# UNITED KINGDOM AIRSIDE TRANSIT VISA REQUIREMENTS

This information leaflet lists the countries or territories whose nationals or citizens need an airside transit visa and details the exemptions that apply.

1) Appendix 1 of the Immigration Rules lists the countries or territories whose nationals or citizens need a visa for the United Kingdom.

   There are exceptions to the United Kingdom's airside transit visa requirement. In some circumstances passengers who are visa nationals may travel to the United Kingdom without a transit visa under the **Transit without Visa concession.**

   A visa national who is travelling to the UK simply to travel on to another country may enter without a visa (at the discretion of an Immigration Officer), provided that they meet all the following requirements:

   - They arrive in the UK and depart by air;
   - The intended onward flight has been confirmed and departs within 24 hours of arrival;
   - The individual is properly documented for their destination and has obtained the appropriate visa if required.

2) The **Transit without Visa concession** does <u>not</u> apply to the nationals or citizens of the following countries or territories listed below. Unless they qualify under the exemption category – refer to paragraph 3 - they must obtain a **Direct Airside Transit Visa (DATV)** if they wish travel to the UK in order to transit airside - or a Visitor in Transit Visa if they need to pass through UK Border Control, refer to paragraph 5.

## <u>Counties or territories whose nationals or citizens require a DATV</u>

**Afghanistan**
**Albania**
**Algeria**
**Angola**
**Bangladesh**
**Belarus**
**Bolivia**
**Burma**
**Burundi**
**Cameroon**
**China - People's Republic of**
**Colombia**
**Congo-Brazzaville**
**Congo - Dem Rep of** [1]
**Ecuador**
**Eritrea**
**Ethiopia**
**Gambia**
**Ghana**
**Guinea**
**Guinea-Bissau**
**India**
**Iran**
**Iraq**
**Ivory Coast**
**Jamaica**
**Kenya**
**Kosovo**
**Lebanon**
**Lesotho**
**Liberia**
**Macedonia (FYR of)**
**Malawi**
**Moldova**
**Mongolia**
**Montenegro**
**Nepal**
**Nigeria**
**Pakistan**
**Palestinian Authorities**
**Rwanda**
**Senegal**
**Serbia**
**Sierra Leone**
**Somalia**
**South Africa**
**Sri Lanka**
**Sudan**
**Swaziland**
**Tanzania**
**Turkey**
**'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'** [2]
**Uganda**
**Venezuela**
**Vietnam**
**Yugoslavia** [3]
**Zimbabwe**

[1] including travel documents issued by the former Zaire

[2] The 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' is not recognised by HM Government. Visas are issued on an EU uniform format 'Form for Affixing the Visa'

[3] documents issued by the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, by present Yugoslavia authorities or by the UN mission in Kosovo.

3) **Passengers Exempt from the DATV Requirement**

Holders of certain documents are, regardless of nationality, exempt from the requirement to hold a Direct Airside Transit Visa when transiting the UK.

A transit passenger is not required to hold a transit visa if he holds or a person with whom he arrives in the United Kingdom holds on his behalf:

(a) a valid visa for entry to Australia, Canada, New Zealand or the United States of America and a valid airline ticket for travel via the United Kingdom as part of a journey from another country or territory to the country in respect of which the visa is held;

(b) a valid visa for entry to Australia, Canada, New Zealand or the United States of America and a valid airline ticket for travel via the United Kingdom as part of a journey from the country in respect of which the visa is held to another country or territory;

(c) a valid airline ticket for travel via the United Kingdom as part of a journey from Australia, Canada, New Zealand or the United States of America to another country or territory, provided that the transit passenger does not seek to transit the United Kingdom on a date more than six months from the date on which he last entered Australia, Canada, New Zealand or the United States of America with a valid visa for entry to that country;

(d) a valid USA I-551 Permanent Resident Card issued on or after 21st April 1998**;**

(e) a valid Canadian Permanent Resident Card issued on or after 28th June 2002;

(f) a valid common format Category D visa for entry to an EEA State;

(g) a valid common format residence permit issued by an EEA State pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No. 1030/2002;

(h) a passport issued by the Republic of Venezuela that contains biometric information held in an electronic chip;

(i) a diplomatic or service passport issued by the People's Republic of China; or

(j) a diplomatic or official passport issued by India; or,

(k) a diplomatic or official passport issued by Vietnam.

4) **Transiting to the Republic of Ireland**

Passengers must pass through UK Border Control in order to take a flight to Ireland. **Visa nationals (and passengers qualifying for DATV exemption above)** may Transit without Visa providing they fulfil the TWOV conditions and are properly documented for entry into Ireland.

**DATV nationals transiting to Ireland** must obtain a **Visit Visa** - not a Visitor in Transit visa which is only for transit to a destination outside the Common Travel Area (Rules HC395 paragraph 47 refers).

5) **Visitor in Transit Visa**

All Visa nationals wishing to transit the UK but spend longer doing so than the 24 hours permitted under the TWOV concession must obtain **a Visitor in Transit Visa for stays up to 48 hours** or a **Visit Visa**.

**NOTES**

1) a valid U.S. immigrant visa packet (form 155A/155B) is a 'valid visa' for DATV exemption purposes.

2) an expired I-551 Permanent Resident Card issued on or after 21 April 1998 when accompanied by an I-797 letter issued by the Bureau of Citizenship authorising its extension, exempts the holder from the DATV requirement.

3) holding either an I-512 Parole letter or an I-797C (Notice of Action) instead of a valid U.S. visa; or a Transportation Letter instead of a valid U.S. Permanent Residence Card issued on or after 21 April 1998 does **NOT** qualify for exemption from the DATV requirement.

4) holding a valid travel document with a U.S. ADIT stamp worded – "Processed for I-551. TEMPORARY EVIDENCE OF LAWFUL ADMISSION FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE VALID UNTIL…. EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZED" does **NOT** qualify for exemption from the DATV requirement.

5) whether holders of **non-national (including refugee) travel documents** require a DATV depends on their nationality and whether they qualify for one of the exemptions listed above. So, for instance, the holder of a non-national travel document (e.g. a refugee travel document) who is a national or a citizen of one of the countries listed on the DATV list (e.g. Afghanistan) will require a direct airside transit visa if they are travelling to the UK to transit on to a third country. Persons recognized as stateless under the 1954 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons are not required to hold a DATV and may TWOV.

Updated (2011)