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# VOISINS VOICES

A BRITISH EMBASSY PARIS NEWSLETTER



British Embassy  
Paris

## Welcome

Welcome to Voisins Voices! This edition includes a few words from our Ambassador, information on upcoming changes to border regulations, on winter sports, healthcare and more.

Please do forward this to anyone you think would find it useful. [To be added to the distribution list, simply follow this link](#) and fill in the form with your email address and name.

As always, our online Living in France Guide has the most up to date information. Whether you have lived in France for many years, or recently arrived - [please click on this link to see more detail and register](#) to be notified of updates.



## What we've been up to A message from Ambassador Menna Rawlings

I feel I say this every year but I can't believe we are already in December. And what a year it's been!

This year we have been marking the 120th anniversary of the Entente Cordiale, including with British military officers participating in a changing of the guard at the Elysee Palace and French officers doing the same at Buckingham Palace. Last month, I was also delighted to welcome Richard Moore, chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, to Paris for the inaugural Entente Cordiale lecture, in which he underlined the vital links between our countries in matters of intelligence and security.

We also reflected on these links at the commemorations in Normandy marking the 80th anniversary of DDay. It was an incredible privilege to stand with veterans as they remembered

remembered their friends lost on the beaches, and an important reminder of the deep shared history between the UK and France. More recently, the Prime Minister was invited to join President Macron at the Armistice Day ceremony in Paris, 80 years to the day since Sir Winston Churchill joined General de Gaulle at the same ceremony in 1944.



This year I've also been struck, in my conversations with British and French nationals on both side of the Channel, at the depth of affection which exists between our people and communities – truly the beating heart of our entente. As always, delivering for you – and for the wider UK interest – has been a key priority for us this year. It was in large part thanks to the hard work of our consular and borders team that the summer passed smoothly for most travellers to and from France – including the thousands who crossed the Channel for the Olympics and Paralympics. At the Embassy, we ran a specialist operations centre 7 days a week during the Games, to make sure we could respond to any potential crises – we were delighted that the period passed without any large-scale incidents. Over summer, we welcomed a host of royal and ministerial visitors to Paris, to cheer on our teams and build deeper links with their French counterparts.





I'm also really pleased to say that we've worked hard to protect the agreement with France which makes school trips smoother for French pupils crossing the border, as we prepare for the introduction for the UK's Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) next year. This means that that children aged 18 and under travelling as part of a French school group will be temporarily exempted from the ETA requirement until a group solution is developed, allowing EU, EEA and Swiss children to continue to use their identity cards on organised French school trips to the UK so long as they meet the requirements of the UK's immigration rules. This is a great result which will help us maintain educational and cultural links with our closest continental neighbour. For more information on ETA, including how it will apply to your French family and friends (or those that have other nationalities), take a look at the information and links provided further down in this newsletter.

Looking ahead to next year, it's a really exciting time for the UK-France relationship. The new UK Government has made it clear they want to reset the UK's relationship with European partners, including France. And the UK will host a UK-France Summit in the UK next year, where we can further strengthen our ties and our joint work to deliver for the French and British people. Closer to home (for me, anyway!) I'm looking forward to celebrating the 300th anniversary of the British Ambassador's Residence in Paris. This amazing building works extremely hard for us – from hosting key political contacts for meetings to giving us the opportunity to speak to the public about the UK-France relationship at events like Patrimoine Day. Do make sure you're following our social media pages to hear more about how we'll be celebrating this next year.

As always, please forward on this newsletter to anyone you think would find it useful, and if you have friends travelling to France over the coming weeks, please encourage them to sign up for our travel advice alerts so they have all the information they need. Our Living In France Guide on gov.uk remains your one stop shop for everything you need to know as a British person living in France.

With that, all that remains is for me to wish you a very happy festive season – whether you're celebrating Christmas, Hannukah or simply looking forward to spending time with loved ones.

Joyeuses fêtes !

*Menna*

## EES: EU Entry/Exit System

The EU plans to introduce the Entry/Exit System (EES). The exact date that EES will be introduced has not been confirmed. Once introduced, non-EU nationals, including UK nationals, visiting the EU will need to create a digital record when entering the EU's Schengen Zone. This includes providing biometric data (fingerprints and facial image) at the border.

If you are a UK national with rights under the Withdrawal Agreement, you will be exempt from EES registration, if you have the correct documentation.

In France, documents that allow exemption include all forms of Withdrawal Agreement residency permits, including 5-year, 10-year and permanent residency permits. Any other valid residency permit issued by France or any other EU member state will also mean that you are exempt.

Please note that minors must be in possession of a Document de circulation pour étranger mineur (DCEM), whether travelling accompanied or alone, to be exempt from EES. DCEMs are free for beneficiaries of the Withdrawal Agreement. Apply for a DCEM through the French government website [Document de circulation pour étranger mineur \(DCEM\) Service-Public.fr](https://www.service-public.fr). If you have one of these documents, you will not need to register in the EES when travelling.

Find out more information on the EES initiative on the [EU's official Travel Europe website](#).

## Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)



ETAs will be implemented for European Nationals travelling to the UK in 2025. Nationalities from the [following locations](#) can apply for an ETA from 5 March 2025, with an ETAs becoming obligatory from 2 April 2025.

### Who does not need an ETA

Please check [this link](#) to find out if you currently need an ETA or check if your nationality can apply later.

Students aged 18 and under travelling on a French organised school trip, which has properly completed the [UK-FR School Travel Information Form](#) will be exempt from ETA. Teachers and guardians travelling as part of the trip will NOT be exempted and should ensure they have properly requested an ETA ahead of travel.

## **You do not need an ETA if any of these apply to you:**

- you have a visa
- you have permission to live, work or study in the UK (including settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme)
- you are a British or Irish citizen
- you are travelling with a British overseas territories citizen passport
- you live in Ireland and you are travelling from Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey or the Isle of Man

## **Dual citizens**

- If you are a dual citizen with British or Irish citizenship, you do not need an ETA. Prove your permission to travel using your British passport, Irish passport or other passport containing a certificate of entitlement.

## **What you can do with an ETA**

You can get an ETA instead of a visa if you are:

- coming to the UK for up to 6 months for tourism, visiting family and friends, business or short-term study
- coming to the UK for up to 3 months on the Creative Worker visa concession
- coming to the UK for a permitted paid engagement
- transiting through the UK – including if you are not going through UK border control
- If you are coming to the UK for another reason, check if you need a visa instead.

## **What you cannot do with an ETA**

You cannot:

- stay in the UK for longer than 6 months
- do paid or unpaid work for a UK company or as a self-employed person, unless you are doing a permitted paid engagement or event or work on the Creative Worker visa concession
- claim public funds (benefits)
- live in the UK through frequent or successive visits
- marry or register a civil partnership, or give notice of marriage or civil partnership - you will need to apply for a Marriage Visitor visa

## **How much it costs**

It costs £10 to apply. Everyone travelling needs to get an ETA, including babies and children. You can apply for other people.

You cannot get a refund after you apply.

## Before you start

You need:

- the passport you will travel with - not a photocopy or digital passport
- access to your emails
- a credit card, debit card, Apple Pay or Google Pay
- You will need to upload or take photos of the:
  - passport
  - face of the person applying
- You do not need to enter your travel details.
- Apply for an ETA
- The fastest way to apply is using the UK ETA app.

## School Trips and ETA

The government has considered the implications of the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme on French school groups visiting the UK, and has agreed that children aged 18 and under travelling as part of a French school group will be temporarily exempted from the ETA requirement until a group solution is developed. This will allow EU, EEA and Swiss children to continue to use their identity cards on organised French school trips to the UK so long as they meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules. The UK-FR school trip form provides the exemption for ETA and must be used to benefit from the exemption. The form may still be used even if all school children have passports.

This agreement is specific to France and helps to maintain educational and cultural links with our closest continental neighbour. We will keep the position under review and ensure that we continue to operate our border in the UK's best interests

## Travel



Many of you may be travelling over the festive season to see family, friends or to have a well-deserved break!

If you are travelling, please be aware that we are likely to see an increase in traffic which may lead to delays at certain times.

Below are links to some popular travel operators, airports and ports' X accounts for live updates:

- [Eurostar](#)
- [Eurotunnel](#)
- [DFDS Updates](#)
- [Port of Calais](#)
- [P&O Ferries](#)
- [Heathrow Airport](#)
- [Gatwick Airport](#)
- [Stansted Airport](#)
- [Luton Airport](#)
- [Manchester Airport](#)
- [Birmingham Airport](#)
- [Cardiff Airport](#)
- [Glasgow Airport](#)

[Read more on our France Travel Advice.](#)

## Ski Season

Ski season is here and many of you might be heading to the mountains! While there's lots of fun to be had, it's important to stay safe on the slopes. Here are some top tips:

### **Before you go**

- Read our [Travel Advice](#).
- Buy appropriate insurance: make sure your [travel insurance](#) covers the activities you want to do and know what the exemptions to your insurance policy are. Medical costs and returning to the UK unexpectedly can be very expensive. Many insurance policies will not cover damage to rental equipment or skiing off-piste without a guide, and many policies require you to wear a helmet at all times. Check your policy before you go!
- Check the [Ski Club of Great Britain's website](#) for information about how to plan and safely enjoy a ski holiday.
- Check your EHIC or GHIC: if you're travelling in the European Union (EU) or Switzerland, you can use your [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\) or Global Health Insurance Card \(GHIC\)](#). The EHIC and GHIC provide medically necessary state-provided healthcare that cannot reasonably wait until you come back to the UK. The healthcare provider in the country you're visiting decides whether treatment is medically necessary. The EHIC or GHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs, such as mountain rescue in ski resorts, being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property.

- Make sure you're fit to ski: winter sports are physical activities, make sure you consider your health and fitness before you travel. If you're not physically prepared, you're also more likely to injure yourself.
- If you have not skied for a while, consider joining a refresher class.

### **When you're at the resort**

- Follow local advice: understand your resort, including information about the pistes and any local laws or regulations. You can ask your travel company or the local tourist information for details.
- Think about wearing a helmet many insurance policies require you to wear a helmet on the slopes regardless of the local legal requirements. In some resorts, it is a legal requirement for children and young people to wear helmets. Check the rules in the resort and the requirements of your insurance policy.
- Choose the right routes: look at the piste map, and understand what it shows you. Be aware of how pistes are classified to indicate their difficulty and choose the right routes or pistes for you. This will help ensure you do not overstretch yourself and get into a tricky situation. Know your limits and do not attempt slopes beyond your level of ability.
- Follow the skiing code of conduct: read the [International Ski Federation \(FIS\) rules of conduct for skiers and snowboarders](#) on the SkiClub GB website. They help everyone stay safe on the slopes, and know what to do if there is an accident.
- If you are considering off-piste skiing, make sure you understand the risks, you're properly prepared, know how to keep yourself and others safe, and have the right equipment. Check whether your insurance covers you for off-piste. Details of [equipment you'll need and courses are on SkiClub GB's website](#).
- Be avalanche and weather aware: snow reports, weather forecasts and avalanche risk levels are available in-resort at the lift stations. [Snow and weather reports and information on avalanches are also on SkiClub GB's website](#).
- Be drink aware: alcohol affects your resistance and awareness of the cold, and also impairs your judgement, co-ordination and reaction time, both on the slopes and après-ski. Drinking alcohol at altitude will affect you more quickly, and your insurance cover may not be valid if you injure yourself or others whilst intoxicated.

## **Healthcare while you travel**



### **3 Tips for stress-free healthcare access when away from home**

The Christmas period is when many people choose to travel. Whether you are homeward bound for the UK, hitting the slopes or getting your home ready to receive family and friends in France, the following information is for you. Read on to see how you, or the people who are travelling to see you, can reduce the worry linked to seeing a doctor away from home.



**Tip #1** [Travel with your European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\), Global Health Insurance Card \(GHIC\) or carte européenne d'assurance maladie \(CEAM\).](#)

When you travel outside of your country of residence, [this card](#) will cover you for state-provided care within the European Union, EEA countries, Switzerland and the UK (you could be charged for accessing the NHS if you are no longer a UK resident, see [here](#) for details). It is the treating physician in the country you are visiting who decides whether treatment is necessary and cannot wait until you return home.

The country that issues you with an EHIC, is the country that covers you for state-run healthcare. If you make social security contributions to France, then you are France-insured and should apply to your local Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie (CPAM) for a CEAM (see [here](#) for the process). If the UK covers your healthcare in France (for example you are a UK state pensioner and you have registered a E121 or S1 form), NHS Business Services Authority will issue you with a UK EHIC or a GHIC. Please see [here](#) for the process. Each family member should be issued their own EHIC/GHIC or CEAM and travel with it.

**Tip #2** Know how to apply for a replacement EHIC/GHIC or CEAM if you forget or lose your card, or it gets stolen

If you do find yourself abroad at a public hospital with no EHIC/GHIC or CEAM snug in your wallet, do not panic. It is possible to apply for a Provisional Replacement Certificate (PRC) if you are UK-insured or a certificat provisoire de remplacement (CPR) if you are France-insured. These certificates cover you in the exact same way as the EHIC/GHIC or CEAM.

You can apply for a PRC online [here](#). You can apply for a CPS in the same way you can apply for a CEAM: contact your CPAM via your ameli account or by calling 36 46 or +33 1 84 90 36 46 (if outside of France).

**Tip #3** Take out comprehensive travel insurance

EHIC/GHIC and CEAM cover is limited to necessary state provided care. It will not cover you for any private care, private prescriptions, private ambulances, co-payments, emergency medical evacuation, mountain rescue or repatriation. We strongly urge you to take out [insurance](#) and read the small print, so you understand how you are covered. We wish you healthy and happy holidays!

## Seasonal workers

If you are coming out to France to work the winter season on the slopes, make sure you follow the correct process to enable you to live and work in France for the time that you wish. Check out the Interior Ministry website and flyer [here](#). Your employer can also contact the [Office for Immigration and Integration](#) if they have any questions.

One big change this year is the need to apply [online](#) for your seasonal residence permit. There are also various steps you need to take in the UK before you start your season so do your research! We've been working with the French authorities and one of our partner organisations, Seasonal Businesses in Travel, to make the process as smooth as possible. Check out their [website](#) for more detail.

Remember that if you are on a French work contract, you will be paying social security contributions to the French system and therefore eligible to access the French healthcare system once you've formalised your residency. This also means you will not be able to use your UK-issued Global or European Health Insurance card so make sure to take out comprehensive health insurance. More information is available on the [Living in France Guide](#) and [Living in Europe Guide](#).

## Support for Victims of Domestic Violence

[This multilingual information portal](#) was created by Women for Women France in collaboration with 30 experts with the aim of becoming the national reference: it contains reliable and comprehensible information for French and non-French victims of domestic violence, regardless of the language they speak and is already available in 16 languages.

It contains 90 practical guides that respond in a clear and precise manner to concrete concerns in the following areas:

- Money, housing, independence
- Separation, divorce, child custody
- Safety and protection orders
- Physical, sexual and mental health
- Right to stay in France
- Police and justice



## Useful Links to Additional Guidance or Support

Please visit the webpages below for more information. The links and contact details can signpost you in the right direction and also connect you to those who can provide support or offer help with technical matters if you need it.

### Key websites:

- Living in France Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france>
- France Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france>
- Healthcare in France: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-france-including-martinique-and-guadaloupe>
- NHS advice on planning healthcare abroad: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/moving-abroad/planning-your-healthcare>
- If you use social media, do also follow us on [Facebook](#) @ukinfrance and on [X](#) @BritishinFrance.
- EU Entry/Exit System: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-entryexit-system>
- ETA: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta>

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