-visa nationals when coming to the UK as a visitor or transiting the UK, or as a Creative Worker seeking entry to the UK pursuant to paragraph Appendix Temporary Work - Creative Worker at CRV 3.2.

An ETA provides an individual with permission to travel to the UK. It is not permission to enter the UK and the holder of an ETA will need to be obtain permission to enter on arrival in the UK.

The requirement for an ETA is applicable to all journeys and modes of entry into the UK, including those coming through the juxtaposed controls or travelling via the CTA.

Who does not need an ETA?

An ETA is not required for individuals who are one of the following:

- British citizens
- Irish citizens (except those that require permission to come to the UK as they are subject to a deportation order, exclusion order decision, or an international travel ban)
- a British Overseas Territory Citizen (BOTC) travelling on a BOTC passport
- a person with entry clearance or permission to enter or stay in the UK, including those who are settled

For further information please see: [Types of British nationality: British overseas territories citizen - GOV.UK](#)

The ETA rollout

As part of a staged rollout, the aim is to extend the requirement for an ETA to all non-visa nationalities by the end of 2024.

An ETA is required by specified nationals in advance of travel to the UK.

Qatar will be the first nationality to adopt ETA for travel to the UK, followed by the remaining Gulf Cooperation Council states and Jordan thereafter, in two phases.

The ETA application process will open on 25 October 2023 for Qatari nationals only, who intend to travel to the UK on or after 15 November 2023.

The ETA application process will open on 1 February 2024, for nationals of Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, who intend to travel to the UK on or after 22 February 2024.

The ETA requirement will be rolled out to other nationalities by their addition to [Immigration Rules Appendix Electronic Travel Authorisation](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

Exemption for Irish residents travelling to the UK from within Common Travel Area

This section tells you about the exemption from the ETA requirement for non-visa nationals who are lawfully resident in Ireland and travelling to the UK from elsewhere in the Common Travel Area (CTA).

ETA rules: Exemption for Irish residents

[Immigration Rules Appendix Electronic Travel Authorisation](#) provide that an applicant who is lawfully resident in Ireland and is travelling to the UK from elsewhere in the CTA does not need to obtain an ETA (ETA 1.3).

A person is lawfully resident in Ireland if they are resident in, and entitled to reside in, Ireland under any relevant legislation or rules which apply in Ireland at the time of the ETA application, but a person is not lawfully resident if they may not leave or attempt to leave Ireland without the consent of an Irish Minister.

A national subject to the ETA requirement who arrives in the UK from the CTA without an ETA, if subject to examination, where relying on the exemption from the ETA requirement on the basis of their lawful residence in Ireland, may be required show evidence of such residence.

This exemption applies only for travel within the CTA. For travel to the UK from outside of the CTA, non-visa nationals that are lawfully resident in Ireland must obtain an ETA.

For further information see: Common travel area guidance and [Immigration Act 1971](#)

Children

A child is any person under the age of 18.

Children aged 16 and 17 who are lawfully resident in Ireland must, if required, provide evidence of their lawful residence in Ireland.

Children under the age of 16 should not normally be asked to provide evidence that they are lawfully resident in Ireland, but they, or an adult travelling may be questioned where appropriate to establish whether they are resident in Ireland and exempt from the ETA requirement.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Related external links

[Every child matters: statutory guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[Children travelling to the UK - GOV.UK](#)

Documents that show lawful residence in Ireland

This section provides examples of which documents can be used to demonstrate lawful residence in Ireland.

The following documents from Ireland should be accepted as evidence of lawful residence in Ireland:

- Permanent Residence Certificate
- European Health Insurance Card
- Irish driving licence
- Irish learner permit
- Medical card
- GP visit card
- National Age card
- Irish Residence Permit

You should where possible check the original document to ensure it is valid and has not expired and that it was issued by the Ireland authorities as set out below.

If the document is damaged and the information on the document is compromised and no longer verifiable it may not be accepted as evidence of lawful residence.

The information included on each document is detailed below.

Permanent Residence Certificate

The Permanent Residence Certificate (PRC) is a paper document certifying residency in Ireland and issued by the Government of Ireland, Department of Justice.

The PRC is available to nationals of the European Economic Area resident in Ireland aged 16 and over, subject to continuous residency requirements.

The PRC includes the name, photograph, date of birth and address of the document holder. The document will be stamped by the issuing office with the state emblem of the harp to certify validity.

European Health Insurance Card

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is a plastic card issued by member states of the European Union (EU).

It is available to nationals of an EU member state and of any age, when residing in Ireland.

An EHIC includes the letters IE in the top right-hand corner when issued by the Government of Ireland. This document will not be accepted if issued by another member state.

The EHIC includes the name and date of birth of the document holder. It does not include a photograph of the document holder.

A form of photo ID may also be required to confirm the identity of any person above the age of 18 using an EHIC to demonstrate residency in Ireland. Photo ID used to supplement an EHIC is not required to be issued by the Government of Ireland.

Irish driving licence and Irish learner permit

An Irish driving licence and learner permit are both plastic cards issued by the National Driver Licence Service of Ireland.

An Irish driving licence or learner permit are available to any national aged 16 and above that has passed the driving test or theory test in Ireland.

A driving licence and learner permit include the name, photograph, date of birth and address of the document holder.

Both documents include holographic features and the letters IRL in the top left-hand corner. A driver licence or learner permit will not be accepted if issued by another state.

Medical Card and GP Visit Card

The Medical and GP Visit Cards are both plastic cards issued by the Health Service Executive of Ireland.

The GP Visit Card is available to all nationals resident in Ireland aged 70 and above. The Medical Card and GP Visit Card are available to any national of any other age, subject to income requirements.

The Medical Card and GP Visit Card include the name, gender and date of birth of the document holder. It does not include a photograph of the document holder.

A form of photo ID may also be required to confirm the identity of any person above the age of 18 using a Medical Card to demonstrate residency in Ireland. Photo ID used to supplement a Medical Card is not required to be issued by the Government of Ireland.

National Age card

The National Age Card is a plastic card issued by An Garda Síochána, the national police and security service of Ireland.

The National Age Card is available to all nationals resident in Ireland aged 18 and over.

The National Age Card includes the name, photograph and date of birth of the document holder. It also includes a hologram located on the back of the card.

Irish Residence Permit

The Irish Residence Permit (IRP) is a plastic card issued by the Government of Ireland.

The IRP is available to third country nationals resident in Ireland, aged 16 and over.

An IRP includes the name, photograph, date of birth and nationality of the document holder. It also includes holographic features and the letters IRL in the top left-hand corner.

Absence of documentary evidence

Where a person seeks to rely on an exemption based on their lawful residence in Ireland and does not provide one of the documents set out above, it is unlikely that Home Office officials will be satisfied on the balance of probabilities such person is lawfully resident in Ireland and that the exemption applies. However, officials must take into account all relevant information provided before making a decision.

An ETA will be required where a person is not lawfully resident in Ireland.

Related content

[Contents](#)