



Ms Monique Hawkins  
the3million

DECS Reference: MIN/1467395/26

26 February 2026

Dear Ms Hawkins and co-signatories,

Thank you for your letter of 17 February about dual nationals.

The UK Government has introduced electronic travel authorisations (ETAs) as part of our wider plans for a more secure, fully digital UK border. ETAs have been introduced to enhance our ability to screen travellers upstream and prevent people who may pose a threat from travelling here. The introduction of an ETA scheme is in line with the approach many of the UK's international partners have already taken to border security, including the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the forthcoming European Union ETIAS.

An ETA is a permission to travel to the UK, for those passengers who would not typically require a visa for short visits to the UK.

Under UK immigration legislation, a dual British citizen is not eligible for an ETA. The Home Secretary's power to grant an ETA derives from the Immigration Rules, which do not apply to British citizens. She therefore does not have the power to grant an ETA to a British citizen.

Subjecting any British citizen to the requirements and restrictions associated with ETAs or visas would be at odds with the position of British nationals in UK immigration law. This includes dual nationals, who do not become subject to immigration controls simply by taking on a second nationality; they cannot apply for visas, entry clearance or ETAs as they fall outside the scope of the Immigration Rules. Their entry to the UK has to be in line with their right of abode in the UK.

Primary legislation states that: "all those who have the right of abode in the United Kingdom shall be free to come and go into and from the United Kingdom without let or hindrance except such as may be required under and in accordance with this Act to enable their right to be established".

What this means is that British citizens cannot be subjected to immigration controls, beyond establishing that a person has the right of abode. British citizens, including dual nationals, should travel to and enter the UK on a British passport. If you are a British citizen and seek to travel to the UK without a British passport you may experience difficulties and delays. Public information strongly advising dual nationals to travel with a valid UK passport or Certificate of Entitlement (CoE) has been available since October 2024, including official guidance on GOV.UK, and we included guidance for dual citizens in our ETA communications campaign which has been running since 2023.

Carriers, if they are to avoid the possibility of a financial penalty, are required to carry only appropriately documented passengers to the UK. Appropriate documentation for a British citizen is a British passport. Other forms of immigration documentation (such as e-Visas and ETAs) are not applicable to British citizens. If a British citizen seeks to travel to the UK without a British passport, airlines will likely be unable to verify their status as a British citizen, resulting in possible delay and refusal of boarding.

Any British citizen seeking to enter the UK may only evidence their right of abode in the UK at the border with a valid British passport, or other passport endorsed with a CoE to the right of abode.

We recognise that the introduction of the ETA is a substantial change for British dual citizens of ETA eligible nationalities. That is why we encouraged British citizens in this position to make the necessary arrangements, to avoid complications when travelling to the UK after 25 February. Recognising the potential impact on dual British nationals, we have issued temporary operational guidance to carriers on the acceptance of alternative documentation. This includes carriers accepting, at their discretion, an expired UK passport (issued 1989 or later) alongside a valid non-visa national third country passport, where biographic details match. This is a short-term transitional measure and remains an operational decision for carriers. It does not replace the requirement to hold a valid UK passport or a valid CoE.

Emergency Travel Documents remain available for urgent travel in defined circumstances. Adults and children who have previously held a UK passport issued after 1 January 2006 can apply where they need to travel urgently. Where a person has not previously held a UK passport, they can only apply if their urgent travel meets the exceptional circumstances criteria, for example urgent medical reasons or attending the funeral of a close relative. Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/travel-urgently-from-abroad-without-uk-passport>.

We have published an ETA guide for dual nationals on GOV.UK, available at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/electronic-travel-authorisation-eta-guide-for-dual-citizens>.

There is also guidance on GOV.UK to help people determine whether they qualify for British citizenship at: <https://www.gov.uk/check-british-citizenship>.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Tapp', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Mike Tapp MP**  
**Minister for Migration & Citizenship**