



Immigration update: the UK's new eVisa

What employers should know about the UK's new eVisa

As we approach the 31 December deadline for the transformation of UK immigration status documents from passport stamps and physical documents to the new eVisa, it is important to be aware of the consequences for employees. We provide a simple guide to share with HR teams, friends, family, and colleagues who may be affected by the digitalisation of UK immigration.

The eVisa transition

The new eVisa is a digital record of immigration status that will replace physical documents such as Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs). It will not affect people's immigration status, only how they prove it in order to access certain rights such as working, renting, travelling, and health and welfare services.

This change aims to make proving immigration status smoother and more secure.

Who will need an eVisa?

While British and Irish citizens will continue using documents such as passports, most Europeans already have a digital record of their immigration status through the EU Settlement Scheme. Those still relying on physical documents should make the free application to register for an eVisa soon.

Applying for an eVisa

Applicants must first create a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account to access the new eVisa on the www.gov.uk/eVisa website. They will need their BRP number or alternatively, the Unique Application Number (UAN) from their last visa application, as well as a valid passport or identity document. Next, use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to confirm identity and apply to link the UKVI account to an eVisa.

An email should be received within days, confirming the eVisa is live. It is advisable to then generate a share code using [the 'View and Prove' service](#) to ensure it is working.



Potential issues

With a digital roll-out of this magnitude, it is unsurprising that there have been many reports of teething problems with the technology. Some users face challenges setting up accounts or encounter errors when accessing their eVisas online. Incorrect personal details can also be an issue, raising concerns about being stranded abroad without proof of status to return to the UK.

Immigration Minister, Seema Malhotra, last week warned that many are still unaware and unprepared for the transition, urging parents to make sure they have applied for their children's eVisas too.

Help with the transition

Seema Malhotra acknowledged there had been some malfunctions and in a written statement to parliament announced that BRPs which expire at the end of 2024 may still be used to generate a share code to prove a right to work and rent where the person has valid immigration status.

For those who don't have a BRP and need to make what is known as a No Time Limit (NTL) application, the process, which previously involved lots of evidence gathering, has been greatly streamlined and a digital UKVI account is now created alongside their application, rather than only following the lengthy NTL process.

To avoid people being stranded outside the UK, the Immigration Minister also announced that airlines and other carriers will be able to accept a BRP or similar EUSS BRC expiring on or after 31 December 2024 as valid evidence of permission to travel until at least 31 March - a date to be kept under review. Those travelling in the early part of 2025 are advised to continue carrying their expired BRP, as this will add to the range of checking options already available to carriers. It's also worth generating a share code before travel, as these last up to 90 days.

Impact on employment checks

As HR teams should be aware, although their BRPs may expire at the end of December, employees' work visas may last longer. Many right to work checks will have been done using the UKVI online service and therefore should not be affected by the eVisa transition.

Prior to April 2022, manual checks of BRPs sufficed. In these cases, in order to retain a statutory excuse (the defence against civil penalties for employing an illegal worker), employers should carry out an updated right to work check using a share code before the end of the year. This is particularly pertinent since the civil penalty for illegal working was raised to up to £60,000 per employee.

If you have any questions or difficulties regarding the eVisa, right to work practices, sponsorship compliance or UK immigration, please do not hesitate to contact [\[email protected\]](#).