ETIAS Delayed to 2025

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David Adams and Scott Bettridge were quoted in a SHRM article discussing the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS), set to launch in 2025, and what employers and travelers should know about this pre-travel clearance system. ETIAS, initially slated for launch in 2022 but delayed multiple times, resembles the U.S. Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) and serves as a pre-travel clearance system rather than a visa that enables European countries to conduct background checks on travelers. Scott explained, "You're still maintaining visa-free travel privileges, you just need to obtain this travel authorization. ETIAS is the European visa waiver system, and it has an overall objective of improving global security and safety."

The delayed launch, now scheduled for 2025, is attributed to technological challenges, compliance with EU regulations, and considerations like the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris. David shared, "When you roll out a platform of this scale affecting over a billion travelers, you have to make sure that all your t's are crossed and your i's are dotted. So that's one issue is the technical challenges that have come across, including glitches of software and data integrity issues. If they would have rolled [ETIAS] out in early 2024, as they originally planned, that system would have been tested in ways that they would never have been able to plan for given the volume of travelers they're expecting for the Olympics."

Companies are advised to prepare for ETIAS by incorporating it into their business traveler management programs and understanding its implications for employees traveling to Europe. Despite the planned launch date, uncertainties remain, highlighting the dynamic nature of immigration policies.

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