



FSU

**INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMS**

What is the Schengen Area?

Understanding European Travel Policies

Introduction

The Schengen Area is made up of 29 European countries that **have removed internal border controls**. This allows for free movement between member states without additional passport checks or visas.

U.S. citizens can travel visa-free within the Schengen Area for **up to 90 days within any 180-day period**.

Only participants of Valencia or Florence programs longer than 90 days will receive student visas. **Students arriving on *student* visas will not be subject to the 90-day restriction and should consult their program-specific guidance for their length of stay restrictions.**

- EU and Schengen Member
- Schengen Member Only
- EU Member Only



State Department Guidance for U.S. Travelers in Europe



Arrival in the Schengen Area



When traveling to your study abroad destination, **you will go through passport control in the first Schengen country you enter** – not necessarily your final study abroad destination. **This is when your 90-day count will start.**

Example:

If your program is in Valencia but your flight goes from New York to Paris and then to Valencia, your passport will be stamped or scanned in France, not Spain, because you entered the Schengen Area in Paris.

Traveling within the Schengen Area



Once you clear passport control upon entering the Schengen Area, **you will not go through additional official passport or visa checks** when traveling between Schengen member states. **All trips within the Schengen Area will count towards your 90-day limit.**

Example:

If your study abroad program is in Florence and you take a weekend trip to Croatia, you will not be required to pass through passport control when entering Croatia.

Please note: You are still required to carry your passport with you at all times while traveling, as it serves as your primary form of identification.

Exiting the Schengen Area

Schengen Area Travel Calculator



If you plan to travel outside the Schengen Area independently, or when you return to the United States after your program, **you will be required to go through passport control.** During this process, border officials may ask basic questions about your travels and verify that you have not overstayed your student visa or your allotted tourist travel allowance. **Your 90-day count will pause when you exit.** Depending on how many days have passed between your reentry to the Schengen Area, **your count will either resume or reset.** Use the Schengen Travel calculator to determine the date your count will reset.

Example:

If your study abroad program is in Prague and you take a weekend trip to London, you will go through passport control when exiting the Schengen Area in the Czech Republic and again upon entering the United Kingdom. When returning to Prague, you will go through passport control once more upon arrival in the first Schengen member state you enter.

Entry/Exit System (EES)

Beginning **October 12, 2025**, European Union and/or Schengen Area countries will begin gradually introducing the **Entry/Exit System (EES)** at their external borders. This system will replace manual passport stamping for non-EU nationals. **Full implementation is expected by April 10, 2026.**

What to Expect:

- Passports will be scanned electronically at entry and exit points.
- The system will record the date, time, and place of each crossing.
- Biometric data (fingerprints and/or facial images) may be collected.
- Expect longer processing times initially as the system is rolled out.
- The **EES will automatically track the 90 days within a 180-day period** allowed for short stays in the Schengen Area.
- Since passport stamping is being discontinued, the system will be the official record of how long you have stayed.

For full details, please review the EU's official page:

<https://travel-europe.europa.eu/en/ees>



European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS)

ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorization System) is a travel authorization required for visitors from visa-exempt countries to enter most European countries in the Schengen Area. It's not a visa, but a quick online application that screens travelers for security and public health risks before they arrive.

ETIAS is slated to be implemented during the last quarter of 2026.

No action is required at this time. Students planning to travel to the Schengen Area in **Summer 2027 and beyond** may be impacted by this entry requirement.

International Programs will inform impacted study abroad students if an ETIAS is required for programs in the Schengen Area through the **IP Student Portal**.

For full details, please review the EU's official page:

<https://travel-europe.europa.eu/etias>



Need Help or Have Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact the International Programs Visas Team for support.

- Email: **IP-Visas@fsu.edu**
- Phone: **850-644-3272**