

If we go on holiday, will we face any problems when coming back to the UK?

I am outside the UK – will I be allowed to travel back to and enter the UK?

The rules around the right to travel to and enter the UK are very complex and depend on many different pieces of legislation. Factors such as your nationality and whether you were living in the UK before 31st December 2020, all play a part. This document attempts to capture the different situations people are in, and whether they are allowed to travel to and enter the UK.

This document is aimed at those who are eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), rather than those who obtain other types of visas such as Skilled Worker visas, student visas etc. **If you have not yet applied to the EUSS** (and do not have other permission to live in the UK), seek [legal advice](#) urgently and do not make any plans to travel – **this document does not cover your situation**.

See also our travel checklist webpage [No Permission No Travel](#).

How to use this document

This document contains five separate tables, choose the one which best describes your situation:

1. Granted pre-settled or settled status under the EUSS
2. Resident in UK before 31 Dec 2020, and awaiting a final outcome on an EUSS application – has a Certificate of Application (CoA)
3. Not resident in UK before 31 Dec 2020, but applied to the EUSS as a joining family member
4. British citizen or citizen with multiple nationalities one of which is British
5. Has Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) (not under the EUSS)

With thanks to Chris Benn of [Seraphus](#), for his input.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this page is for general guidance and does not constitute legal advice. It is a simplified overview and individual situations are often more complex. Given the changing nature of laws, rules and regulations, and the inherent hazards of electronic communication, there may be delays, omissions or inaccuracies in information contained in this page. Accordingly, the information on this site is provided with the understanding that the authors and publishers are not herein engaged in rendering legal advice. As such, it should not be used as a substitute for consultation with professional legal advisers. **Please seek [legal advice](#) if you are affected by any of these situations.**

1. Granted pre-settled or settled status under the EUSS

Non-visa national

Is an EEA or Swiss national, or has another nationality which is not on the '[visa national list](#)'.

Visa national

Has one of the nationalities on the '[visa national list](#)'.

Greg is an American citizen who obtained pre-settled status on the basis of his durable partnership with a Swiss citizen.

Zahra has an Egyptian passport and is married to a Norwegian citizen. They both have settled status. Zahra obtained her settled status in 2019 using her EEA Residence Card. This residence card expired in March 2020, but Zahra did not bother replacing it as she has been proving her right to work in the UK using the digital right-to-work check.

Can Greg or Zahra travel to the UK?

Yes – make sure your travel document is linked to your eVisa

More info - recommended evidence to take

Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)

EUSS status holders have an eVisa which shows their pre-settled or settled status in their UKVI account. It is essential that your eVisa is working and your current travel document(s) is attached to it, so that the carrier gets an automated 'permission to travel' message from the UK when you check-in. If your travel document is not attached to your UKVI account, your carrier will instead need to check a share code or contact the 'Carrier Support Hub'.

Entering the UK

EEA, Swiss, Australian, Canadian, Japanese, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and American citizens can use eGates. Other non-visa nationals will need to see a Border Force officer.

National ID cards

EEA citizens with pre-settled or settled status can rely on their valid National ID card to enter the UK indefinitely if it is a biometric National ID card. Currently, non-biometric National ID cards can be used to enter the UK but this could change in the future.

Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)

Almost all biometric residence cards (EEA BRCs and EUSS BRCs) expired on 31 December 2024, and visa nationals now need to rely on their eVisa. Therefore, as described in the column to the left for non-visa nationals, make sure your travel document is linked to your eVisa.

Entering the UK

You will need to see a Border Force officer, who will check your travel document to see that it is linked to your eVisa. If your travel document is not linked to your eVisa a Border Force officer should still be able to confirm your EUSS status but this may take longer.

2. Resident in UK before 31 December 2020

Awaiting a final outcome on an EUSS application – has Certificate of Application

Non-visa national with CoA

Is an EEA or Swiss national,
or has another nationality which is not on the '[visa national list](#)'.

Visa national with CoA

Has one of the nationalities on the '[visa national list](#)'.

Juliette is French, living in the UK since 2017 but missed the deadline to apply to the EUSS. She submitted a late application in 2022, which was refused but she applied for an Administrative Review and is still waiting for the outcome.

Gloria is Filipino, and she is married to Dieter, German citizen. They have been married since 2018 and have been living in the UK. She applied for Settled Status in Feb 2021, is still waiting for a decision, has gone abroad and is worried whether she can travel back to the UK.

Can Juliette or Gloria travel to the UK?

Yes – but may need evidence

No – with some minor exceptions

More info - recommended evidence to take

Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)

If your travel document is the same one you applied to the EUSS with, then carriers should receive a 'permission to travel' message. If you've changed your travel document since applying to the EUSS, the carrier will not receive a 'permission to travel' message and instead will need to check a share code or contact the Home Office Carrier Support Hub before allowing you to board.

Entering the UK

You should carry a copy of your CoA, together with evidence that you were resident in the UK before 31 December 2020 and have remained resident after this date. This is especially important if you made a late application, or if you are waiting for the outcome of an Admin Review or appeal. See [GOV.UK: Entering the UK under the EU Settlement Scheme and EU Settlement Scheme family permit](#). If you applied as a family member, also carry evidence of your family relationship.

National ID cards

EEA citizens with a pending EUSS application can rely on their valid National ID card to enter the UK whilst their application remains pending if it is a biometric National ID card. Currently, non-biometric National ID cards can be used to enter the UK but this could change in the future.

Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)

Carriers will not get a 'permission to travel' message for visa nationals with a pending EUSS application.

Carriers are not allowed to accept a CoA as a visa or visa exemption document. You will only be able to board if you have an in-date EUSS Family Permit, or an in-date EEA BRC.

Entering the UK

If you manage to reach the UK border, then you should be allowed to enter the UK if you have a valid or expired EUSS Family Permit / EEA BRC. However, you should also carry a copy of your CoA, to, evidence that you were resident in the UK before 31 December 2020, and proof of your family relationship. See '[EU Settlement Scheme: Border Force guidance](#)', section 'Arriving passengers with a pending valid EUSS application', and consider seeking [legal advice](#).

3. Not resident in UK before 31 December 2020 Eligible to apply to EUSS as a joining family member (JFM)

Applied for EUSS family permit, not yet issued	Has valid EUSS family permit that is not expired	Applied for EUSS, not yet granted No valid EUSS family permit
Suzanne (Dutch) is married to Lee (Chinese), both have lived in UK since 2018 and both have settled status. Lee's father Chen (dependent on Lee) has applied for an EUSS family permit from China and is waiting for a decision.	Agnieszka (Polish) and her civil partner Jack (Canadian) both have pre-settled status. Jack's 16-year-old son Oscar who was living in Canada wants to join them. He has applied for and been granted an EUSS Family Permit.	Maria (Spanish) has been living in the UK since 2020 and has settled status. Her husband Jose is still in Spain but wants to join Maria and has applied directly to the EUSS from Spain. Anna was granted an EUSS Family Permit a year ago, travelled to the UK, applied for the EUSS and is still waiting. Her EUSS Family Permit has now expired.
Can Chen, Oscar, Jose or Anna travel to the UK? (With stated intention to settle, rather than as a visitor)		
no - not until family permit is issued	yes - can enter and leave UK freely for 6 months	no - not until status is granted
More info - recommended evidence to take, and basis of rights		
<p><u>Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)</u> If a person wishes to travel to the UK while waiting for an EUSS family permit decision, they must do so on a temporary basis as a visitor for up to 6 months. This means they must either hold an ETA (if they are a non-visa national) or a visit visa (if they are a visa national).</p> <p><u>Entering the UK</u> They will need to provide evidence that they will be leaving the UK in order to return overseas and collect their family permit. However, persons in this situation are at risk of refusal if it is decided their intention is not merely to visit the UK.</p>	<p><u>Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)</u> Carriers should permit boarding after inspecting the EUSS Family Permit to confirm it is valid and not expired.</p> <p><u>Entering the UK</u> EEA, Swiss, Australian, Canadian, Japanese, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and American citizens can use eGates, whereas other non-visa nationals will need to see a Border Force officer. You should usually apply to EUSS within 3 months of your arrival in the UK.</p> <p><u>National ID cards</u> EEA citizens with a valid EUSS family permit, or a pending EUSS application, can rely on their valid National ID card to enter the UK whilst their application remains pending if it is a biometric National ID card. Currently non-biometric National ID cards can be used to enter the UK but this could change in the future.</p>	<p><u>Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)</u> If a person wishes to travel to the UK while waiting for an EUSS decision, they must do so on a temporary basis as a visitor for up to 6 months. This means they must either hold an ETA (if they are a non-visa national) or a visit visa (if they are a visa national).</p> <p><u>Entering the UK</u> They will need to provide evidence that they will be leaving the UK before re-entering on the basis of their EUSS status. However, persons in this situation are at risk of refusal if it is decided their intention is not merely to visit the UK.</p>

4. British citizen / citizen with multiple nationalities one of which is British

Has a valid British passport	Has settled status but no British passport	Does not have status under the EUSS, does not have a valid British passport
<p>Angela is a Swedish citizen who naturalised as a British citizen fifteen years ago and so holds dual nationality. and has both a British and a Swedish passport.</p>	<p>Marcus is German, obtained settled status in 2019 and naturalised as a British citizen in 2020. He is now a dual national, but he only has a naturalisation certificate as proof of his British nationality as he has not yet applied for a British passport. Up until now he has been travelling to and from the UK with just his German passport.</p>	<p>Isabelle was born in 2021 to a Polish parent with settled status, so she was born with both Polish and British citizenship. Her parents have only applied for a Polish passport for her.</p> <p>Viktor is a Bulgarian citizen who naturalised as a British citizen using a Permanent Residence document in 2019. He still travels on his Bulgarian passport, has not applied for a British passport.</p>

Can Angela, Marcus, Isabelle or Viktor enter the UK from abroad?

yes

No - must have British passport from 25 February 2026

More info - recommended evidence to take, and basis of rights

Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)
British citizens should show their British passports to when checking in. Their EEA/Swiss passport will not be linked to an eVisa, so they cannot demonstrate 'permission to travel' to a carrier without a British passport.

Entering the UK
British citizens should ensure they can show their British passport when entering the UK, as their EEA/Swiss passports no longer gives them the automatic right to enter the UK.

Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)
When a person naturalises as a British citizen, they will lose their status under the EUSS. However, their UKVI account may continue to show a their EUSS status even though this is no longer valid. It will be difficult to board a carrier (plane, train or ferry) without a British passport because from 25 February 2026, carriers will need to enforce a 'No permission, no travel' policy – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/no-permission-no-travel-uk-set-to-enforce-eta-scheme>. See also this guide for dual citizens - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/electronic-travel-authorisation-eta-guide-for-dual-citizens>.

Entering the UK
If citizens nevertheless manage to travel on their non-British passport, it is recommended that they carry with them a certificate of registration or naturalisation if they have one, or – for children - other documents such as birth certificates and proof of parents being British or settled at the time of their birth. Without a British passport or certificate of entitlement in their non-British passport, citizens may have some trouble proving their right to be admitted to the UK. To prove British citizenship, people should [apply for a British passport](#) (costs between £61.50 and £120 as at time of writing), or alternatively a '[Certificate of Entitlement](#)' (costs £589 as at time of writing).

5. Has Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)

Has Indefinite Leave to Remain which is not settled status under the EUSS

Willem is a Dutch citizen who moved to the UK in 1981. He found out that because he arrived in the UK before 1989, he was eligible to apply for a biometric card as evidence of his status under the Windrush Scheme. These cards expired by December 2024, and so Willem will have needed to [create a UKVI account](#) to access his ILR as an eVisa.

Sofia is an Italian citizen who has a letter from the Home Office from 1972 stating she has Indefinite Leave to Remain. She has always lived in the UK since this time and has only had short trips abroad. She decided not to apply to the EUSS. Nor has she [applied for an eVisa via the No Time Limit \(NTL\) process](#).

Can Sofia and Willem enter the UK from abroad? (With stated intention to return to home in UK rather than as a visitor)

yes

yes – but getting an eVisa might make travel more smooth

More info - recommended evidence to take, and basis of rights

Boarding a carrier (plane, train, ferry)

If you only have physical proof such as a stamp in your passport or a letter from the Home Office, you may have some trouble proving your right to board a plane, train or ferry, although [Carrier Guidance](#) makes clear (in section “Visa checks”) that this physical proof **should** be accepted. If you believe you have ILR but do not have a document to prove this, then you will struggle to board a plane and you should definitely apply for a digital record of your immigration status in the form of an eVisa. Depending on the circumstances, this can be done by either making a [late EUSS application](#), [an NTL application](#) or a [Windrush Scheme application](#). For EU citizens who have lived in the UK for a long time, it is likely that the best option is to obtain an eVisa is to make a late EUSS application. If you already have a digital form of your ILR, i.e. an eVisa, it is essential that your eVisa is working and your current travel document(s) is attached to it, so that the carrier gets an automated ‘permission to travel’ message from the UK when you check-in. If your travel document is not attached to your UKVI account, your carrier will instead need to check a share code or contact the ‘Carrier Support Hub’.

Entering the UK

EEA, Swiss, Australian, Canadian, Japanese, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and American citizens should be able to use eGates if you have an eVisa. If your ILR is in the form of a physical proof such as a stamp in your passport or a letter from the Home Office, you will be directed to speak to a Border Force officer. You may have some trouble proving your right to be admitted to the UK, though [Border Force guidance](#) makes clear (in section “Long term residents and indefinite leave holders”) that you should be granted entry with such documents.

National ID cards

If you only have ILR outside the EUSS, then you are not eligible to travel to or enter the UK with a National ID card.