

European Union Announces Visa Waiver Program for 2023

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. waiver /'weɪvər/ (Noun) an act or example of not recognizing or obeying a right, law, etc.; a document recording such an act
Example: The scholars passed all the requirements and are eligible for a tuition fee waiver.
2. in advance /ɪn əd'væns/ (Phrase) before an event or a point in the future
Example: If you would like to eat at the well-known restaurant, you have to make a reservation two weeks in-advance.
3. detail /'diːteɪl/ (Noun) a single fact or item
Example: I am calling her right now to get the details of the event.
4. authorize /'ɔːθəˌraɪz/ (Verb) to officially approve something
Example: The owner gave her authorization to change the cafe's design.
5. criminal record /ˌkrɪmɪnl 'rekərd/ (Noun) an official list of crimes that a person has committed
Example: They did a background check on the man and found out that he has a criminal record.
6. database /'deɪtəbeɪs/ (Noun) an organized set of information stored by a computer
Example: The company stores all records on their database.



The European Union has announced details of a new visa waiver program that will require tourists from a number of countries to apply in advance — and pay — to visit the Schengen Zone. Now, citizens of around 60 countries can visit and travel between Europe's 26 Schengen Zone countries for up to 90 days without a visa. These include tourists from the US, the UK, Japan and South Korea.

With the new program, travelers from these countries still won't need a visa, but from May 2023 they'll need to apply to visit through the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS). Adults between 18 and 70 will also have to pay a fee of about \$7. The European Commission says ETIAS has been developed to find security risks while still allowing people to travel without a visa. ETIAS applications will be done online, asking for things like passports, personal details and the country where the traveler will first arrive. Authorized tourists will be able to travel between all Schengen Zone countries.

Travelers will also be asked security questions, such as whether they have a criminal record. The system will check this information against other European databases. The European Commission says that over 95% of people will get travel authorization in just a few minutes. However, for those with criminal records and other issues found in the databases, it could take up to 96 hours longer — and up to 30 days for a small number of people. ETIAS authorization will let travelers visit the Schengen Zone as many times as they want for three years, but it won't let them live and work there.

DISCUSSION

1. What countries have you always wanted to visit? Why?
2. What's the longest you've ever stayed in a foreign country?
3. Are there any countries you've been to that you wouldn't want to visit again?
4. Which of your friends or family do you enjoy traveling with the most?
5. Wherever you go becomes a part of you somehow. — Anita Desai. What do you make of this statement?