Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

In support of all carriers

Done at Warsaw
10/11/2023
General Information

- ETIAS Central Unit (ECU) strives to maintain accuracy and any spotted errors will be promptly addressed.
- Proposals for changes/correction are welcomed at: etias.acu1@frontex.europa.eu and will be addressed in a timely manner.
- FAQ may contain links to external sites over which ECU has no control and for which it does not assume responsibility.
- FAQ are intended to provide operational information.
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2. General Questions

2.1. What is the Entry and Exit System (EES)?

The Entry and Exit System (EES) is an automated IT system that electronically registers each entry into or exit from the territory of European countries that use the system by travellers who are in the scope of EES (Please see Q/A Which travellers are in the scope of EES?), recording the time and place of their entry/exit and calculating the duration of their authorised stay. It also registers refusals of entry and generate alerts for overstayers. When the system enters into operation, it will replace the manual stamping of travel documents by the border authorities.

2.2. What is the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)?

The European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) is a system for granting authorisation for visa-exempt third-country nationals to travel to European countries for a short-term stay. The information travellers provide in their application form when requesting an ETIAS travel authorisation will support European countries in determining whether they pose a security, illegal immigration or epidemic risk.

2.3. What legislation regulates the implementation of EES, ETIAS and carrier related obligations?

The instruments are, in their current and consolidated version:

- For EES


- For ETIAS


  Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1380 of 8 August 2022 laying down the rules and conditions for verification queries by carriers, provisions for data protection and security for the carriers’ authentication scheme as well as fall-back procedures in case of technical impossibility, hereinafter referred to as Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1380.
The Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985 (CISA) between the Governments of the States of the Benelux Economic Union, the Federal Republic of Germany and the French Republic on the gradual abolition of checks at their common borders.

• Additional instruments from the Smart Border Package 


2.4. Which countries use EES?

29 European countries use EES: 25 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) as well as the 4 Schengen Associated Countries (Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland).

Ireland and Cyprus are EU Member States that do not use EES; passports are still stamped manually.

For more information regarding specific situations and territories, please refer to “Special situations”.

2.5. Which countries require ETIAS?

30 European countries require ETIAS: 26 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) as well as the 4 Schengen Associated Countries (Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland).

Ireland is an EU Member State that does not require ETIAS.

For more information regarding specific situations and territories, please refer to “Special situations”.

2.6. What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?

According to Article 1 of the CISA and Article 2 (15) of the Schengen Borders Code, a ‘carrier’ is any natural or legal person whose occupation it is to provide passenger transport by air, sea or land.

Air, sea and international carriers transporting groups overland by coach, which provide transport for profit, to travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from a third country or territory to any of the European countries that use EES, except Bulgaria and Romania, or requiring ETIAS, are bound by the EES and ETIAS regulations.

2.7. Which carriers are not bound by EES and ETIAS?

• Carriers transporting travellers within the European countries that use EES, except when transporting travellers who are visa-required and hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania to any other European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS;
• carriers transporting travellers who are required to be in possession of ETIAS travel authorisation, among European countries that require ETIAS;
• carriers transporting travellers only outside European countries that use EES or require ETIAS;
• carriers that do not intend to transport travellers into a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS within the next 6 months;
• carriers transporting travellers by train;
• river carriers.
2.8. **What are the obligations of carriers for the implementation of EES?**

Air carriers, sea carriers and international carriers transporting groups overland by coach must use the carrier interface to verify whether travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries have already used the number of entries authorised by their visa (Article 13 (3) of Regulation (EU) 2017/2226).

The verification query shall be introduced no earlier than 48 hours before the scheduled time of departure. Carriers must ensure that only duly authorised staff have access to the carrier interface (please see Q/A “Who will have access to the carrier interface?” for the definition of duly authorised staff). Carriers should put in place, at the very least, physical and logical access control mechanisms to prevent unauthorised access to the infrastructure or systems they use, including authentication, logging to ensure access traceability, and regular review of access rights (Article 3 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1409).

The carrier obligations stipulated in Article 26 of CISA remain unchanged. Querying the carrier interface is an additional obligation.

2.9. **What are the obligations of carriers for the implementation of ETIAS?**

Air carriers, sea carriers and international carriers transporting groups overland by coach to enter the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS, are responsible for checking the travellers’ status according to the EES and ETIAS regulations. Carriers are responsible for establishing an authentication scheme with the carrier interface, following the registration and testing process established by eu-LISA.

According to Article 3 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1380, the verification query should be introduced at most 48 hours before the scheduled time of departure. Carriers must ensure that only duly authorised staff have access to the carrier interface (please see Q/A “Who will have access to the carrier interface?” for the definition of “duly authorised staff”). The carriers should put in place, at the very least, physical and logical access control mechanisms to prevent unauthorised access to the infrastructure or systems they use, including authentication, logging to ensure access traceability, and regular review of access rights.

The carrier obligations stipulated in Article 26 of CISA remain unchanged. Querying the carrier interface is an additional obligation.

2.10. **When will EES start operating?**

EES is intended to start operating in 2024.

2.11. **When will ETIAS start operating?**

ETIAS should start operating a few months after EES.

2.12. **Do carriers have access to assistance related to EES and ETIAS?**

Yes. Please see Carrier Support.

2.13. **What are the different roles of carriers and service providers?**

Air carriers, sea carriers and international carriers transporting groups overland by coach, entering the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS, are responsible for checking the travellers’ status according to the EES and ETIAS regulations. Carriers are responsible for establishing an authentication scheme with the carrier interface, following the registration and testing process established by eu-LISA.

Carriers are also responsible for granting access to the carrier interface only to duly authorised staff, meaning natural or legal persons that are employees of or contractually engaged by the carrier or other
legal or natural entity under that carrier’s direction or supervision. Please see Q/A “Who will have access to the carrier interface?” for the definition of “duly authorised staff”.

For carriers requesting a System-to-System (S2S) connection, the service provider, or an in-house system which is used, needs to be declared during registration and follow the guidelines of the authentication scheme.

Service providers are responsible for establishing connectivity between the system declared by the carrier during registration and the carrier interface system. Each carrier needs to ensure that the service provider is following the Security Convention and the Technical/Security requirements established with eu-LISA under the Carrier Technical Guidelines.

2.14. Which travellers are in the scope of EES?

Travellers admitted for a short stay, for no more than 90 days in any 180-day period, to the territory of the European countries that use EES. A detailed description can be found in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) 2017/2225. The list of third countries and territories whose nationals are required to have a visa to enter a European country that uses EES can be found in Annex I of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1806.

2.15. Which travellers are out of the scope of EES?

The following categories of travellers are considered out of the scope of EES:
• travellers who are nationals of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland;
• travellers with a long stay visa;
• travellers with an EU resident permit;
• travellers who are family members of an EU citizen and who hold a residence card;
• travellers who are family members of a third-country national who enjoys the right of free movement equivalent to that of EU citizens and who hold a residence card or residence permit;
• travellers exercising their right to mobility;
• travellers who are nationals of Andorra, Monaco, San Marino or holders of a passport issued by the Vatican City State;
• persons, or categories of persons, exempt from border checks or benefiting from specific rules in relation to border checks as referred to in point (g) of Article 6a (3) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399, which will be in force after EES enters into operation, according to Regulation (EU) 2017/2225;
• persons, or categories of persons, referred to in points (h), (i), (j) and (k) of Article 6a (3) of Regulation (EU) 2016/399, which will be in force after EES enters into operation, according to Regulation (EU) 2017/2225.

2.16. Which travellers fall in the scope of ETIAS?

ETIAS travel authorisation is required for travellers who meet all the following criteria:
• they are not nationals of the European Union or Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland;
• they are citizens of a country or territory whose nationals are not required to have a visa to travel to any of the European countries requiring ETIAS; the list of these countries can be found in Annex II of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1806;
• they do not have a residence permit/card/document issued by any of the European countries requiring ETIAS.
More information can be found on the ETIAS website.

2.17. Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?

The following categories of travellers are considered out of the scope of ETIAS:
• nationals of the European Union or Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland;
• a national of the visa-required countries who needs a visa to travel to any of the European countries requiring ETIAS, UK nationals and their family members who are beneficiaries of the Withdrawal Agreement, a national of Andorra, San Marino, Monaco, the Holy See (the Vatican City State);
• a refugee, a stateless person or a person who does not hold the nationality of any country and resides in any of the European countries requiring ETIAS and holds a travel document issued by that country;
• a holder of a residence permit or a residence card issued by any European country requiring ETIAS or by Ireland;
• a holder of a uniform visa or national long-stay visa, or a holder of a local border traffic permit but only within the context of the bilateral agreement on local border traffic between a European country requiring ETIAS and a third country or territory;
• a holder of a diplomatic or service passport who has been exempted from the visa requirement pursuant to an international agreement concluded by the European Union and a third country or territory; for more information, please refer to Regulation (EU) 2018/1806, Article 6 (1);
• a civilian air or sea crew member when on duty, a civilian sea crew member going ashore holding a seafarer’s identity document, issued in accordance with the International Labour Organisation Conventions No 108 of 13 May 1958 or No 185 of 16 June 2003 or the International Maritime Organisation Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic of 9 April 1965, a crew member or other member of an emergency or rescue mission in the event of a disaster or an accident, a civilian crew member of a ship navigating in international inland waters;
• a holder of a travel document issued by intergovernmental international organisations, an intra-corporate transferee, a student or a researcher exercising the right to mobility in accordance with Directive 2014/66/EU or Directive (EU) 2016/801.

2.18. What is the validity of an ETIAS travel authorisation?
An ETIAS travel authorisation is valid for three years or until the travel document used for the application expires, whichever comes first.

2.19. Is an ETIAS travel authorisation equivalent to a visa?
An ETIAS travel authorisation is not a visa. An ETIAS travel authorisation is an entry requirement and condition for stay for visa-exempt nationals travelling to any of the European countries requiring ETIAS and is linked to the traveller’s passport. The validity of an ETIAS travel authorisation is three years or until the travel document used in the application expires, whichever comes first.

2.20. Is the carrier interface the same as the Advanced Passenger Information System?
No. There are significant differences between the two:
• the Advanced Passenger Information system allows air carriers to collect travellers’ biographical data (as contained in their travel documents) during check-in, supplement that data with travel route information and transmit it to the border control authorities of destination country or territory. For more information, please see Council Directive 2004/82/EC;
• the carrier interface allows carriers to send verification queries and check travellers’ status with regard to holding a valid uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries or a valid ETIAS travel authorisation, where applicable.

2.21. Will a carrier be informed when a new country joins the European Union or the Schengen area?
Information about new countries joining the European Union or Schengen area will be made available to carriers through the official portals of the European Commission.

2.22. Will travel documents be stamped after EES enters into operation?
With EES entering into operation, entries and exits will begin to be recorded electronically and this modality will replace the manual stamping of travel documents.
3. **Carrier Registration**

3.1. **Why does a carrier have to register?**

Carriers transporting travellers to the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS have to check that the travellers have the travel documents required for entry, as stipulated in Article 26 (1)(b) of CISA, so they must use the carrier interface. Please see Q/A “What is the carrier interface?”. To access and use the carrier interface, carriers must register (Article 10 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1380). Only registered carriers can verify whether travellers have a valid travel authorisation, or a valid uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries.

3.2. **Do all carriers need to register?**

No. For more information, please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?”.

3.3. **Which carriers do not have to register for EES or ETIAS?**

Carriers that do not fall into the scope of EES and ETIAS do not need to register. For more information, please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?”.

3.4. **Do train carriers need to register?**

No. Train carriers are not bound by the definition of ‘carrier’, as per article 1 of the CISA. Train carriers are excluded from the obligation to query the carrier interface and therefore no registration is required. For more information, please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?”.

3.5. **Is there a deadline for carriers to register?**

No. New carriers will be able to register even after EES and ETIAS enter into operation. However, due to the obligations stipulated in the EES Regulation, carriers transporting or intending to transport travellers into the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS after EES enters into operation are advised to register as soon as possible. The time to complete the registration process will depend on how much time the carrier needs to perform the mandatory actions to start querying the carrier interface. For more information, please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?” and “What are the obligations of carriers for the implementation of EES?”.

3.6. **How can a carrier register?**

eu-LISA is responsible for the registration process. Carrier registration and related information are available on eu-LISA’s website.

3.7. **What is the registration process?**

According to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1380 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1409, carriers have the legal obligation to query EES and ETIAS to confirm the status of travellers, and in order to have access to those systems they need to register. The registration process differs depending on the type of connection. More information about connection types can be found in Q/A “What is the carrier interface?”

- For the System-to-System connection (Application Programming Interface)

To register, the carrier will need to fill in the F01 Carrier Registration form and F02 Contact Request Form for its legal entities and single point of contact (Carrier SPOC), as well as the carrier’s service provider contacts. Once the forms are sent to eu-LISA by email, eu-LISA will share with the carrier the Non-Disclosure Agreement and a welcome pack that will contain the F03 Registration form for Carrier System and Service
Provider contacts, F04 Form for Request to be Connected, F05 Form to Report Test Incident and F06 Form to Ask Question to be filled in, which concludes the first phase of registration. For more information on the registration process and documentation, please visit eu-LISA’s website.

After filling in the documentation, the carrier will go through the pre-compliance and compliance phases. During the pre-compliance phase, the carrier can perform testing by using the carrier interface simulator and completing pre-defined test cases. The pre-compliance phase is not mandatory but strongly recommended. During the mandatory compliance phase, the carrier will run a set of scenarios before being able to query the carrier interface.

- Compliance tests will not be required for mobile app and web browser connection. The carrier should provide training to the duly authorised staff (please see Q/A “Who will have access to the carrier interface?” for the definition of duly authorised staff) based on guidelines and the training environment that will be provided by eu-LISA. After completion of the training, the carrier should submit a declaration of readiness and will then be able to query the carrier interface.

3.8. What documents does a carrier need to fill in during the registration process?

The carrier will need to fill in and submit the following forms:

- **F01 Carrier Registration form**
  The purpose of this form is to collect the information needed for registration.

- **F02 Contact Request Form**
  This form should be used if the carrier needs to modify, add or delete any contact details.

- **F03 Registration form for Carrier System and Service Provider contacts (included in the Welcome Pack):**
  This form is used when a carrier selects System-to-System connection to provide the data of the carrier service provider and the system they use to connect to the carrier interface.

- **F04 Form for Request to be Connected (included in the Welcome Pack):**
  This form is only shared after registration with system providers or carriers using an in-house system and who have declared their intention to use the System-to-System connection.

- **F05 Form to Report Test Incident (included in the Welcome Pack)**
- **F06 Form to Ask Question (included in the Welcome Pack)**
- **F07 Carrier Security Convention form** Please see Q/A “What is the security convention?”.

3.9. What are the mandatory documentation and information the carrier must provide during registration?

Carriers need to provide the following information:
- their legal name;
- their contact point details (“Single Point of Contact” or SPoC);
- their e-mail, telephone number, postal address;
- the contact details of their legal representative and back-up SPoC (names, telephone numbers, email and postal addresses);
- functional email or other means of communication for technical support;
- confirmation that they operate and transport passengers into the territory of any of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS, or intend to do so within the next six months;
- their instruments of constitution (including statutes) (read more in Q/A “What are the instruments of constitution and extract of company registration?”);
- an extract of official company registration (read more in Q/A “What are the instruments of constitution and extract of company registration?”); an electronic copy of an authorisation to operate in one or more Member States, such as an Air Operator Certificate, may substitute for the official company registration;
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• the country of registration (or, if the carrier is registered in a third country or territory, the EU Member State in which the carrier operates or intends to operate within the next year);
• the carrier’s choice for access to the carrier interface (‘data exchange channels’) (Read more in Q/A “How can carriers access the carrier interface?”).

3.10. Who is authorized to submit the Carrier Registration Form?

The carrier’s legal representative or Single Point of Contact (SPoC) should submit the F01 Carrier Registration form.

3.11. What is the role of the Single Point of Contact (SPoC)?

The main responsibilities of the SPoC are:
• to manage all administrative tasks for the carrier’s registration or deregistration;
• to administer user access and role allocation under the security convention;
• to be the main Point of Contact in case of technical impossibility.

3.12. Can a carrier have multiple SPOCs and back-up SPOCs?

No. Carriers shall have two points of contact: the SPOC and the back-up SPOC. They need to define which SPOC is the primary one and which is the back-up. Currently, both contacts receive all communication related to carrier registration and testing activities.

The contacts can be changed at any time.
Additionally, the carrier can declare a system (a service provider or in-house system) and provide dedicated contacts named System SPOC/backup System SPOC.
The system contact is mainly for managing all requests linked to system connectivity and testing. For more information, please refer to the Standard Operating Procedures for Carrier Assistance.

3.13. What is the security convention?

The security convention is a document (F07 Carrier Security Convention form), developed by eu-LISA, establishing the security rules for access to the carrier interface under the provisions of Commission Implementing Regulations 2022/1409 and 2022/1380. This access is enabled so that carriers can execute the tasks defined in the EES Regulation 2017/2226 and in the ETIAS Regulation 2018/1240. The security convention should be signed by each carrier contact (SPoC, back-up SPoC and legal representative) provided during registration in F01 Carrier Registration form.

3.14. How can a carrier connect to the EES and ETIAS systems?

The carrier needs to have an internet connection. Further information will be provided by eu-LISA after registration.

3.15. How can a carrier access the EES and ETIAS systems?

Please see Q/A “How can carriers access the carrier interface?”.

3.16. Does a carrier need to register separately for each of the different types of access they might choose (System-to-System, Web Portal, or Mobile App)?

No. Only one registration is necessary. During the process the carrier can choose one or more of the available access options (System-to-System, Web Portal, or Mobile App). The carrier will be able to update these options later by resending F01 Carrier Registration form, and indicating all the types of access they wish to implement.
3.17. Will carriers receive a notification upon submission of the registration request?

After submitting the registration request, carriers will receive a confirmation of successful registration or a request to send additional information to complete registration.

3.18. Will carriers receive a notification/be notified after/upon successful registration?

Yes. Once registered, carriers will receive a notification email indicating their assigned ID number.

3.19. What are the instruments of constitution and extract of company registration?

The instruments of constitution are the founding acts that regulate the existence of the company and its modifications over time, in accordance with the law of the place of the registration. They may include information such as:

- the type and name of the company;
- the objects of the company;
- capital amount;
- the registered office;
- the nominal value of the shares subscribed, etc.

In some countries, such as the United States, the instruments of constitution are also referred to as the “corporate charter”, “articles of association” or “certificate of incorporation”.

The extract of the company registration is a document usually issued officially by a business register. Such a document contains basic company information such as the name, address, registration number and whether the company is currently active.

3.20. How can a carrier submit the Carrier Registration Form?

The carrier’s Single Point of Contact or legal representative can submit the Carrier Registration form to the dedicated e-mail address: carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.

3.21. How can carriers add new contact details or modify/delete existing ones?

The Carrier Single Point of Contact can submit the Contact Details Form with the updated information to the dedicated e-mail address: carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.

3.22. Where can carriers download the Contact Request Form?

Carriers can download the F02 Contact Request Form from the eu-LISA website.

3.23. Do carriers have immediate access to the EES and ETIAS systems upon registration?

Once the carrier submits the registration form to eu-LISA, they will have access to the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool and will be able to request assistance related to the registration process. Please see Q/A “How can carriers request assistance?”. Until EES enters into operation, carriers can request assistance via the carrier onboarding email, carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.

After the necessary tests have been performed and the carrier has been certified, they will have full access, including being able to submit queries in the carrier interface.

3.24. How can carriers contact eu-LISA during the registration process?

Carriers can contact eu-LISA via the carrier onboarding email carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu during the onboarding process, after they have submitted all registration forms and when in the process of testing the system. After EES enters into operation, carriers should use the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool for the onboarding process.
3.25. Can carriers make a provisional registration, providing all necessary data but without complying with the minimum-security requirements at this provisional stage?

No. Carriers need to comply with the minimum-security requirements and complete the registration process to have access and query the carrier interface. Please see also Q/A “What are the mandatory documentation and information the carrier must provide during registration?”.

3.26. Do carriers requesting a web portal or mobile application connection to the carrier interface need to declare a service provider?

All carriers, regardless of the connection method to the carrier interface, may use a service provider to verify the travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation on their behalf.

When a carrier requests Web portal and/or Mobile application connection, eu-LISA will:

- provide the carrier’s SPOC with temporary credentials for each authorised user account for the test and production environments;
- send to the carrier’s SPOC and backup SPOC email accounts a separate email for each user account; this email will contain a username and a temporary password that will allow the carrier’s staff to activate accounts and set up new passwords.

The Carrier SPOC shall allocate the set of users to the duly authorised staff, following the security convention.

Based on this process, the carrier SPOC will provide the necessary credentials to the service provider to check the traveller’s status on their behalf as duly authorised staff. For the definition of duly authorised staff, please see Q/A “Who will have access to the carrier interface?”.

3.27. Do carriers, service providers, network providers or ground handlers need to be registered?

Only carriers need to be registered. When registering, carriers should indicate any other party they collaborate with or to which they outsource services. Service providers, network providers or ground handlers cannot register separately from the carrier.

3.28. Can carrier groups register as a group or do the individual members need to register separately?

Carrier groups can be registered as a group, provided that those who need to query the carrier interface fall under the definition of duly authorised staff and obligations can be fulfilled. For the definition of duly authorised staff, please see Q/A “Who will have access to the carrier interface?”.

3.29. If different carriers use the same service provider, does each carrier need to be registered?

Yes. Each carrier must be registered separately.

3.30. How many service providers can be declared by a carrier?

There is no limit to the number of service providers that can be declared by a carrier. The carrier will need to fill out the F03 Registration form for Carrier System and Service Provider contacts for each of the service providers it uses. To connect the service provider system with the carrier interface, eu-LISA will request the carrier to also fill out the F04 Form for Request to be Connected, if it has not been filled out by the declared service provider.
3.31. How should an entity that is both a carrier and a service provider register?

The entity must be registered as a carrier. Service providers do not register separately from a carrier; they should be included in the carrier’s registration form.

3.32. When will the service providers receive the technical and functional documentation?

After a service provider is declared in a F03 Registration form for Carrier System and Service Provider contacts, the carrier can share the technical documentation with them as duly authorised staff. For the definition of duly authorised staff, please see also Q/A “Who will have access to the carrier interface?”.

3.33. Can a service provider liaise between eu-LISA and the carrier regarding technical compliance?

Yes. This is possible when the carrier has declared the service provider during registration.

3.34. When will carriers be able to start querying the carrier interface?

After EES enters into operation, carriers that have been registered can query the carrier interface.

To use system-to-system access to the carrier interface, carriers should be also certified for this option.

3.35. Is it necessary for carriers to register separately for EES and ETIAS to conduct a verification query via the carrier interface?

No. The carrier interface is common for both systems. If a carrier is already registered, verification for travellers can be performed with a single query via the carrier interface for either EES or ETIAS.

4. Carrier Testing

4.1. Why is it necessary to test the connectivity to the carrier interface when a system-to-system connection is requested?

Testing is needed to ensure compliance with the security and technical requirements to access the carrier interface.

4.2. For which access options is testing necessary?

Only for system-to-system access. For web access or through the mobile app, no testing is necessary.

4.3. How long will the testing period last?

For system-to-system connection the compliance test should be completed within 24 hours. The testing is considered completed once the compliance tests and the pre-defined compliance scenarios are successfully accomplished.

4.4. What is the pre-compliance phase?

Pre-compliance is the phase in which a carrier requesting a system-to-system connection can perform free testing using the carrier interface simulator. Pre-compliance tests are performed by the carrier or their service provider to ensure that messages are correctly received and processed by the carrier interface simulator, according to the connectivity configurations. When pre-compliance testing is finalised, carriers need to send to eu-LISA a declaration of readiness for the compliance phase. Pre-compliance testing is not mandatory but strongly recommended.
4.5. **What is the compliance phase?**

During the compliance phase a registered carrier needs to run a set of minimum scenarios to get certified and ready to perform verification queries. eu-LISA will provide testing guidelines and a predefined list of use cases. This phase is mandatory for carriers that request a system-to-system connection. Successful carriers will be certified and connected to the carrier interface to perform verification queries.

4.6. **Are the pre-compliance and compliance phases mandatory for carriers requesting to use web portal and mobile application connection to the carrier interface?**

No. Carriers requesting to use only the web portal and mobile application do not need to perform pre-compliance and compliance testing.

4.7. **Can carriers choose another type of connection to the carrier interface after the registration is completed?**

Yes. Registered carriers can add (or remove) new connection types at any time, by submitting a new “Carrier Registration form” with the updated information. The carriers need to indicate their carrier ID and state that the reason for the request is to update the registration.

4.8. **Do carriers who will not use the system-to-system connection need to register?**

Yes. Registration is required. After completing registration, eu-LISA will provide the technical guidelines on how to connect to the carrier interface via web portal and mobile application. Please see Q/A “What is the registration process?”.

4.9. **If a carrier uses a service provider, who should perform the tests with eu-LISA?**

It is entirely up to the carrier to decide which tests they perform and which ones they delegate to a service provider.

4.10. **If a carrier is using several service providers, do all of them need to go through the compliance tests?**

Yes. Service providers that have already undergone the certification process do not need any additional compliance tests. Compliance tests are required only for service providers that have not yet been certified and tested.

4.11. **If a service provider is declared by more than one carrier, does it need to undergo the certification process for each carrier?**

A service provider that is already certified and tested does not need to repeat the compliance tests for any subsequent carrier using its services. Nevertheless, this service provider has to be declared by each carrier using its services.

5. **Carrier deregistration and disconnection**

5.1. **When can a carrier deregister, be deregistered or be disconnected?**

According to Article 11 (1), (2), (3), (5) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1380 carriers will be deregistered in the following cases:

- when the carrier informs eu-LISA that it no longer operates or transports travellers into the territory of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS;
- when the logs show that the carrier has not used the carrier interface for a period of one year;
• when the carrier no longer fulfils the conditions or has breached the provisions of the EES and ETIAS Regulations, the security requirements or the technical guidelines, including in the case of abuse of the carrier interface.

or disconnected:
• In the case of urgent IT security concerns, including when the carrier is not complying with the security requirements or with the technical guidelines, eu-LISA may immediately disconnect the carrier.

A disconnected carrier will still have access to the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool. A disconnected carrier may be reconnected to the carrier interface following removal of the security concerns that gave rise to the disconnection.

Deregistered carriers may submit a new request for registration. Please see Q/A “Can deregistered carriers become registered again?”.

5.2. Will a carrier be notified before being deregistered?
Yes. One month before deregistration, eu-LISA will inform the carrier of its intention to deregister the carrier along with the reason for the deregistration and will give the carrier the opportunity to provide written comments before the deregistration.

According to Art.11(6) from the EES Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1409, eu-LISA will assist carriers that have received a notice of deregistration to remedy the deficiencies that gave rise to the notice.

5.3. Can deregistered carriers become registered again?
Yes. Deregistered carriers may submit a new request for registration and go through the entire registration process to regain the connection to the carrier interface.

5.4. Can deregistered carriers query the carrier interface?
No. If a carrier is deregistered, access to the carrier interface will be deactivated - this means the carrier will not have the ability to query the carrier interface. If they proceed with boarding of travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, without querying the carrier interface, they may be subject to penalties and will be responsible for returning the travellers, if refused entry by the border authorities, as per article 26 of CISA.

6. The Carrier Interface

6.1. What is the carrier interface?
The carrier interface is a tool that allows carriers to fulfil their obligations and send verification queries to check whether a traveller holding a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries has already used up the number of entries, or whether they hold valid ETIAS travel authorisation, where applicable.

6.2. How can carriers access the carrier interface?
Carriers can access the carrier interface through:
1. a system-to-system interface;
2. a web interface available on the EU carrier web portal;
3. an application for mobile devices.

6.3. Who will have access to the carrier interface?
Only the duly authorised staff of registered carriers will have access.
Duly authorised staff means natural persons who are employees of, or contractually engaged by, the carrier, or another legal or natural person under the carrier’s direction or supervision, assigned the tasks of verifying travellers, in accordance with Article 13(3) of Regulation (EU) 2017/2226, and with Article 45 (1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1240.

6.4. **What kind of information can be checked via the carrier interface?**

The carrier interface allows carriers to check whether a traveller’s uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries is still valid, whether the number of entries authorised by the visa has been reached or whether a traveller has a valid ETIAS travel authorisation.

6.5. **What type of logs will be kept by eu-LISA and for how long?**

eu-LISA will keep logs of all data processing operations carried out using the carrier interface. The logs will be kept for two years.

6.6. **Who is responsible for the security of the carrier interface?**

eu-LISA is responsible for the information security management of the carrier interface. Additionally, the carriers are obliged to maintain minimum security requirements to protect their IT environments and devices connected to the carrier interface from unauthorised staff. Carriers shall also keep a log of the usage of the login IDs provided by eu-LISA.

7. **The verification process**

7.1. **What is a verification query?**

The verification query, through the carrier interface, allows carriers to fulfil their obligation to verify whether a traveller’s uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries is still valid, whether the number of entries authorised by the visa has been reached/consumed or whether a traveller has a valid ETIAS travel authorisation.

Please see Q/A “How does a carrier perform a verification query by using the carrier interface?”.

7.2. **When should carriers perform the verification query?**

The query must be performed prior to boarding, at the earliest 48 hours before the scheduled time of departure.

The carrier may perform a single verification query through the carrier interface for both categories of travellers: those who are visa required and hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, and those who are required to have an ETIAS travel authorisation.

Carriers are obliged to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, in the following cases:

- when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from a third country or territory, Cyprus or Ireland to European countries using EES, except when transporting them to Bulgaria and to Romania. Please see Q/A “Which countries use EES?”;

- when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from Bulgaria or from Romania to any other European country using EES, except when transporting those travellers from Bulgaria to Romania or vice versa;
7.3. How does the verification process affect travellers?

The verification process does not add any new obligations for travellers. Instead of having visa-required travellers’ single and double entry visas checked through visual inspection by the carrier, the carrier interface will be used.

Travellers will be able to check their visa status, their remaining authorised stays and the status of their ETIAS travel authorisation through the ETIAS and EES website: [ETIAS & EES website](ETIAS & EES website).

7.4. How does the verification process affect carriers?

Verification of uniform short-stay visas issued for one or two entries will no longer be performed through visual inspection. Instead, the verification will be conducted automatically through the carrier interface, making the process quicker. Once ETIAS enters into operation, the verification of ETIAS travel authorisations will also be conducted through the carrier interface.

7.5. How does a carrier perform a verification query by using the carrier interface?

Carriers can perform verification queries by scanning the MRZ of the travel documents (recommended), importing a CSV file or, as an alternative, by manually providing the following mandatory data to the carrier interface:

- Surname (family name); first name or names (given names);
- Date of birth; sex; nationality;
- Type and number of the travel document and the three-letter code of the issuing country or territory;
- Date of expiry of the travel document.

Carriers will also input the scheduled date of arrival at the border of a European country using EES or requiring ETIAS.

7.6. Do carriers need to collect or/and verify biometric data when querying the carrier interface?

No. To perform verification query, carriers need to provide the passengers’ personal data, document and travel data. For more information, please see Q/A “How does a carrier perform a verification query by using the carrier interface?”.

Biometric data (facial image and fingerprints) of third-country nationals admitted for a short stay to the territory of the European countries that use EES will be collected by border authorities and stored in the EES system.

7.7. Is a carrier responsible for determining whether a traveller’s status should be queried via the carrier interface?

Yes, the carrier is responsible for determining whether a traveller’s status should be queried via the carrier interface. For more information, please see Q/A “What are the obligations of carriers for the implementation of EES?”, “What are the obligations of carriers for the implementation of ETIAS?”, “Which travellers are in the scope of EES?” and “Which travellers fall in the scope of ETIAS?”

7.8. What responses will be provided to carriers when querying the carrier interface?

The carrier interface will provide the following responses:

- “OK”, “NOK EES” (Not OK EES), “NOK ETIAS” (Not OK ETIAS), “NA” (Not applicable) or an error message (when the information is incomplete or incorrectly inserted).

The meaning of the responses are as follows:
• “OK”: the traveller has a valid ETIAS travel authorisation or a valid uniform short-stay visa (issued for one or two entries);

• “NOK ETIAS” or “NOK EES”: the traveller does not have a valid ETIAS travel authorisation or a valid uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries (travel authorisation or visa has expired, been revoked, or been annulled, or the traveller has already used the number of entries authorised by the visa).

When the system replies with NOK ETIAS/NOK EES, the carrier needs to manually verify the travel documents and assess whether the traveller is in or out-of-scope (for example holders of multiple entry visas or residence permits);

• the “NA” response is sent by the carrier interface in one of the following cases:
  ➢ the carrier indicates (flags) that the traveller is:
    - exempt (out of scope) from the requirement to have a valid ETIAS or a valid uniform visa for one or two entries;
    - in transit.
  ➢ the carrier queries the carrier interface for:
    - travellers subject to the ETIAS travel authorisation requirement before the entry into operation of ETIAS;
    - nationals of the European Union or Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland, or nationals of Andorra, Monaco, San Marino or holders of a passport issued by the Vatican City State;
    - visa-required third country nationals when transporting them to Bulgaria, Romania or Cyprus.

The replies refer only to the validity of the uniform visa issued for one or two entries or the ETIAS travel authorisation, not whether the traveller should be allowed to board or not. It is the carrier’s responsibility to decide whether to allow the traveller to board.

7.9. How will the wrong indication (flag) of a traveller affect the verification query?

Non-indication or wrong indication (flag) of a traveller may result in an incorrect reply. In this case, the carriers may not fulfil their obligations as foreseen in Article 45(1) of ETIAS Regulation and Article 13 (3) of EES Regulation, and may be liable for transporting them without a valid uniform visa issued for one or two entries or valid ETIAS travel authorisation.

7.10. Can a carrier use more than one service provider to query the carrier interface?

Yes. Carriers can use multiple service providers to query the carrier interface.

To use more than one service provider, the carrier has to declare each of them during the registration. In order to remove or add a service provider, the carrier shall submit a new declaration with updated information. For more information, please see Q/A “How many service providers can be declared by a carrier?”.

7.11. Do carriers operating only within the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS need to query the carrier interface?

Carriers operating only within the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS do not need to query the carrier interface, except:

- when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from Bulgaria, from Cyprus or from Romania to any other European country that uses EES.

Carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, between Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania. Please see Q/A 2.4 “Which countries use EES?” and “Which countries require ETIAS?”.
7.12. Do carriers operating only outside the territory of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS need to query the carrier interface?

No. Carriers operating and transporting travellers only outside the territory of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS are excluded from the obligation to query the carrier interface and consequently to register.

7.13. Do operators of cargo ships and cargo aircraft fall under the same obligations to query the carrier interface?

Yes, the operators of cargo ships and cargo aircraft that transport, for profit, travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, into the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS should query the carrier interface.

7.14. Is it possible for carriers to apply for an ETIAS travel authorisation on behalf of a traveller?

A carrier cannot apply for an ETIAS travel authorisation on behalf of a traveller unless it is acting as a commercial intermediary. Only another person or a commercial intermediary may apply on behalf of a traveller. To do so, both parties need to sign a declaration of representation. For more information, please visit the ETIAS website: Applying on behalf of others, ETIAS & EES website.

7.15. Should carriers query the carrier interface for travellers who are transiting through an airport in a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS?

Travellers are considered in transit when they have connecting flight and remain in the international airport transit area of the European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS.

Regarding EES, if travellers are in airport transit, carriers shall specify this when performing a verification query, as per Article 5 (4) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1409.

Regarding ETIAS, if travellers are in airport transit and remain in the international airport transit area, carriers are relieved from the obligation to query the carrier interface, as per Article 45 (2) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1240.

When querying the carrier interface, carriers shall indicate (flag) in-transit travellers. If the carrier does not indicate (flag) them, this might result in unnecessary processing of personal data and cause a risk of receiving an incorrect reply (e.g. a “NOK EES” or “NOK ETIAS”) from the carrier interface.

In any case where the carrier interface replies with “NOK EES” or “NOK ETIAS”, the carrier shall manually verify travellers before boarding.

7.16. How can carriers using self-service check-in, such as online check-in, verify the travellers?

Carriers should use the carrier interface to verify the travellers prior to boarding, regardless of whether the carrier is using self-service or in-person check-in.

7.17. Travel to and from Ireland: should carriers query the carrier interface?

When transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, to Ireland, there is no need to query the carrier interface. However, carriers must query the carrier interface when transporting travellers from Ireland to any European country using EES or requiring ETIAS. Please see Q/A “Which countries use EES?” and “Which countries require ETIAS?”.
7.18. Travel to and from Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania: should carriers query the carrier interface?

Carriers should query the carrier interface when transporting travellers required to have an ETIAS travel authorisation from a third country or territory to Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania.

Carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who are required to be in possession of an ETIAS travel authorisation, from any European country requiring ETIAS to Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania and vice versa.

Carriers should query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from Cyprus to any other European country using EES, except to Bulgaria or to Romania.

Carriers should query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from Bulgaria or from Romania to any other European country using EES, except when transporting those travellers from Bulgaria to Romania and vice versa.

Carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from a third country or territory to Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania.

For more information, please also see Q/A “Which countries use EES?”, “Which countries require ETIAS?”, “When should carriers perform the verification query?” and “Do carriers operating only within the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS need to query the carrier interface?”.

8. Carrier Support

8.1. Who provides assistance to carriers?

The ETIAS Central Unit will provide operational and technical assistance in English 24/7 and will be the single point of contact for all assistance requests. The Unit will provide operational assistance directly, and forward technical assistance requests to eu-LISA for resolution. Carriers can request assistance via the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool (Please see Q/A “How can carriers request assistance?”).

8.2. What kind of assistance will carriers receive?

Carriers will have access to this list of FAQs, available on the carrier web portal and translated into all the official EU languages. Additionally, assistance will be provided on operational and technical assistance requests submitted via the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool, and in exceptional cases via an emergency phone line when the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool is not available. The ETIAS Central Unit will provide assistance to a carrier by directing them to the relevant FAQ or by forwarding the request to eu-LISA in case of a technical issue. The assistance will be available to all registered carriers in English 24/7.

During the registration process, carriers can request assistance by contacting eu-LISA: carriers_onboarding@eulisa.europa.eu.

8.3. In which language will assistance be provided?

Assistance will be provided in English.

8.4. When can carriers request assistance?

Only registered carriers can request assistance. They can do so when facing operational or technical issues.
8.5. How can carriers request assistance?
Registered carriers can request assistance via the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool, available on the carrier web portal, or in exceptional cases via an emergency phone line when the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool is not available.

8.6. What is the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool and when can carriers use it?
The Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool is a tool with ticketing functionalities which is the main communication channel for assistance requests. It can be accessed through the carrier web portal. Registered carriers can indicate in the tool the issue they are facing, either operational or technical, and submit it for resolution.

8.7. Does the ETIAS Central Unit have access to the ETIAS and EES databases and the rights to modify data to support carriers?
The legal provisions do not provide for access to the travellers' personal data for the ETIAS Central Unit. For more information related to carrier support, please see Q/A “What kind of assistance will carriers receive?”.

8.8. Can the ETIAS Central Unit or eu-LISA contact carriers by other means than the Carrier Onboarding and Support Tool?
Yes. To best support carriers, eu-LISA or the ETIAS Central Unit may contact carriers that have requested assistance by any means necessary. For more information, please refer to the Standard Operating Procedures for Carrier Assistance.

9. Air carriers

9.1. Should a carrier that is not a member of International Air Transport Association (IATA) or Airlines for Europe (charter operators) register?
Yes. All carriers operating and transporting travellers from a third country or territory to a European country using EES or requiring ETIAS must register.

Please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?”.

9.2. Should privately owned aircraft perform verification queries?
Any natural or legal person whose occupation is to provide passenger transport by air, sea or land (Article 1 of CISA) is considered a carrier and is obliged to query the carrier interface and verify the travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation. However, natural or legal persons that use privately owned aircraft and do not transport passengers as their profession are not considered carriers and do not need to query the carrier interface. For more information, please see Q/A “When should carriers perform the verification query?”.

The rules for “Checks on persons on private flights”, according to Annex VI of the Schengen Borders Code, are also applicable.

9.3. What is the definition of an aircrew member?
According to Article 2 of Commission Regulation 1178/2011, amended by Article 1 of Commission Regulation 290/2012, aircrew members include cabin crew and flight crew members.
Cabin crew member refers to a qualified crew member, other than a flight crew or technical crew member, who is assigned by an operator to perform duties related to the safety of passengers and flight during operations.

9.4. **Do aircrew members need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a uniform visa?**

Aircrew members do not need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa when performing their duties. For more information, please refer to Q/A “Which travellers are out of the scope of EES?” and “Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?”.

European countries that use EES or require ETIAS impose different requirements and exemptions for aircrew members when they disembark from or travel to embark on the aircraft.

The exact scope of the exceptions under this provision is determined by the Member States. Member States have communicated the measures they have taken pursuant to Article 6 to the Commission, published at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en. The exact scope of 2(2)(i) of the ETIAS Regulation is therefore determined by the content of the Member States’ measures referred to above. The same exemptions that currently apply for visas (for visa-required countries) are to apply for ETIAS (for visa-exempt countries).

https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en includes an Excel file which contains the sheet “Exemptions Article 6(1)”, where visa exemptions for other categories mentioned in Article 6(1) can be found, indicating the way each Member State allows the exemptions.

9.5. **Do aircrew members travelling to take up duty need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa?**

Aircrew members, when in performance of their duties, including travelling to take up duty, are considered out of scope of the ETIAS/EES as stated in Q/A “Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?” and “Do aircrew members need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a uniform visa?”.

If an aircrew member does not hold a crew member certificate, as provided for in Annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation of 7 December 1944, they will be considered as regular passengers and may need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa.

Please note that each Member State applies a different approach regarding the exemptions of civilian aircrew members when on duty. For this reason, please check each Member State’s approach at this link: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en.

9.6. **Do air carriers need to query the carrier interface for crew members?**

Air carriers only need to query the carrier interface for crew members who do not fall under the exemptions and hold a uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries or an ETIAS travel authorisation.

Carriers do not need to query the carrier interface for crew members who fall under the exemptions defined in the EES and ETIAS Regulations. Member States apply different approaches regarding the exemptions of civilian aircrew members when on duty. For this reason, please check each Member State’s approach at this link: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en.
9.7. **What is the suggested approach in case of an ad-hoc flight where the registered departure control system (DCS) is not installed and the carrier occasionally has to use a local DCS?**

The carrier needs to have included the local DCS in its registration form if the carrier wishes to query the carrier interface by using the system-to-system connection.

Otherwise, the carrier can decide to use either the web portal or the mobile application.

9.8. **How should air carriers proceed when operating an ad-hoc operation if there is no service provider or the service provider is not registered?**

The carrier can use either the web portal or the mobile application.

9.9. **Are jet operators obliged to query the carrier interface and therefore to register?**

Yes. All air carriers, including jet operators, who transport travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from a third country or territory to a European country using EES or requiring ETIAS are obliged to query the carrier interface and therefore to register. Please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?”.

9.10. **Should an air ambulance performing flights to the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS query the carrier interface?**

An air ambulance performing flights from a third country or territory to a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS should query the carrier interface for the travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, unless exceptions are provided for in bilateral agreements or national law (Annex VII, point 7 of the Schengen Borders Code).

10. **Sea carriers**

10.1. **Which sea carriers need to query the carrier interface?**

Sea carriers that transport travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, into the territory of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS (e.g. ferry companies, cruise ships) need to query the carrier interface.

Other types of legal or natural person that operate cargo ships that transport travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, also need to query the carrier interface.

Private yachts, pleasure boats and cargo ships with no travellers are out of scope and should not query the carrier interface. Nevertheless, rules for “sea borders”, according to Annex VI of the Schengen Borders Code are still applicable.

10.2. **What is the definition of a sea crew member?**

According to the Practical Handbook for Border Guards, crew members include all persons actually employed for duties on board during a voyage in the working or service of a ship and included in the crew list.

10.3. **Do sea crew need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa?**

Sea crew members may be exempt from having an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa. However, each European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS has a different interpretation of the terms “sea crew”, “going ashore” and “in the performance of their duty”.
The exact scope of the exceptions determined by the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS and the measures they have taken pursuant to Article 6 of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 have been communicated to the European Commission and published at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en.

The link includes an Excel file, which contains the sheet “Exemptions Article 6(1)”; starting from row 348, visa exemptions for other categories mentioned in Article 6(1) can be found, indicating the way each European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS allows the exemptions. Thus, the same exemptions currently applying for visas (for visa required countries) are to apply for ETIAS (for visa exempt countries).

10.4. Do contractors, entertainers or other staff working on board a ship need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa?

All staff working on board a ship may need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa, if they do not fall under the exemptions as per the ETIAS or EES regulations, or they do not hold a seafarer’s identity document, issued in accordance with the International Labour Organisation Conventions No 108 of 13 May 1958 or No 185 of 16 June 2003 or the International Maritime Organisation Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic of 9 April 1965.

However, European countries that use EES or require ETIAS impose different requirements and exemptions for sea crew members.

The exact scope of the exceptions determined by the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS and the measures they have taken pursuant to Article 6 of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 have been communicated to the European Commission and published at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en.

The exact scope of Article 2(2)(i) of the ETIAS Regulation is therefore determined by the content of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS measures referred to above. Thus, the same exemptions currently applying for visas (for visa required countries) are to apply for ETIAS (for visa exempt countries).

10.5. Do sea carriers need to query the carrier interface for crew members and staff working on board?

Carriers do not need to query the carrier interface if the crew members are exempted under the conditions specified by each European country using EES or requiring ETIAS. European countries that use EES or require ETIAS impose different requirements and exemptions for sea crew members when they disembark from or travel to embark on the vessel. Please see: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en.

According to the Practical Handbook for Border Guards, crew members include all persons actually employed for duties on board during a voyage in the working or service of a ship and included in the crew list.

Therefore, carriers need to query the carrier interface for staff members who do not fall under the definition of crew member and hold a uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries or ETIAS travel authorisation.

10.6. Does a sea carrier need to query the carrier interface for travellers who have already been queried upon arrival into a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS, if the sea carrier does not intend to visit ports outside the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS?

The sea carrier does not need to query the carrier interface when:
• transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, within the territory of European countries using EES, except from Bulgaria or from Romania to any other European country using EES;
• transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries from Bulgaria to Romania and vice versa;
• transporting travellers who are required to have an ETIAS travel authorisation within the territory of European countries requiring ETIAS.

10.7. When should sea carriers query the carrier interface?

Sea carriers are obliged to query the carrier interface at the earliest 48 hours prior to the scheduled time of departure, prior boarding:
• travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from a port outside the territory of a European country that uses EES to a port of a European country that uses EES, except to Bulgaria or to Romania;
• travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from Bulgaria or from Romania to any other European country that uses EES, except when transporting those travellers from Bulgaria to Romania and vice versa;
• travellers who are required to be in possession of an ETIAS travel authorisation, from a port outside the territory of a European country that requires ETIAS to a port of a European country that requires ETIAS.

10.8. Does a cruise ship operator need to query the carrier interface every time the ship exits and re-enters the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS during the same trip?

All carriers are obliged to query the carrier interface at the earliest 48 hours prior to the scheduled time of departure from a third country or territory port if the itinerary includes ports of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS, as described in Q/A “When should sea carriers query the carrier interface?” and “When should carriers perform the verification query?”.

10.9. Are crew members on board a ship flying a Schengen country flag considered to be in the Schengen area when the ship is outside Schengen territorial waters?

No. The flag of a ship defines its nationality and not the ship’s status as a territory, according to Article 91(1) of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Therefore, the flag does not define whether the crew member can be considered to be in the Schengen area when on board.

10.10. Do sea carriers need to query the carrier interface for crew members on board a ship flying a Schengen country flag when the ship exits and re-enters Schengen territory?

The flag of a ship defines its nationality and not the ship’s status as a territory, according to Article 91(1) of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (please see Q/A Are crew members on board a ship flying a Schengen country flag considered to be in the Schengen area when the ship is outside Schengen territorial waters?).

Therefore, the obligations of carriers referred in the EES and ETIAS Regulations do not change, and they shall query the carrier interface for crew members that are not exempt.

Crew members might be exempt under the conditions specified by each European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en.

For more information, please also see Q/A “Do contractors, entertainers or other staff working on board a ship need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa?”, “Do sea carriers need to query the carrier interface for crew members and staff working on board?” and “Does a cruise ship operator need to query the carrier interface every time the ship exits and re-enters the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS during the same trip?”. 
10.11. Should ferry carriers query the carrier interface for drivers of commercial vehicles?

Drivers of commercial vehicles shall be treated as regular travellers. Carriers need to query the carrier interface to verify those drivers who fall in the scope of EES or ETIAS. For more information, please also see Q/A “Which sea carriers need to query the carrier interface?” and “When should sea carriers query the carrier interface?”.

10.12. Are river carriers obliged to query the carrier interface?

No. River carriers are excluded from the obligation to query the carrier interface therefore, no registration is required. Please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?”.

11. Land carriers

11.1. Which land carriers need to register?

Only international carriers transporting groups of travellers overland by coach from a third country or territory into the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS need to register. Please also see Q/A “Which countries use EES?”.

11.2. When should an international carrier transporting groups overland by coach conduct verification queries on ETIAS?

After the entry into operation of EES, querying the carrier interface will be mandatory for all carriers transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries. Please see also Q/A “What are the obligations of carriers for the implementation of EES?” and “When should carriers perform the verification query?”.

For the first three years following the entry into operation of ETIAS, querying the carrier interface to verify travellers who are required to be in possession of an ETIAS travel authorisation will be optional for international carriers transporting groups overland by coach. During this period, land carriers will not be liable for boarding travellers without a valid ETIAS travel authorisation.

11.3. In case of an international operator with subsidiaries in European countries that use EES or require ETIAS, which entity should register?

Carriers’ obligations are described in Q/A “Why does a carrier have to register?”. If the main entity (the headquarters) does not have the capacity to manage the technical implementation, operational processes or compliance with the security convention, or to ensure connection of subsidiaries to the carrier interface, separate registration of each subsidiary is recommended to fulfil the carrier’s obligation. Please note that the legal definition of “subsidiaries” differs based on the national law of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS.

11.4. Are land taxi companies considered to be carriers and if so, are they obliged to query the carrier interface?

No. Taxi companies are excluded from the obligation to query the carrier interface and no registration is required. Please see Q/A “What is the definition of a carrier, and which carriers are bound by EES and ETIAS?”.
11.5. Would a bus driver be authorised to query the carrier interface?

If a bus driver needs to query the carrier interface, the carrier SPoC, responsible for maintaining and controlling access rights to the web portal and the mobile application, needs to provide authorisation.

11.6. What is considered local border traffic?

Local border traffic refers to the regular crossing of the external border of the European Union by nationals of neighbouring third countries who reside in the border areas.

11.7. Do travellers enjoying the rights of local border traffic need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa?

Travellers enjoying the rights of local border traffic do not need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa when travelling under the rules on local border traffic and existing bilateral agreements. Under local border traffic, border residents may regularly cross the border and stay in the border area without a visa or an ETIAS travel authorisation. For more information, please see Q/A “Which travellers are out of the scope of EES?” and “Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?”.

11.8. In which cases should travellers holding a local border traffic permit apply for an ETIAS travel authorisation?

Travellers holding a local border traffic permit should apply for an ETIAS travel authorisation whenever their intended journey extends beyond the area/distance provided for in the bilateral agreement.

11.9. Are travel agencies obliged to query the carrier interface?

As a rule, carriers are responsible for performing verification queries. If a travel agency is also registered as a carrier and it transports travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, they should query the carrier interface. For more information, please see the Q/A “When should carriers perform the verification query?”.

12. Transition and Grace Periods

12.1. What does the EES transition period mean?

The EES transition period is a period of 180 days from the date EES enters into operation according to Article 22 of Regulation (EU) 2017/2226. During the transition period, border authorities will verify the remaining days of authorised stay by checking the stamps in the travel documents manually and verify and record the entry/exit data in EES. Please see also “What responses will the carrier interface give to carriers when sending a verification query during the EES transition period?”.

12.2. What do the ETIAS transition and grace periods mean?

The ETIAS transition period is a period of six months from the date on which ETIAS starts operations according to Article 83 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1240. During the transition period, travellers will be allowed to enter the territory of a European country that requires ETIAS without an ETIAS travel authorisation, provided that they meet the other entry conditions as set forth in Article 6 of the Schengen Borders Code.

The grace period will follow the transition period, and travellers will be allowed to enter the territory of the countries that require ETIAS without an ETIAS travel authorisation, if this is their first entry during that period.
12.3. When will the ETIAS transition period start and how long will it last?

The transition period is a period of six months from the date ETIAS enters into operation. The European Commission may adopt a delegated act to extend that period for a maximum of a further six months, renewable once, as stipulated in Article 83 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1240.

12.4. What responses will the carrier interface give to carriers when sending a verification query during the EES transition period?

After the entry into operation of the EES, all carriers will be obliged to query the carrier interface to verify the travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries. During the EES transition period, responses from the carrier interface will be the same as after this period, since the EES transition period applies only to border authorities’ checks. For more information, please see Q/A “What does the EES transition period mean?”.

The response to the verification queries from the carrier interface will be “OK”, “NOK EES” or “NA”. For more information, please see Q/A “What responses will be provided to carriers when querying the carrier interface?”.

12.5. What responses will the carrier interface give to carriers when sending a verification query during the ETIAS transition period?

During the ETIAS transition period, the response for travellers who are required to be in possession of an ETIAS travel authorisation will be “OK” for all of them, regardless of whether they hold it or not.

12.6. When will the ETIAS grace period take place and how long will it last?

The grace period will follow the transition period and will last for six months. The European Commission may adopt a delegated act in accordance with Article 89 of the ETIAS Regulation to extend that period for a maximum of an additional six months.

12.7. What responses will the carrier interface give to carriers when sending a verification query during the ETIAS grace period?

During the ETIAS grace period, if the traveller intends to travel to the European countries that require ETIAS for the first time after the transition period, the reply will be “OK”.

In all other cases the reply will be:
- “OK” - when the traveller has a valid ETIAS travel authorisation;
- “NOK ETIAS” - when the traveller does not have a valid ETIAS travel authorisation;
- “NA” - when the carrier indicates (flags) that the traveller is exempt from the scope of the ETIAS Regulation.

12.8. Uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries: how will the number of entries that has been used before EES enters into operation be recorded?

All border crossings by travellers into the territory of a European country that uses EES before EES enters into operation should be reflected by manual stamps in their travel document. Once EES enters into operation, border authorities of the country in question should verify the existence of such stamps, check the number of entries used and record them in the EES. If the number of entries or the authorised days of stay have been already used, the traveller will be refused entry. Please see also Q/A “What does the EES transition period mean?”.
12.9. Should a traveller in the scope of ETIAS have a valid travel authorisation during the grace period?

During the grace period all travellers who are in the scope of ETIAS are required to have a valid ETIAS travel authorisation. Exceptionally, the border authorities may allow travellers without a valid ETIAS travel authorisation to enter the territory of the European countries that require ETIAS for the first time after the end of the transitional period, provided that they fulfil all the remaining entry conditions. Please see Q/A “What do the ETIAS transition and grace periods mean?”.

12.10. What are carriers’ obligations during the ETIAS transition and grace periods if border authorities refuse entry to a traveller for reasons other than not having a valid ETIAS travel authorisation?

When border authorities refuse entry to a traveller for whatever reason, carriers, at the request of the border authorities, are obliged to return the traveller, as per art.26(1) (a) from the CISA.

13. Travel documents

13.1. Should holders of travel documents issued by intergovernmental international organisations or by other entities recognised as subjects of international law apply for an ETIAS travel authorisation?

Travellers who hold a travel document issued by intergovernmental international organisations of which at least one European country that requires ETIAS is a member, or by other entities recognised as subjects of international law, are exempt from the obligation to have an ETIAS travel authorisation. Please see Q/A “Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?”.

14. Visa related issues

14.1. What type of visas are in the scope of the carrier interface?

Currently, only uniform short-stay visas for one or two entries are in the scope of the carrier interface.

14.2. Is an airport transit visa in the scope of the carrier interface?

No. Currently, airport transit visas are not in the scope of the carrier interface.

15. Carriers’ liability

15.1. Are carriers liable for transporting travellers without a valid ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa?

Yes. Carriers will be subject to penalties if they transport travellers who are in the scope of ETIAS or EES without the required travel documents, as stipulated in Article 45 (5) of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1240 and Article 26 of CISA.

15.2. What are the penalties for not complying with the carriers’ obligations set forth in the EES and ETIAS regulations?

The penalties derive from the Convention implementing the Schengen agreement (CISA) and Council Directive 2001/51/EC, imposed by Member States according to the national law transposing this Directive.
15.3. Are carriers liable if a traveller has been refused entry to a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS by the border authorities because their ETIAS travel authorisation or uniform short-stay visa issued for one or two entries was annulled or revoked during the journey?

Carriers shall not be penalised if the verification query was performed prior to boarding, not earlier than 48 hours prior the scheduled departure, and the reply was “OK” or “NA”. However, carriers are always responsible for returning the traveller in the case of a refusal of entry, according to Art.26(1) (a) of the CISA.

16. The complaint mechanism

16.1. Can carriers submit complaints against the actions of the ETIAS Central Unit?

Yes. If a carrier is affected by any of the actions taken by the ETIAS Central Unit or eu-LISA, the carrier can submit a complaint, either by using the complaint form, via email to complaints@frontex.europa.eu, or via post. Detailed information regarding the complaint mechanism can be found on Frontex’s website.

17. Special situations

17.1. Are carriers obliged to query the carrier interface when border checks take place before boarding?

When border checks to enter the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS precede boarding, carriers are relieved from the obligation to query the carrier interface, as per the EES Implementing Regulation recital and the ETIAS Implementing Regulation recital. An example of such a case is the British port of Dover, where the French police perform border checks on travellers prior to boarding instead of upon arrival in the port of Calais in France.

17.2. Disaster or accident situations: does a crew member or other member of an emergency or rescue mission need an ETIAS travel authorisation?

In the event of a disaster or an accident, a member of an emergency or rescue mission may need an ETIAS travel authorisation or a visa. The arrangements for the entry and exit of members of rescue services, police or fire brigades acting in emergency situations, as well as border guards crossing the border when performing their professional tasks, shall be laid down by national law as per Annex VII, point 7 from Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code).

17.3. Shall a carrier query the carrier interface in case of an emergency landing on the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS?

Carriers will be relieved from the obligation to query the carrier interface in the case of emergency landing due to force majeure, imminent danger or on the instructions of the competent authorities.

17.4. Should carriers query the carrier interface when performing regular, ad-hoc or emergency flights to NATO bases on the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS?

Carriers transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from a third country or territory to a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS, shall query the carrier interface. Regular border controls, including entry/exit records, are performed at NATO bases, in accordance with the Schengen Borders Code.
In cases of force majeure or imminent danger, please see Q/A “Shall a carrier query the carrier interface in case of an emergency landing on the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS? ”.

17.5. In case of a round trip which includes visits to third countries or territories, shall carriers transporting groups by coach query the carrier interface?

Carriers are obliged to query the carrier interface every time they depart from a third country or territory to a European country that applies EES or requires ETIAS, to verify all travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation. Please see Q/A “When should carriers perform the verification query?”.

If border checks precede boarding, please see Q/A “Are carriers obliged to query the carrier interface when border checks take place before boarding?”. 

17.6. Travel to and from Greenland and the Faroe Islands: should carriers query the carrier interface?

According to Article 5 (2) from the Agreement on the Accession of the Kingdom of Denmark to the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement, Greenland and the Faroe Islands are considered to be within the area without internal border controls. Therefore, carriers should query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from any third country or territory to Greenland or the Faroe Islands.

Carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers from any European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS to Greenland and the Faroe Islands, or vice versa. For more information, please see the following Q/A “Which countries use EES?”, “Which countries require ETIAS?”, “When should carriers perform the verification query?” and “Do carriers operating only within the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS need to query the carrier interface?”.

17.7. Travel to and from Svalbard: should carriers query the carrier interface?

According to the Article 126, the Agreement on the European Economic Area applies to the territory of the Kingdom of Norway, but not to Svalbard. Therefore, carriers transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from Svalbard to any of the European countries that use EES, except to Bulgaria and to Romania, or that require ETIAS, need to query the carrier interface. There is no need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers to Svalbard. For more information, please see the Q/A “Which countries use EES?”, “Which countries require ETIAS?” and “When should carriers perform the verification query?”. 

17.8. Travel to and from Ceuta and Melilla: should carriers query the carrier interface?

Ceuta and Melilla are Spanish territories and therefore the Schengen visa policy applies. The special rules defined in the Declaration by the Kingdom of Spain on the cities of Ceuta and Melilla in the Final Act to the Agreement on the Accession of the Kingdom of Spain to the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985 do not affect the implementation of the Schengen acquis. According to this declaration, the specific arrangements for visa exemptions for local border traffic between Ceuta and Melilla and the Moroccan provinces of Tetuan or Nador shall continue to apply. Moroccan nationals who are not residents of the provinces of Tetuan or Nador and who wish to enter the territory of Ceuta or Melilla exclusively shall remain subject to the visa requirement. The validity of these visas shall be limited to these two towns and may permit multiple entries and exits (‘visado limitado múltiple’) in accordance with the provisions of Article 10(3) and Article 11(1)(a) of the 1990 Convention. Therefore, carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers falling under the scope of the special rules.
Carriers shall query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from a third country or territory to Ceuta or Melilla, as well as from either town to Spain or any other European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS.

Carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers from any European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS, except when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries, from Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania to Ceuta or Melilla. For more information, please see the following Q/A “Which countries use EES?”, “Which countries require ETIAS?” and “When should carriers perform the verification query?”.

17.9. Travel to and from the Spanish and Portuguese outermost regions (the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands): should carriers query the carrier interface?

According to Article 349 from the of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands are part of the European Union outermost regions and the Schengen acquis applies, therefore:

- carriers should query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from any third country to the Azores, Madeira or the Canary Islands;

- carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers from the Azores, Madeira or the Canary Islands to the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS, or vice versa, except when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries from Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania to the Azores, Madeira or the Canary Islands.

For more information, please see the following Q/A “Which countries use EES?”, “Which countries require ETIAS?”, “When should carriers perform the verification query?” and “Do carriers operating only within the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS need to query the carrier interface?”.

17.10. Travel to and from the French outermost regions (Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion and Saint-Martin): should carriers query the carrier interface?

According to Article 349 of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion and Saint-Martin are part of the European Union outermost regions, but the Schengen acquis does not apply to these territories, as per Article 138 of CISA. Therefore:

- carriers do not need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries or an ETIAS travel authorisation from any third country or territory to Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion or Saint-Martin;

- carriers shall query the carrier interface when transporting travellers from Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion or Saint-Martin to the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS, except when transporting travellers who hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries to Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania.

For more information, please see the following Q/A “Which countries use EES?”, “Which countries require ETIAS?” “When should carriers perform the verification query?” and “Do carriers operating only within the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS need to query the carrier interface?”.
17.11. Travel to and from the overseas territories of France and the Netherlands: should carriers query the carrier interface?

According to Article 138 of CISA, the provision of the agreement applies only to the European territories of France and the Netherlands. Therefore, carriers transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from the overseas territories of France and Netherlands to any of the European countries that use EES, except to Bulgaria and to Romania, or that require ETIAS, need to query the carrier interface. There is no need to query the carrier interface when transporting travellers to the overseas territories of France or the Netherlands. For more information, please see Overseas Countries and Territories (europa.eu).

17.12. Travel to and from offshore zones (offshore ships, wind parks, oil plants), located outside European countries that use EES or require ETIAS: should carriers query the carrier interface?

Carriers transporting travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, from a third country or territory, or offshore zones, located outside European countries that use EES or require ETIAS, to any European country that uses EES, except to Bulgaria and to Romania, or to a European country that requires ETIAS, do need to query the carrier interface.

However, querying the carrier interface is not necessary when transporting travellers from any of the European countries that use EES or require ETIAS to offshore zones located outside European countries that use EES or require ETIAS. For more information, please see Q/A “When should carriers perform the verification query?”.

17.13. Should a MedEvac flying into the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS query the carrier interface?

A MedEvac performing regular or ad-hoc flights from a third country or territory to the territory of a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS should query the carrier interface for the travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, unless exceptions are provided for in bilateral agreements or national law (Annex VII, point 7 of the Schengen Borders Code).

For travellers who hold short-stay visa for one or two entries, or an ETIAS travel authorisation, the derogation of Article 6(5)(c) of the Schengen Borders Code may apply: it stipulates that third-country nationals who do not fulfil one or more of the conditions laid down in paragraph 1 may be authorised by a European country that uses EES or requires ETIAS to enter its territory on humanitarian grounds, on grounds of national interest or because of international obligations. Where the third-country national concerned is the subject of an alert as referred to in paragraph 1(d), the European country authorising them to enter its territory shall inform the other European countries that use EES or require ETIAS accordingly.

17.14. If a traveller missed their international transit flight and needs to leave the airport’s transit area and enter a European country that requires ETIAS to reach their final destination, do they need to apply for an ETIAS travel authorisation?

If a traveller who is required to have an ETIAS travel authorisation wants to leave the airport’s transit area, they need to apply for and obtain an ETIAS travel authorisation.

17.15. How can carriers proceed when transporting deportees for government agencies with or without travel documents?

Deportees are not exempt from the EES and ETIAS Regulations, therefore carriers shall consider them as regular passengers who need proper travel documents to be transported. For more information, please see the Q/A “When should carriers perform the verification query?” and “Do carriers operating only within the territory of European countries that use EES or require ETIAS need to query the carrier interface?”.
17.16. Do carriers need to query the carrier interface for members of NATO armed forces?

A member of the armed forces travelling on NATO or Partnership for Peace business, who holds an identification document and individual or collective movement order provided for by the Agreement between the parties to the North Atlantic Treaty regarding the Status of their Forces, does not need an ETIAS travel authorisation, hence carriers do not need to query the carrier interface.

According to the Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 in Art. 6 (2) (c), Member State may exempt from the visa requirement members of the armed forces travelling on NATO or Partnership for Peace business and holders of identification document and movement orders provided for by the Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization regarding the status of their forces.


17.17. Do carriers need to query the carrier interface for Heads of State or holders of diplomatic, service, or special passports?

Carriers should not query the carrier interface for Heads of State, Heads of Government, members of national governments with accompanying spouses, members of their official delegations, or sovereigns or other senior members of a royal family, whose arrival and departure have been officially announced through diplomatic channels to the border guards. For more information, please refer to Article 6a, (3), point (g)(i), point 1 of Annex VII of Regulation EU 2017/2225, which amends Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen borders code), and the Q/A “Which travellers are out of the scope of EES?” and “Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?”.

Holders of diplomatic, service or special passports do not need ETIAS travel authorisation if they are exempted from the visa requirement pursuant to an international agreement concluded by the European Union and a third country or territory. For more information, please refer to: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/document/information-national-derogations-visa-requirement_en. In this case, carriers do not need to query the carrier interface. For more information, please see the Q/A “Which travellers are out of the scope of EES?” and “Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?”.

Carriers shall query the carrier interface for holders of diplomatic, service, or special passports if they are not exempt under the above conditions and hold a uniform short-stay visa for one or two entries or an ETIAS travel authorisation. For more information, please see the Q/A “Which travellers are out of the scope of EES?” and “Which travellers are out of the scope of ETIAS?”.