



Working in Europe after the new checks EES, the 90/180 rule and ETIAS delays

What UK event crews need to check before the next European tour

OTAS Brief TB-003 | All levels: Operational • Tactical • Strategic

Correct as of 20 October 2026 | UK passport holders | Not legal advice | otas.live/insights/



The short version: Europe's new border checks

EES is live

Since 10 April 2026

- Fingerprints and a photo
- No more passport stamps
- Free to register
- Every entry and exit recorded

The 90/180 rule

Now counted for you

- One total for all Schengen
- Overstays are recorded
- Ireland and Cyprus separate
- Track every crew member

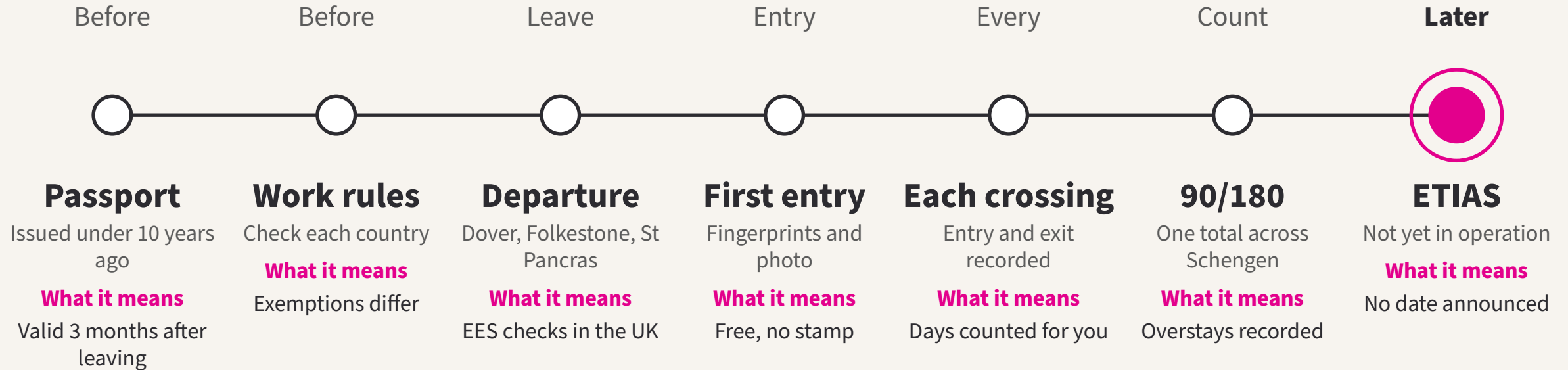
Work and ETIAS

Check each country

- ETIAS has not started
- Neither is a work permit
- Exemptions differ by country
- Do not pay any website

British citizens on a UK passport, from any UK nation, as published by the EU and GOV.UK on 20 October 2026. General information, not legal advice.

A tour through the new checks: seven points



UK passport holders. Ireland and Cyprus are outside Schengen and EES.

Work exemptions differ by country

01 • France

Artists and technical team

For film, audio-visual content and shows

No more than 90 days

02 • Germany

Performers and festivals

Performers and their assistants. Special cultural or musical events or festivals

Under 90 days in 12 months

03 • Spain

Artists and technicians

Audiovisual sector or artistic activities for the public, with proof

90 days in 180. Page being updated

04 • Netherlands

Musicians and artists

Working in the Netherlands

6 continuous weeks in 13

05 • Notification

Employer may need to act

France: SIPSII secondment declaration for some postings

1 day before work starts

06 • The rule

Check each country

What is exempt in one country may not be in another

Ask the authorities

From GOV.UK country pages for work. Examples only, each with conditions. France, Germany and Netherlands pages last updated April 2024.

What EES does at the border

- **1. Register** First entry: 4 fingerprints and a facial image.
- **2. Children** Fingerprints not scanned for children under 12.
- **3. No cost** Nothing to do or pay before you arrive.
- **4. No stamps** Manual stamping ended on 10 April 2026.
- **5. Counting** 90 days in any 180, one total across Schengen.
- **6. Overstays** Recorded automatically by the system.

What it means for you

Days are visible at every border

Holidays count towards your total

Queues may be longer at busy times

Overstay may mean a ban of up to 3 years

The point

EES counts days. It does not check whether your work is allowed.

Before each tour: four steps



The point: days and work permission are separate checks, and both need an owner.

90 days in any 180, now counted by EES

90

days: the limit for short stays in the Schengen area in any 180-day period, counted as one total across all countries using EES.

10 April 2026. EES fully in use at all Schengen external borders.

EUR 20. The ETIAS fee once it starts. Valid up to 3 years.

No date. ETIAS is not in operation. The EU will announce it months ahead.

Up to 3 years. Possible entry ban for overstaying, says the FCDO.

Cyprus counts separately. Ireland is outside Schengen.

Operational: what crew and performers can do

- **Check your passport** Issued under 10 years ago, valid 3 months after you leave.
- **Track your days** Include holidays and other tours.
- **Use the calculator** The EU short-stay calculator.
- **Carry proof** Booking letter and role, for any exemption.
- **Allow time** First EES registration takes longer.
- **Ignore ETIAS sellers** It has not started.

Your travel pack

Keep it with your passport.

What to carry

- Booking or contract letter
- Proof of your role
- Return travel details
- Your own days record
- Also hold an EU or Irish passport?
Check which rules apply.

Unsure? Ask before you travel.

Tactical: tour, production and crew managers

01

Days tracker

Every crew member, the whole 180 days

Keep: tracker

02

Country rules

Each country and each role

Keep: rule summary

03

Evidence packs

What each exemption needs

Keep: copies

04

Notifications

Who files them, and when

Keep: confirmations

05

Travel time

Extra time for EES checks

Keep: schedule

06

Briefings

Remove any ETIAS date

Keep: briefing text

Three levels: Operational for crew and performers, Tactical for tour and production managers, Strategic for promoters and directors.

Strategic: what promoters and directors decide

Decision	What it looks like	Evidence to keep
Tour plan	Crew rotations within 90 days in any 180	Tour plan
Visas	Budget for visas where no exemption applies	Budget line
Owner	One person owns border and work checks	Named owner
Advice	Taken where an exemption is unclear	Advice record
Watch	ETIAS start date and the Spanish update	Review date
Briefings	Crew told what to expect at the border	Briefing text
Records	Days and evidence kept for each tour	Tour file
Review	After each tour: any delays or refusals	Debrief notes

Planning prompts, not legal or immigration advice.

What we don't know yet: 4 open points

01 • No date

ETIAS start

No official date on 20 October 2026

Now: do not pay any website

02 • Changing

Spain

GOV.UK says its Spain page is being updated

Now: check before booking

03 • Dated

Country pages

France, Germany and Netherlands last updated April 2024

Now: ask the authorities

04 • Not covered

Other countries

This Brief covers four destinations only

Now: check each country's rules before the tour

Open on 20 October 2026. Check the official sources before acting.



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Key sources: eu-LISA; EU Travel to Europe (EES and ETIAS);
European Commission; GOV.UK; FCDO travel advice

Errors are corrected openly, on every format, and logged with the
date.

General information, not legal or immigration advice. Correct as of
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Briefing card • about 1 minute

“Before we travel: the EU now records every entry and exit. First time through, they take your fingerprints and photo. It is free.

Your days in Europe are counted automatically, including holidays. If you have been in Europe in the last six months, tell me.

Days records held by: _____

Work paperwork held by: _____

Do not pay any website for ETIAS: it has not started. Any questions?”

Read before departure. Fill in the blanks first.

Before the next tour: the checklist, by level

Operational passport dates; your own days record; carry proof of your role; ignore ETIAS sellers.

Tactical days tracker for every crew member; country work rules; notifications; time for EES.

Strategic tours within 90/180; budget for visas; one owner for checks; watch for the ETIAS date.