



Welcome to the 2024 edition of Travelling in Europe! So, what's new this year?

The Schengen area is growing – again! Bulgaria and Romania became the newest members of the world's largest passport-free travel zone on 31 March.

To begin with, border checks have been lifted for people travelling by air and sea between these two countries and other countries in the Schengen area, but controls at internal land borders remain in place for the time being.

If you are visiting Austria, Estonia or Norway, don't forget to check out this year's European Capitals of Culture. And if your travels take you to Ireland or Italy, then why not look up the European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism?

Wherever you are travelling in Europe, keep safe and have fun!

Order or download this leaflet here:







With thousands of years of history, a rich cultural heritage and breathtaking scenery, Europe is home to some of the world's most popular destinations

As well as attracting millions of visitors from overseas, those who call Europe home love to explore the multitude of cities and countries on their doorstep.

Today, it is as easy for Europeans to travel around the EU as it is to travel within their home country. The removal of most passport checks and the use of the same currency - the euro - in 20 EU countries have made travelling much easier. The creation of a single market where people, goods, services and money can move freely has brought wider choice and lower prices.

More and more young Europeans are also getting to know their continent better thanks to the DiscoverEU travel pass.

Check the **Your Europe** website for more information and advice





#### **DOCUMENTS YOU WILL NEED**

#### **EU CITIZENS**

#### Passport or identity card

Thanks to the Schengen Agreement, most EU countries have removed controls at their internal borders.

Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are also in the Schengen area, although they are not in the EU. This means, for example, that you can go skiing in Switzerland without having to show your passport when crossing the border from the EU. Border controls within the Schengen area can exceptionally be reintroduced for a limited period if there is a serious threat to public safety or security.

public surery or security.				
Schengen	Non-Schengen area			
EU countries			Non-EU countries	EU countries
Austria	Germany	Poland	Iceland	Cyprus
Belgium	Greece	Portugal	Liechtenstein	Ireland
Bulgaria (*)	Hungary	Romania (*)	Norway	
Croatia	Italy	Slovakia	Switzerland	
Czechia	Latvia	Slovenia		
Denmark	Lithuania	Spain		
Estonia	Luxembourg	Sweden		
Finland	Malta			
France	Netherlands			

(\*) For air and sea travel only. Checks at internal land borders remain in

When travelling to or returning from EU countries that are not part of the Schengen area, you will need to present a valid passport or ID card. Everyone crossing the EU's external borders, including EU citizens, is subject to systematic checks against relevant databases.

Even if you don't need a passport for border checks within the Schengen area, you will need to carry a <u>valid travel document</u> (your passport or ID card) when travelling in the EU because it may be required for identification or security purposes. Children must have their own passport or ID card. Be aware that the only valid ID is one obtained from your national authority. Before travelling outside the EU, check what documents are required by the non-EU country you are planning to visit.



You will not need a visa when travelling within the EU.



#### **NON-EU CITIZENS**

Note: Citizens of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are treated as EU citizens for the purposes of travel and entry into EU countries, since these four countries are part of the Schengen area.

#### Passport

You will need a valid passport.

### Visa

Citizens from more than 100 countries require a visa to visit the EU. The list of countries whose citizens require visas to travel to Ireland differs slightly from other EU countries.

You can apply for a visa at the consulate or embassy of the EU country you plan to visit (or the one that is your main destination). If you hold a <u>Schengen visa</u>, you can travel to all the Schengen countries. If you have a valid long-stay visa or residence permit issued by one of the Schengen countries, you can stay for up to 90 days in other Schengen countries.

There are more than 60 countries and territories whose citizens do not need a visa to visit the EU for up to 90 days. In mid-2025, visitors from these countries will be required to apply for an ETIAS travel authorisation. The new system will increase security and avoid delays at the border for travellers.

#### MONEY

#### The euro

The euro (€) is currently used every day by more than three quarters of EU citizens, or around 347 million people in 20 EU countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and the Vatican City use the euro as their national currency, in agreement with the EU. A number of countries and territories, such as Kosovo (\*) and Montenegro, also use the euro as their de facto currency.

(\*) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence



### Cards and cash

Today, <u>cross-border euro payments</u>, including cash machine withdrawals and card payments, cost the same as they do at home for EU citizens, although you may still be charged a currency conversion fee if you live outside the euro area. You can now also easily check and compare conversion charges when paying with your card or withdrawing cash abroad. Block any lost or stolen bank cards immediately by calling the issuer. Make a note of the number to ring before you travel. If you enter or leave the EU with €10 000 or more in cash (\*) (or its equivalent in other currencies), you must declare it to the customs authorities.

(\*) Cash means banknotes, coins, bearer negotiable instruments and certain types of gold.

#### **SHOPPING**

#### WITHIN THE EU

There are no limits on what you can buy and take with you when you travel between EU countries, as long as it is for your own personal use and not for resale. Taxes (value added tax and excise duties) are included in the price you pay and no further payment is due in any other EU country.

However, special rules apply in the case of goods subject to excise duty, such as alcohol and tobacco products. To determine whether tobacco and alcohol are for your own use, each country can set guide levels. If you carry a larger quantity of these goods, you may be questioned to check that you have no commercial intent. However, countries may not set their guide levels lower than the amounts in the table below.

Tobacco	Alcohol
800 cigarettes	10 litres of spirits
400 cigarillos	20 litres of fortified wines (such as port or sherry)
200 cigars	90 litres of wine (of which max 60 litres of sparkling wine)
1 kg of tobacco	110 litres of beer





**COMING INTO THE EU** 

If you enter the EU from a non-EU country, you can bring with you goods free of value added tax (VAT) and excise duties for personal use within the limits set out below. The same applies if you come from territories where EU rules on VAT and excise duty do not apply.

There is a higher or lower limit on the amount of tobacco you can bring into the EU depending on the country, so check the customs rules of the EU country you are visiting.

Tobacco (*)		Alcohol
HIGHER LIMIT LOWER LIMIT		1 litre of spirits or undenatured alcohol (ethyl alcohol) or 2 litres of fortified or sparkling wine (**) and
200 cigarettes or 40 cigarettes or		
100 cigarillos or	20 cigarillos or	wille ( ) allu
50 cigars or	10 cigars or	4 litres of still wine and
250 g tobacco	50 g tobacco	16 litres of beer

(\*) Each amount represents 100 % of the total allowance for tobacco products. You may combine any of these, but you must not exceed the total limit. For example: 100 cigarettes (50 % of allowance) + 50 cigarillos (50 % of allowance) = 100 % of total allowance.

(\*\*) For spirits and fortified or sparkling wine, each of these amounts represents 100 % of the total of the allowance, which you can split. For example, you can bring half a litre of spirits and 1 litre of fortified wine both represent half of this allowance.

Travellers under the age of 17 cannot make use of these tobacco and alcohol allowances

If you are travelling from one EU country to another via a non-EU country (e.g. Switzerland), you will need to check the customs rules of that country.



#### Other goods, including perfume

**★** Up to a value of €430 for air and sea travellers

\* Up to a value of €300 for other travellers.

age of 15, but it may not be lower than €150.

Some EU countries apply a lower limit for travellers under the

#### Food

There are no general restrictions on carrying meat or dairy products when travelling within the EU. However, make sure that you don't Don't forget to take bring foodstuffs containing meat, a reusable bag with milk or their products into the EU you when you go from non-EU countries as they could shopping. EU rules carry dangerous pathogens that cause are helping to reduce sickness in EU livestock, such as footthe use of plastic and-mouth disease and African swine bags that litter

fever. The only <u>exceptions</u> are for those and damage the travelling with small quantities for environment, Most personal consumption from Andorra, countries charge the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino or when shopping. Switzerland.

#### **HELP FOR CONSUMERS**

As a consumer, you are guaranteed fair treatment,  $\underline{\text{products that}}$ meet acceptable standards and a right of redress if something goes wrong, wherever you are in the EU.

#### Know what you are eating

You can be assured of the highest food safety standards because of strict laws on the production, processing and selling of food. Food labelling rules mean clear, comprehensive and accurate information on food content.

#### Know what you are buying

You are protected from a wide range of <u>unfair commercial</u> practices, both online and in shops. Pre-ticked boxes on websites are banned so that you do not unintentionally pay for travel insurance when buying a plane ticket online, for example.

#### Compare prices

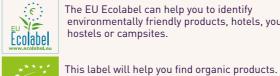
The full price, including VAT and the unit price – the price per kilogram or per litre – of all goods for sale must be clearly displayed. When booking accommodation or a flight online, the total price, including charges and taxes, must be visible from the start of the booking process.



#### Resolve any problems

The European Consumer Centres Network gives practical information on EU consumer rights, as well as free advice and assistance with cross-border complaints or disputes

#### Look out for the label



The EU Ecolabel can help you to identify environmentally friendly products, hotels, youth hostels or campsites.



#### **BY ROAD**

#### Driving licence

A valid <u>driving licence issued in an EU country</u> is recognised throughout the EU and in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Every new licence issued is printed on a plastic card in a standard European format. In most countries, in addition to carrying a valid driving licence you will need to have your vehicle's registration certificate with you.

Non-EU drivers should check whether they need an international driving permit to drive in the EU countries they are visiting, in particular if they plan to visit Cyprus, Ireland, Malta

#### Motor insurance

Wherever you are travelling in the EU, your compulsory car insurance policy will automatically provide cover for damage caused to third parties through a car accident (third-party liability). If you have comprehensive car insurance at home, it may extend to travelling to other countries, but you should check which countries this applies to and the period of validity before setting out.

A European accident statement form, obtained from your insurer or online, is a standard document available in several languages that makes it easier to make a declaration on the spot if you have an accident in another country.

When you travel within the EU with a third-party liability insurance policy issued in a non-EU country you may need a green card, or you may need to take up frontier insurance. Rules may differ depending on the country where the policy is issued, so check in advance

#### Tolls and vignettes

Many countries charge for the use of their roads with either tolls (distance based) or vignettes (time based). The EU ensures that charging systems do not discriminate against non-residents or occasional users.

#### **Driving safely**

In all EU countries, seatbelts must be worn in all vehicles fitted with them. Children must have appropriate child restraints. Using a mobile phone while driving greatly increases the risk of an accident and is forbidden in all EU countries and in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, unless using a hands-

What are the speed limits

free set. The maximum permitted blood alcohol content level varies between 0 mg/ml and 0.5 mg/ml, depending on the country. Drivers who speed or drink-drive can be tracked down thro improved cross-border exchange of information.

in Spain? Do I need to wear a helmet when I cycle in Sweden? Check the most important road safety rules

Remember to drive on the left side of the road in Cyprus, Ireland and Malta and that in some countries, such as Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Portugal, you normally have to give way to traffic coming from your right.

#### Electric cars

There are currently more than 700 000 recharging points for electric vehicles across the EU, with an ever-increasing share of fast recharging stations. Standardised electric plugs means that drivers can recharge their cars anywhere in the EU. Check out the alternative fuel station <u>map</u>.

#### Buses and coaches

The EU is continually improving safety standards for buses and coaches, for example, the recent introduction of new requirements for features such as blind spot recognition and warning systems to prevent collisions with pedestrians and cyclists. If seatbelts are fitted in buses and coaches, it is mandatory to wear them throughout the EU.

Why not explore Europe by bicycle? EuroVelo, the European cycle route network, connects the entire continent and some of its main attractions with 17 long-distance cycle routes covering over 90 000 km. You can enjoy Europe's towns and cities on your own bike or by using one of the many self-service bike rental schemes, some of which have been co-financed by the EU.



The creation of a single European market in air transport 30 years ago has led to cheaper fares and a greater choice of carriers, routes and services for passengers. Europe has one of the best aviation safety records in the world. To improve safety further, airlines from outside the EU must hold an authorisation confirming their compliance with international safety standards. In addition, their aircraft may be inspected in Europe and they will be banned from operating inside European airspace if they are found to be unsafe or not sufficiently overseen by their authorities. Common EU rules on security checks for passengers and cabin and hold luggage apply for all flights departing from EU airports. There are restrictions on liquids that can be taken into the cabin and a common list of items that are not allowed in either cabin or hold luggage.

#### **BY RAIL**

Rail remains one of the safest and most popular forms of transport in Europe and plays an important role in the EU's ambitions to be climate neutral by 2050. The EU has more than 200 000 km of railways. There are more than 11 000 km of high-speed lines on important routes like Paris-Brussels-Amsterdam/Cologne, Milan–Rome and Barcelona–Madrid, and more are under construction. The EU is working to boost longdistance and cross-border passenger rail services, including night trains. It aims to double high-speed rail traffic by 2030 and triple it by 2050.

## **BY WATER**

There are many key sea routes between EU ports offering regular, high-quality services as an alternative to, or in combination with, road, air or rail. There are also more than 40 000 km of navigable rivers, canals and lakes.

#### YOUR RIGHTS

The EU is the only area in the world where citizens are protected by a full set of passenger rights, whether they travel by plane, train, bus, coach or ship. Passengers in the EU have the right to accurate, timely and accessible information, assistance in the event of transport disruption and, in certain circumstances, compensation for cancellations or long delays.

Download the app so you can check what your rights are and how to claim them.

In addition, EU rules protect you when you buy package holidays or trips that combine at least two different types of travel services (such as a flight and a hotel or car rental) through the same or linked online booking sites.

Before you go: You must receive clear information about your travel package (including travel destination(s), the list of services included and an emergency number). You must also be informed of your rights, for example, you have greater rights regarding cancellations or if the organiser goes bust.

When you are there: If you find yourself in difficulty during your stay, you are entitled to assistance such as information on health services and consular assistance.

#### Passengers with a disability or reduced mobility



visiting.

Passengers with a disability or with reduced mobility are entitled to <u>free assistance</u> in airports, train stations, ports and designated terminals for buses or coaches, as well as on board aircraft, trains, ships and buses or coaches. It is advisable to notify the carrier or

for your mode of transport before travelling. If you are travelling by car and have an EU <u>disability parking</u> <u>card</u> in your home country, you should be able to use the parking facilities for people with disabilities in other EU countries. Check in advance what local conditions apply in the country you are

terminal operator of specific needs at the time of booking, wher

buying the ticket in advance. Check the amount of notice needed

#### Seeking redress

If you feel that your rights have not been respected while travelling and you want to seek redress, you should file a complaint with the carrier or terminal operator or the national <u>enforcement body</u> for your specific mode of transport.

Call the Europe Direct freephone number 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 for more information.



#### STAYING HEALTHY

#### Access to healthcare

Don't forget to take your European health insurance card with you on your travels – just in case you need medical treatment while you are away. The card is available for free, normally from your national health insurer, and gives you access to medically necessary, state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in any of the 27 EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. If you have to pay for healthcare, you will need to keep all your bills, prescriptions and receipts so that you can apply for reimbursement in the country you are visiting or when you get home.

Find out how to apply for a card.

#### Travel insurance

The European health insurance card is not a substitute for travel insurance, as it does not cover costs such as repatriation or mountain rescue in ski resorts. You may want to take out travel insurance to cover such risks.

#### **Medicines**

A <u>prescription from your doctor</u> is valid in all EU countries, but you should check that the prescribed medicine is authorised for sale and is available in the country you are visiting. Make sure your prescription contains all the relevant information about you, the prescribing doctor and the prescribed product. With e-prescriptions, it is now possible for travellers to collect

medicine prescribed electronically by their doctor from a

pharmacy in some EU countries, while some doctors can also

access important patient information in their own language. Check to see if these <u>services</u> are available where

#### Vaccination

There are, in general, no vaccination requirements when travelling in the EU. However, there are requirements or recommendations for some of the EU's overseas territories. Check with your doctor before you go.

#### **Bathing water**



meet the minimum water-quality standards and over 85 % meet the more stringent 'excellent' level.

More than 95 % of the EU's bathing water sites

Check out the interactive <u>map</u> to find out what the quality of the water is where you are going.

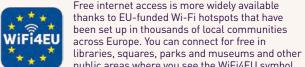
#### STAYING CONNECTED

## Mobile phones

EU subscribers can use their mobile phones while travelling in the EU just as they would at home, without paying any extra charges In 2022 the 'Roam-like-at-home' rules which also apply in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, were extended for another 10 years. If you plan to stay in another EU country for a few months, you may want to check your operator's fair use

You can also enjoy your <u>online subscriptions</u> to films, sports events, e-books, video games and music services without any

#### Wi-Fi



extra charges or restrictions.

public areas where you see the WiFi4EU symbol. Send a postcard! Postage stamps can only be used in the country in which you

**Plugs** Nearly all EU countries have two-pin plugs, apart from Cyprus, Ireland and Malta, which have three-pin plugs. Make sure to pack an adapter when visiting these countries.











#### **THINGS TO DO**

For ideas and information on what to see and do, have a look at the <u>European tourist destinations website</u> or go to the websites of the official national tourist organisations of each EU country.

official national tourist organisations of each EU country.				
<del></del>	**** * * * <sub>**</sub> *			
A	Austria	austria.info		
В	Belgium	visitflanders.com		
		visitwallonia.com		
BG	Bulgaria	bulgariatravel.org/en		
(CY)	Cyprus	visitcyprus.com		
CZ	Czechia	czechtourism.com		
D	Germany	germany.travel		
DK	Denmark	visitdenmark.com		
E	Spain	spain.info/en/		
EST	Estonia	visitestonia.com		
F	France	france.fr/en		
FIN	Finland	visitfinland.com		
GR	Greece	visitgreece.gr		
H	Hungary	visithungary.com		
HR	Croatia	croatia.hr/en-gb		
	Italy	italia.it/en		
(IRL)	Ireland	discoverireland.ie		
L	Luxembourg	visitluxembourg.com		
(LT)	Lithuania	lithuania.travel/en		
LV	Latvia	latvia.travel/en		
M	Malta	visitmalta.com		
NL	Netherlands	holland.com		
P	Portugal	visitportugal.com		
PL	Poland	poland.travel		
RO	Romania	romania.travel/en		
S	Sweden	visitsweden.com		
SK	Slovakia	slovakia.travel/en		
(SLO)	Slovenia	slovenia.info		

The EU promotes many cultural projects and events across Europe every year. In particular, it supports <u>European Capitals of Culture</u>, an initiative which aims to highlight Europe's rich cultural diversity.



#### 2024

Bad Ischl (Austria) Bodø (Norway) Tartu (Estonia)

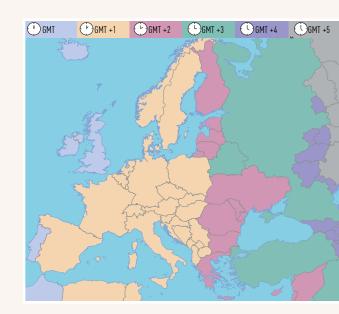
Dublin (Ireland) and Grosseto (Italy) are the 2024 <u>European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism</u>, respectively.

The European Commission supports EU countries in rewarding non-traditional, emerging sustainable tourism destinations in Europe through the European Destinations of Excellence award.

#### Young travellers

Since 2018, the EU has been giving 18-year-old Europeans the chance to travel for free across Europe for up to one month and discover the continent's rich cultural heritage. So far, more than 200 000 young Europeans have received a DiscoverEU travel pass. The initiative offers young travellers the chance to connect with each other through organised meetups and take part in an exciting programme of activities. On top of their travel pass, all <u>DiscoverEU</u> travellers also receive a discount card and can take advantage of over 40 000 discounts on cultural events, accommodation, education, services and products in over 30 countries across Europe.

#### **TIME ZONES**





#### **PETS**

Travelling with a dog, cat or ferret is <u>easy</u> with an EU pet passport, available from any vet. All dogs, cats and ferrets must have a passport and, for identification purposes, be fitted with an electronic microchip or have a clearly readable tattoo applied before July 2011. They must be vaccinated against rabies and the details entered into their pet passport. The vaccination must be carried out after the microchipping or tattooing.

Dogs must be given specific tapeworm treatment by a vet before travelling to Finland, Ireland and Malta. Details of the treatment must appear in the pet passport and the dog can then travel between 1 and 5 days after treatment.

#### IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

#### Single European emergency number: 112

To contact the emergency services in any EU country from any phone, fixed or mobile, dial 112, free of charge. Emergency assistance is also available directly from your vehicle via the <u>eCall</u>

Report any theft to the local police. You will need to enclose the police report when making your insurance or compensation claim. If your passport or ID card has been stolen, report it to your country's consulate or embassy and to the police.

If you are outside the EU and need assistance, you can <u>seek help</u> from the embassy or consulate of any other EU country if yours is not represented.

#### **GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE EU**

#### IN PERSON

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you online.



Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

— by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may

charge for these calls),
— at the following standard number: +32 22999696,
— via the following <u>form</u>.

## FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU

#### ONI INE

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website.

#### EU PUBLICATIONS

You can view or order EU publications <u>online</u>. Multiple copies of free publications can be obtained by <u>contacting</u> Europe Direct or your local documentation centre.

## EU LAW AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law

## since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to <u>EUR-Lex</u>. **OPEN DATA FROM THE EU**

The portal <u>data.europa.eu</u> provides access to open dvvatasets from the EU institutions, bodies and agencies. These can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes. The portal also provides access to a wealth of datasets from European countries.

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