



HM Government  
UK TRANSITION



# TRAVELLING TO EUROPE FOR WORK?

**NEW RULES ARE HERE**

ACT NOW AT

**[GOV.UK/BUSINESS-TRAVEL-EU-2021](https://www.gov.uk/business-travel-eu-2021)**



## Introduction

From 1 January 2021 (following the end of the Brexit transition period), new rules came into effect for business travellers to Europe.

The business travellers to the EU campaign is a UK Government campaign to inform UK businesses of the things they and their employees need to do before travelling to Europe.

Specifically, it will inform and reassure UK business travellers regarding new rules for Europe, and encourage them to take appropriate action to ensure they can travel to EU and EFTA countries.

**IMPORTANT: International travel is currently restricted due to the coronavirus pandemic. If legally permitted to travel, UK business travellers should follow Government advice on the latest COVID-19 related measures in the UK, and read the travel advice for their destination before departing.**





## Actions for UK Business Travellers to Europe

The main areas where UK business travellers may need to take action are:

- UK Passports
- Visa and Work Permits
- Travel Insurance and Health Cover
- Driving Abroad
- Recognition of Professional Qualifications
- Your Indemnity Insurance
- Paying UK Income Tax and Social Security
- Your Luggage
- Merchandise in Baggage
- Travelling with Animal Products, Plants and Plant Products





## UK Passports

Different passport validity rules apply for British Citizen passport holders visiting Europe. Check your passport validity using the [passport checker](#) on GOV.UK. You may need to renew it earlier than planned and should allow up to 10 weeks when applying from the UK. This does not apply to Ireland.

- You should have at least 6 months left on an adult or child passport to travel to most countries in Europe (not including Ireland).
- If you renewed your current passport before the previous one expired, extra months may have been added to its expiry date. Any extra months on your passport over 10 years may not count towards the 6 months needed.
- You should check that your passport meets the new validity rules now using our online passport checker: [gov.uk/checkpassport](https://gov.uk/checkpassport).
- You should allow up to 10 weeks for your new passport when applying from the UK. Updated processing times for overseas applications will vary.
- Both blue and burgundy British passports, including those with 'European Union' on the cover, remain equally acceptable.



## Visa and Work Permits

You may require a visa, work permit or other documentation before travelling. This will depend on the country and the planned activity for the trip. You should visit the [specific country guides](#) and the [EU Immigration Portal](#) to find out the entry requirements for the country/countries you are travelling to and how to apply for a visa and/or work permit, if needed.

Business travellers without the correct documentation may be denied entry and businesses may also face additional costs and administrative barriers.

You will need a visa or work permit if you are:

- Taking part in activities or providing services that are not covered by a country's visa-waiver rules.
- Staying for more than 90 days in a 180-day period for any reason.
- Transferring from the UK branch of a company to a branch in a different country ('intra-corporate transfer'), even for a short period of time.
- Carrying out contracts to provide a service to a client in another country in which your employer has no presence.
- Providing services in another country as a self-employed person.

If you are travelling for less than 90 days in a 180-day period, you will not need a visa if you are:

- Going to a business meeting, attending a conference, attending cultural or sports events or exchanges.
- Travelling for journalistic or media purposes.
- Some EU & EFTA countries allow extra activities without a visa and/or permit.



## Travel Insurance and Health Cover

**European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC) and Global Health Insurance Cards (GHICs) are valid for travel to the EU. You should continue to get appropriate travel insurance for your trip.**

- Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) continues to be valid for travel to the EU until its expiry date.
- Once your EHIC expires, you can apply for a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC), free of charge, online at [nhs.uk/ghic](https://nhs.uk/ghic).
- EHICs and the new GHIC provide the same access to emergency and necessary healthcare cover for travel to the EU. You do not need to apply for a GHIC if you already have a valid EHIC.
- If visiting Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein, your card may not be valid. You should get appropriate travel insurance which covers your health needs. A UK passport can be used to get medically necessary healthcare in Norway. Read more [travel advice information](#).
- EHICs and GHICs are not an alternative to travel insurance. Full information on getting the right travel insurance is available at [gov.uk/foreign-travel-insurance](https://gov.uk/foreign-travel-insurance).



## Driving Abroad

**UK Motorists driving their own vehicle to Europe must obtain a motor insurance green card, and may need to display a GB sticker on their vehicle. Check [gov.uk/visit-europe-2021](https://www.gov.uk/visit-europe-2021) for further information on the new documents you will require.**

- You will require an insurance green card for the vehicle you are driving to EU and EFTA countries. Contact your insurance provider at least 6 weeks before you travel.
- You will need to display a GB sticker on the rear of your vehicle if your number plate has:
  - A Euro symbol
  - A national flag of England, Scotland or Wales
  - No flag or identifier at all – numbers and letters only
- You need to display a GB sticker if you are driving in Cyprus, Malta or Spain, regardless of your number plate.
- If you have a card driving license, you do not require an international driving permit (IDP) to drive to the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. You may need an IDP to drive in some EU countries and Norway if you have either:
  - A paper driving license
  - A license issued in Gibraltar, Guernsey, Jersey or the Isle of Man
- Check the requirements with the [embassy of the country you will be driving in](#).



## Recognition of Professional Qualifications

To continue to practice or service clients in the EU (e.g. for engineering, teaching or legal services), make sure your qualifications are recognised by the relevant regulatory or professional body.

- Check the national regulations of the country you are doing business in to understand the necessary qualifications needed for your staff to operate appropriately. You will also need to have your UK professional qualification officially recognised if you want to work in a profession that is regulated in the EU or EFTA.
- Organise which professional qualifications your staff will need to be recognised by EU regulators to practise or service clients in the EU. If you have a UK professional qualification you will need to have this officially recognised by the appropriate regulator for your profession in each country where you intend to work.
- Get your professional qualifications recognised by EU regulators. This will involve getting in touch with the appropriate regulator in each country you intend to work in.

## Indemnity insurance

If you are responsible for a business that sends staff abroad, check whether you need indemnity insurance for your employees here.





## Paying UK Income Tax and Social Security

**Check if you will still have to pay UK Income Tax, and find out whether you will pay social security contributions in the country where you work or in the UK. Check the guidance [here](#).**

- Cross-border workers (and their employers if they have one) are liable to pay social security contributions only in one state at a time. Generally, this is the country where the work is undertaken, irrespective of where the worker resides within the EU or the UK, or where the employer is based in the EU or the UK.
- Special rules apply to certain categories of workers:
  - Detached workers – carrying out to work in another State for a temporary period of up to two years
  - Multi-State workers – workers carrying out an activity in the UK and one or more of the EU Member States
  - Mariners
  - Aircrew
  - Civil servants
- Workers from the UK working in the EEA or Switzerland might be able to pay National Insurance while working abroad, depending on where you're working and how long for. If you're eligible, you can keep paying National Insurance to protect your State Pension and entitlement to other benefits. For more information check [here](#).
- To check if workers coming to the UK from the EEA or Switzerland need to pay social security contributions, more information can be found [here](#).



## Luggage

**If you're taking goods to another country temporarily for business reasons and you think you'll be over the duty-free limit of £390, you can usually get an ATA Carnet to avoid paying duty. This includes things like:**

- Samples to show at trade fairs or sales meetings
- Publicity materials
- Recorded film and audio
- Large amounts of equipment such as cameras or sound equipment
- Goods for educational, scientific or cultural purposes
- Personal effects and sports goods

If you are leaving or entering the UK temporarily, including on a business trip, you do not need to declare your laptop or mobile phone to customs.

You need to make a declaration if you're carrying £10,000 or more in or out of Great Britain from any country, including the EU. To check the guidance or obtain an online form, visit [gov.uk/guidance/taking-cash-in-and-out-of-great-britain](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-cash-in-and-out-of-great-britain).



## Merchandise in Baggage

**You will need to make a customs declaration if you are taking commercial goods out of the UK in your accompanied baggage or vehicle. Check the rules around [Merchandise in Baggage](#) for more information.**

- If you carry commercial goods in your accompanied baggage or small vehicle when you travel to and from Great Britain, you will need to declare them to customs.
- These commercial goods, also known as 'merchandise in baggage' (MiB), are goods you are carrying either to sell or for use by your business.
- For MiB below £1500/1000kg in value/weight that are not excise or restricted goods, you can use a simple online declaration.
- For MiB above these thresholds, excise or restricted goods, you need to make a normal customs declaration.
- There will be different MiB rules for the country people are arriving in or departing from. Business travellers should check the rules for the country they are going to.
- There are different rules for Northern Ireland. Contact the [Trader Support Service](#) for advice.



## Travelling with Animal Products, Plants and Plant Products

**You can no longer take food and drink containing animal products, such as dairy or meat into the EU. Almost all plants and plant products require a phytosanitary certificate.**

- You are not permitted to take meat, milk or products containing them into EU countries. Some exceptions apply, including certain amounts of powdered infant milk, infant food or pet food for medical reasons. Check the new rules on the [European Commission website](#).
- A phytosanitary certificate is required to take certain plants and plant products (including most fruits and vegetables) into EU countries. Check the rules for travelling from a non-EU country into the EU on the [European Commission website](#).

There is a suite of assets available to help partners amplify the messages, found [here](#).

Includes social assets for Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. You'll find citizens travel assets which cover passports, driving, healthcare and pets as well as business travel and traffic light system assets.

Campaign lock-up and badging devices for your communications are also available.

## Need a UK passport?

You'll need to allow up to **10 weeks** when applying from the UK

**Don't leave it too late**

HM Passport Office



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**PLAN AHEAD AT**

[GOV.UK/BUSINESS-TRAVEL-EU-2021](https://gov.uk/business-travel-eu-2021)

Check  
Change  
Go





## Working Together

- Your invaluable support can help drive awareness of these vital messages to those travelling to the EU for work.
- We are always looking for opportunities to co-create new products and assets to support with the integration of the messaging into your client and customer communications, please speak to us about this.
- We are here to help by:
  - Providing a dedicated team to work with you and your colleagues to support the campaign
  - Supplying you with the latest accurate and up-to-date messaging to share with your customers / members
- As part of our evaluation, we're keen to be able to report back on the support from partners, so information such as where the assets have been used, reach and examples of the assets in situ (e.g. screenshots/photos) will be extremely useful.



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**THANK YOU**

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**Business Travel Pack**

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