

Readout Facebook Q&A

4 February 2020

Due to the developing nature of these subjects, please make sure to check our [Living in Switzerland Guide & Preparing for EU Exit Switzerland](#) as well as the [Living in Liechtenstein Guide & Preparing for EU Exit Liechtenstein](#) for the latest information

Question	Answer
<p>visa/ESTA</p> <p>When the European "Esta" comes into effect will we have to apply for it in order to go into France or Germany? Do we have to keep all receipts to prove we have only been 90 days in the Schengen area?</p>	<p>Hi M., Thanks for getting in touch. ETIAS (the European "Esta") is due to be introduced during 2021, and the scheme will cover all countries within the Schengen Area. You can find further information at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_18_4362.</p> <p>Once the scheme comes into operation, UK visitors to the Schengen Area will need to obtain an ETIAS. UK nationals resident in the Schengen Area (e.g. resident in Switzerland) should not need to obtain an ETIAS for travel to another country within the Schengen Area.</p>

<p>FRONTIER WORKERS</p> <p>Question from a member of British in Switzerland: What will be the future situation for British Frontier workers? I live in France and work in Geneva as an International fonctionnaire (CERN). My two daughters are presently studying in the UK and may want to work in this area after university. As there a very few jobs in France in this border area they would want to apply to work in Switzerland as frontaliere workers but this will be post Brexit. What would their situation be? Would it be better to move to Switzerland?</p>	<p>Dear K., Thank you for contacting us. UK nationals who are currently frontier working in Switzerland are protected by our Citizens' Rights Agreement, which will apply from 1 January 2021. If your daughters apply for a Swiss frontier worker permit (G permit) before 31 December 2020, then they will also be covered by the Citizens' Rights Agreement. If they apply after this period, then they will have to fulfil the requirements for third country nationals.</p>
<p>PASSPORT</p> <p>What about renew our passport?</p> <p>My passport ran out last year. Where do I now apply for a new one? Will it be a blue one?</p>	<p>Hi N., You can renew your passport online at https://www.gov.uk/renew-adult-passport/renew</p> <p>Hi A., You can renew your passport online at https://www.gov.uk/renew-adult-passport/renew. Blue passports are currently being phased in.</p>
<p>PET TRAVEL</p> <p>If I want to take my Swiss pet passports dog to England in 2021 will it suffice to have him pass a rabies test this month? Naturally he was vaccinated when a small pup.</p>	<p>Hi D.,</p> <p>This is an area which will change from 1 January 2021. You should check the latest guidance on GOV.UK, where you can also sign up for updates https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-after-brexit#return-to-the-uk.</p> <p>You can also contact the Pet Travel Helpline with any queries:</p>

	<p>Email: pettravel@apha.gov.uk Telephone: +44 (0)370 241 1710 Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm (closed on bank holidays)</p> <p>We would also advise you to talk to your vet before making travel arrangements.</p>
<p>PERMITS</p> <p>After the transition period, will UK citizens on an EU B permit be able to retain it until the expiry date, or will they have to switch to the one year B permit?</p>	<p>Dear S., Your B permit remains valid, and you can renew it when it expires as usual. This is protected by our Citizens' Rights Agreement which will enter into force on 1 January 2021. If you are eligible and fulfil the requirements for a C permit, you will be able to apply for one at the migration authority in your place of residence.</p>
<p>PERMITS</p> <p>A practical question: my C-permit says "EU-EFTA". Do we need to get a new one or does the current one remain valid until the "Kontrollfrist". At my local Kreisbüro they were unable to answer the question last week. Thanks!</p>	<p>Hi L., You don't need to get a new permit. Your current permit remains valid, and you should renew it when it expires as now. The EU/EFTA branding doesn't affect the validity of your permit.</p>
<p>LANGAUGE REQUIREMENT</p> <p>There are some linguistic requirements for C permit renewals for 3rd party nationals (at least here in Zurich). Will those apply to Brits with C permits after Brexit? My German is still so bad - it's easy to live in Zurich in English.</p>	<p>Hi J., I'm sure your German isn't that bad. Starting on 1 January 2019, new provisions for work and residence permits entered into force in Switzerland. This is however unrelated to Brexit but is rather a matter of Swiss domestic legislation.</p> <p>For UK nationals in possession of a Swiss B or C permit, nothing changes for renewal of those permits until the end of the transition period (31 December</p>

	<p>2020).</p> <p>For all new C permits (i.e. conversion from a B to C permit), the proof of language skills (in the language of the place of residence) from an accredited institution applies as of 1 January 2020. You can find a list of accredited institutions here: bit.ly/2SeVleO</p>
<p>AIRPORT</p> <p>At EU and Swiss airport immigration, do I now have to go through 'other nationalities' because I am not Swiss and we are now not in EU? Thank you.</p>	<p>Dear C., current arrangements for travel in the EU will not change during the transition period which lasts until 31 December 2020. UK nationals will be able to use the EU immigration lines or e-gates, and they will not have their passports stamped.</p>
<p>BORDER CONTROL</p> <p>What about passport control when entering the Schengen zone (including Switzerland)? For British Citizens resident in Switzerland I presume that a valid British Passport plus a Swiss residency card (such as "Permis B") would be sufficient, otherwise the 90 day maximum stay rule would apply.</p>	<p>Hi M., Thanks for your question. Until the end of December 2020, current arrangements for UK nationals entering Schengen Area countries (including Switzerland) will not change.</p>
<p>FRONTIER WORKERS</p> <p>We live in France next to the border with Switzerland. We all have British passports and my husband and I both have a titre de sejour for France. My husband is a Frontalier and works in Geneva but I do not work at present. From Jan 2021, will I be able to cross into Geneva as I frequently do now? If so, can I pass through the many unmanned borders or will it be a case of</p>	<p>Hi C.,</p> <p>Thanks for contacting us. There is no change to the current arrangements during 2020. From 1 January 2021, your titre de sejour for France is protected by the UK's Withdrawal Agreement with the EU, and your husband's frontalier (G) permit to work in Switzerland</p>

<p>me having to get my passport stamped each time I drive to Geneva (even if visiting for a couple of hours)? Or will i have to get a visa? Thank you.</p>	<p>is protected by the UK-Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement.</p> <p>From January 2021, you will be able to travel to Geneva with your valid passport and French residence permit as you do now. UK nationals will not need a visa to travel to or within the Schengen area for short stays (90 days in every 180-day period). The Schengen Border Code will apply to UK nationals, which means the passports will be stamped when entering Schengen (but unlikely when moving between Schengen countries).</p>
<p>TRANSITION PERIOD</p> <p>What is likely to happen with the rights of British citizens past 31 Dec 2020 in Switzerland? Are there other agreements in negotiation right now? What happens to the upcoming permit renewals post 2020? Would British citizens be still eligible for a C permit after 5 years?</p>	<p>Dear A., the rights of UK nationals in Switzerland, and indeed Swiss citizens in the UK, are protected by our Citizens' Rights Agreement which will come into force from 1 January 2021. This means you will be able to renew your permit when it expires, as usual. This includes renewal of L, G, B and C permits. Switching from a B to C permit falls under Swiss domestic law. UK nationals covered by our Citizens' Rights Agreement are eligible to apply for a C permit after 5 years, subject to fulfilling the integration criteria. From 1 January 2020 this includes a proof of language skills (A2 spoken and A1 written) from an accredited institution. You can find a list of accredited institutions here: bit.ly/2SeVleO</p>
<p>VISA</p>	

<p>Quick one, for my wife (being an Iranian citizen) is it still easy for us to travel back to uk without needing a long visa process? Can you advise on agencies that help facilitate this as we are considering moving back.</p>	<p>Hi D., Thanks for contacting us. Unfortunately we are not able to answer visa enquiries and cannot give information on the entry requirements to the UK for non-British citizens.</p> <p>You can visit the following websites for detailed information on the UK visa application process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check if you need a visa for the UK and how to apply • Find details of your nearest visa application centre • Check on current visa processing times in each location and visa category • Apply for a UK visa. <p>If you are unable to find your answer on www.gov.uk, you can contact the Visas and Immigration Centre by telephone (please note that this service will be charged) on +44 (0)20 3481 1736. This phone line is open 24 hours Monday-Friday.</p>
<p>EHIC</p> <p>Do SWISS hospitals still accept the EHIC card? If so up until when will it be accepted?</p>	<p>Hi M., yes your EHIC remains valid.</p> <p>There will be no changes to healthcare access for UK nationals visiting or living in the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland before 1 January 2021.</p> <p>The UK's agreement temporarily protects EHIC and S2 for UK nationals who find themselves in another Member State on 31 December 2020. They will be able</p>

	<p>to complete any treatment they are undergoing or have access to 'needs arising' treatment through their EHIC in that Member State, until they return to the UK. This includes people on holiday.</p> <p>EHIC is only valid for temporary stays, however, such as a holiday. If you are resident in Switzerland, you must take out compulsory insurance with a Swiss health insurance company no later than 3 months after arriving or beginning to work in Switzerland. For more information and useful links, visit our Living in Guide: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-switzerland#healthcare</p> <p>From 1 January 2021, our UK-Swiss citizens' rights agreement protects social security arrangements for UK nationals resident in Switzerland; this means reciprocal healthcare arrangements will continue for people such as UK state pensioners, or students on a course of study.</p>
<p>ELDERLY PARENT</p> <p>As a UK citizen resident in Switzerland, can I still bring an elderly parent to join me? https://www.ch.ch/en/family-reunification-eu-efta/</p>	<p>Hi M., thanks for reaching out to us.</p> <p>Yes, you can still bring an elderly parent to join you. During the transition period until the end of 2020 you can bring family members as now. Our UK-Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement protects your right to family reunification from 1 January 2021, and close family members will be able to join you in Switzerland. Close family members include children, grandchildren and dependent parents and grandparents.</p>

	<p>For more information read the UK-Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement (https://www.gov.uk/government/news/swiss-citizens-rights-agreement?fbclid=IwAR1G5gxi9boHUbLH9YyHvcUUMfQQJzMKM31zsgHugPU1hdbSN2XNiSTEGMk) and our Explainer (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/767005/Explainer_-_Swiss_citizens__rights_agreement.pdf)</p>
<p>PENSION</p> <p>Private pension. Can we now have access to it if we move back to the UK as no longer in EU?</p>	<p>Hi D. and B.,</p> <p>Your access to your private pension will not be affected by the UK leaving the EU. Private pensions are ultimately treated as the property of the individual scheme member, and private property is protected by international law. We fully expect that people will continue to be able to access their pension savings or pension rights.</p> <p>If you are returning to the UK permanently, you should contact the international pension centre to move your pension to the UK: https://www.gov.uk/international-pension-centre</p> <p>If you choose to stay in Switzerland, your rights will be protected under our Citizens' Rights Agreement, which will apply from 1 January 2021. Social security coordination rules will continue to apply to those covered by the agreement, and we will continue to aggregate social security contributions. The UK</p>

	<p>government has confirmed lifelong uprating of UK state pension for recipients in Switzerland, and the right to export relevant benefits to Switzerland and the UK will generally continue as now.</p>
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