



Bundesministerium
des Innern

Bundesamt
für Migration
und Flüchtlinge

Important information about the electronic travel document



www.ePass.de



What is an electronic travel document ?



An e-travel document is the short name for an “electronic travel document” which is a passport with an integrated electronic chip. An e-travel document is issued for foreigners, for refugees and for stateless persons. The e-travel document was introduced in Germany in November 2007.

The e-travel document chip carries personal data and document-related informations:

- Personal data might include:
First name, surname, date of birth, gender, nationality
- Document-related data might include:
Serial number, issuing state, document type, expiry date

So-called biometric data are also stored on the e-travel document chip:

- Photograph in first-generation e-travel document
(date of application from 01.11.2007)
- Photograph and two fingerprints in second-generation e-travel document
(date of application from 29.06.2009)



Why are electronic travel documents being introduced



As with the e-passport, the introduction of e-travel documents is intended to improve and fasten the determination of the identity of the respective document holder.

The identity data and the biometric data stored on the chip which is integrated in the travel document will also help to prevent unauthorised use of the e-travel document as well as protect it from forgery or falsification.



Are the old travel documents still valid



Yes, all travel documents already issued will remain valid as stated.

Before travelling abroad, however, you are advised to find out about the current border controls and residence permit regulations which are in place in the relevant destination.

How long will the new electronic travel documents be valid



The electronic travel document for foreigners, for refugees and for stateless people will not be valid for longer than the relevant residence entitlement or residence permit.

In other respects the e-travel document for foreigners may be issued up to the following periods of validity:

1. ten years, if the document holder has reached the age of 24 at the time of issue,
2. six years, if the document holder is below the age of 24 at the time of issue.



The maximum period of validity for the travel documents issued to refugees and to stateless people is up to three years.

The following applies to e-travel documents for refugees which are issued to displaced persons:

1. they are valid for ten years if the applicant has reached the age of 24 ,
2. they are valid for six years if the applicant is under the age of 24.

How much does it cost for the electronic travel document



The price is based on the fees charged for issuing an e-passport to a German national.

As such, the fee charged for issuing a travel document

- to foreigners, to refugees or to stateless persons who have reached the age of 24 is 59 euros
- for children or persons under the age of 24 is 37.50 euros.

(Last revised: March 2009)

Where are the fingerprints stored



The fingerprint data remain with the immigration authority until the time the e-travel document is issued.

In compliance with the relevant legal provisions, the fingerprints are irrevocably deleted by the identity card printing company (Bundesdruckerei GmbH) and by the immigration authority when the e-travel document is issued at the latest.

No provision is made in the law for a Germany-wide biometric database.

How are the fingerprints taken for the electronic travel document



Two fingerprints are required for the e-travel document. The fingerprints are scanned at the immigration office during the process of application. Applicants place their fingers on the glass plate and the fingerprint is recorded electronically in a matter of seconds, without any messy stamping ink or any other equipment.

As a general rule, the two index fingers are scanned three times in succession. The software then automatically selects the best print.

It is also possible, if necessary, to scan fingers other than the index fingers. The little fingers are not used.

This new process generally takes no longer than the previous application process.



Are the data contained on the chip of the electronic travel document protected from interception



Yes, they are protected from unauthorised access by an effective security mechanism.





Advice

Questions about (security) technology in relation to the e-travel document can be addressed to the Service Centre of the

Federal Office for Information Security

Tel.: 01805-274-300

(8-17:00 hrs - calls cost 12 cents per minute)

email: ePass@bsi.bund.de

How can foreign nationals check which data are stored in their electronic travel document ?



The immigration authorities have electronic reading devices which allow document holders to see their personal data stored on the chip.



Which bodies are authorised to read out the fingerprints



The data stored on the e-travel document chip may be read out and used by the agencies authorised under the German Residence Act for the purposes of checking the authenticity of the document or for the purposes of establishing or ascertaining the identity of the document holder.

Authorised agencies include the following:

- Police law enforcement agencies
- Customs officials
- Passport authorities and registry offices
- Immigration offices

The residence permit laws prohibit the read-out of the data stored on the chip in the private domain. Technical safeguards are in place to ensure compliance with this legislation.



Which states have access to the data on the chip



The authorities of other states can access the personal data and the photograph insofar as they have the necessary reading devices.

Other states also need a valid certificate of authorisation issued by the Federal Republic of Germany in order to read out the fingerprints. These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

What happens if the chip in the electronic travel document is defective



Every e-travel document is checked before issue to ensure that only fully functional e-travel documents are issued.

The document holder can also ask the immigration authorities to display the data stored on the chip on the electronic readers in order to ensure that the e-travel document is in proper working order.



Should the chip malfunction at a later date then the document will still be valid



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