



Global Immigration alert

January 2025

United Kingdom

UK government proposes fee increases for certain immigration services, introduces ETA exemption for qualifying individuals

Executive summary

On 16 January 2025, the UK government proposed to increase the maximum fees chargeable for certain immigration and citizenship products and services to reduce “reliance on taxpayers.” These proposed changes are subject to parliamentary approval. The government also announced an exemption from the [Electronic Travel Authorisation \(ETA\)](#) for certain individuals.

Proposed fee increases

The proposed changes, presented to the parliament on 16 January 2025, will provide flexibility to the government to increase the maximum fees that it can charge on the following products and services:

- ▶ ETA applications: GBP 10 to GBP 16
- ▶ Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) applications: upper limit increase from GBP 300 to GBP 525
- ▶ Applications for naturalization as a British citizen: GBP 1,500 to GBP 1,605
- ▶ Applications for naturalization as a British overseas territories citizen: GBP 1,000 to GBP 1,070

If the parliament approves these changes, the authorities will implement the revised fees by amending the Immigration and Nationality (Fees) Regulations 2018 “as soon as parliamentary time allows” (i.e., at the earliest opportunity). However, the fee increases are not expected to be implemented until April 2025.

ETA airside transit exemption

The government also announced that following feedback from the aviation industry, it has introduced a temporary exemption from the ETA effective 16 January 2025 for passengers who transit airside (i.e., pass through a UK airport without going through border control to take a connecting flight). This will primarily affect individuals transiting through the Heathrow or Manchester airports, as these are the only UK airports that currently offer transit facilities. The government will continue to monitor the exemption.

Impact on employers

The proposed changes will increase the costs for employers that hire foreign nationals.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.



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