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ETIAS AND EES: IMPACT ON UKRAINIAN CITIZENS TRAVELLING TO EU

In a world increasingly focused on security and streamlined travel experiences, the European Union (EU) is implementing two major initiatives: the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) and the Entry/Exit System (EES). These systems will fundamentally reshape the travel experience for citizens of Ukraine, who currently enjoy visa-free travel to most EU countries. ETIAS and EES are part of the EU's "smart borders" package, which aims to improve control and information processing using innovative technologies. EES focuses on entry and exit control, while ETIAS involves pre-screening and risk assessment for visa-exempt travellers [1].

These theses explore the upcoming changes brought by ETIAS and EES, analysing their practical implications, potential challenges, and long-term benefits for Ukrainian travellers.

ETIAS introduces a pre-travel authorization requirement for visa-exempt travellers. The implementation of ETIAS is expected to contribute to more efficient and automated border control, making the passage through border control easier and faster for all passengers. It will also enhance the perception of safety for travellers [2]. Ukrainian citizens, among other visa-exempt nationals, will be required to submit an online application via official ETIAS website or the ETIAS mobile application by

providing personal and travel-related information, including responding to security-related questions. The majority of applications will receive automated approval within minutes, while a small number might require further manual processing and the time of processing can vary from 14 to 30 days depending on necessity to provide additional documents or visit an interview [3].

In contrast, the EES focuses on biometric data collection (facial image and fingerprints) and tracking at border control points. Data collection is not only limited to biometric data but also includes data listed in the travel document and also data related to date and place of entry and exit from the EU countries using the EES [4]. In other words, the EES system helps to ensure faster, safer, and more efficient border control processes by extracting key information from passports and quickly processing them [5]. Upon arrival and departure, Ukrainian travellers will register their fingerprints and travel documents at electronic kiosks within EU border zones. Their movement data will be stored in a central database to improve security monitoring and track overstays.

While both systems introduce additional steps for Ukrainian travellers, there's the potential for long-term benefits. The pre-screening process of ETIAS and the data-driven approach of EES are designed to enhance security within the Schengen Area by identifying potential risks and ensuring compliance with travel regulations [6].

Despite these long-term benefits, the implementation of ETIAS and EES may present some initial challenges. Ukrainian travellers will need to familiarize themselves with the application process and adjust to the new biometric registration procedures at border control points. There is the potential for language barriers or technical difficulties to arise, especially during the early phases of system implementation.

In conclusion, the introduction of ETIAS and EES signals a significant evolution in EU travel and border security regulations. While Ukrainian travellers may experience an initial period of adjustment, these

systems are designed to improve security procedures and create a more streamlined travel experience in the long term.

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