



Global Employer Services Immigration

What Estonia's Presidency of the Council means

The Council presidency rotates among EU Member States every 6 months. On the week of 26 June 2017, Estonia takes over the presidency from Malta, and will in turn hand over to Bulgaria 6 months later.

Three consecutive Presidencies collectively agree on the areas that will be examined at European level. This ensures that important topics remain in focus over the course of 18 months. Estonia is the first of a new set of three Presidencies, with Bulgaria and Austria to follow (last 6 months of 2018).

Estonia has defined four focus points:

1. An open and innovative European economy
2. A safe and secure Europe
3. A digital Europe with the free movement of data
4. An inclusive and sustainable Europe

A safe and secure Europe means that Estonia will strengthen internal security and protect Europe's external borders by improving cooperation and using cutting-edge information systems. This translates to further focus on reforming the Schengen Information System (SIS) and the Schengen border code as well as establishing an Entry-Exit System and ETIAS, the European travel information and authorisation system.

The Entry-Exit system is an EU-wide database whereby travellers scan their passports and fingerprints when they

enter and leave the Schengen area, bringing increased control over traveller flow through the territory ([Immigration alert of 7 July 2017](#)). Different sources have confirmed that Estonia wants to already conclude an inter-institutional agreement on the Entry-Exit System by the end of July.

Foreigners who do not require a visa will need to log onto a website and provide basic information. All of this information is then checked across several databases, and when there is a “no-hit”, the traveller receives an approval. This is the so-called ETIAS ([Immigration alert of 7 July 2017](#)). Several sources indicate that Estonia is aiming to conclude an inter-institutional agreement by the end of its Presidency.

With security currently a hot topic and a planned focus point in Estonia’s Presidency, many changes affecting immigration into Europe are likely. Deloitte will continue to monitor changes at European level affecting employers and employees, and will provide updates.

Contacts

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