

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001464/26
to the Commission
Matjaž Nemec (S&D)
(9 April 2026)**

Subject: Unequal treatment of EU citizens under Australia's ETA and eVisitor systems

Australia's visitor visa programme is made up of three subclasses: the Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) (subclass 601), the eVisitor visa (subclass 651) and the Visitor visa (subclass 600).

While all EU citizens are eligible to travel to Australia under the eVisitor scheme, which is generally considered part of a reciprocal visa-free arrangement, it is also the case that only a subset of EU Member State citizens are eligible to apply for ETA, while citizens from Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia are not.

This differentiation results in a situation where EU citizens are not treated equally. While ETA and eVisitor are both electronic travel authorisations, they are not identical in practice, particularly with regard to processing, levels of automation and user experience.

1. How does the Commission assess the current differentiation between EU Member States with access to the ETA system in the light of the EU's objective of achieving full visa reciprocity?
2. Does the Commission consider that this differentiation constitutes unequal treatment of EU citizens and a potential breach of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 as regards the revision of the suspension mechanism, and if so, has this issue been raised with the Australian authorities?
3. What concrete steps does the Commission plan to take to address the matter?

Submitted: 9.4.2026

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(12 June 2026)**

The Commission attaches particular importance to the reciprocal visa-free travel for all EU citizens: achieving and maintaining reciprocal visa-free travel is a principle of the EU's common visa policy and an objective pursued in a proactive manner in EU external relations, including with Australia.

Regarding Australia, already in 2012 ⁽¹⁾, the Commission noted that citizens of all Member States and Schengen associated countries are entitled to use the Australian electronic travel authorisations system called eVisitor in order to benefit from visa-free travel.

Therefore, the Commission considered that in principle, eVisitor provides equal treatment of the citizens of all Member States and Schengen associated countries, in line with the principle of visa reciprocity enshrined in Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 ⁽²⁾.

The conclusions of this analysis remain relevant, therefore the Commission still considers that visa-waiver reciprocity is in place with Australia.

⁽¹⁾ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council — Seventh report on certain third countries' maintenance of visa requirements in breach of the principle of reciprocity (COM/2012/0681 final).

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement.