

# Trusted Traveler Programs: Expanded Resources for Today's Business Traveler

Article By:

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Companies of all sizes have increased workforce mobility needs arising from international short-term relocations, business visits, trade shows, conferences, speaking engagements, etc. It is critical for today's business traveler to take advantage of accessible resources to ease the international travel burden, when fulfilling business obligations.

For frequent business travelers, time is often lost with long delays in connection with immigration and customs processes both in and outside of the U.S. Over the past several years, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has established five useful programs for pre-approved, low-risk travelers, which are managed through ***U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP): Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI, the APEC Business Travel Card, and FAST.***

The largest program is Global Entry. Launched as a pilot project in 2008, the program is now permanent, serving travelers to the U.S. at 42 U.S. airports and 12 preclearance locations.

Successful Global Entry applicants are able to bypass the long immigration and customs lines at U.S. airports when they return to the U.S. following international travel. Global Entry members scan their passports, verify their biometrics at a Global Entry kiosk at the airport, and proceed to the baggage claim area. Global Entry members are also eligible to participate in TSAPre?<sup>™</sup>, the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) expedited screening program. TSAPre? allows expedited security checks for domestic and some international travel departing from the U.S. In addition, approved applicants generally are spared the burden of removing laptops, 3-1-1 bags, shoes, belts, coats, etc.

Following a successful pilot program, in December 2014, the U.S. and Germany announced a bilateral agreement allowing German citizens to apply for Global Entry and U.S. Citizens to apply for EasyPASS, Germany's expedited entry program. This agreement makes Germany the second country in the Schengen region with which the U.S. has an agreement, and represents a potentially significant expansion of the program. Global Entry eligibility was previously limited to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents, and citizens of certain other countries, including Panama, the Netherlands, Korea, and Mexico.

In order to apply for Global Entry, German citizens must first visit an EasyPASS enrollment center in Germany and preregister with the German Federal Police. The first enrollment center is currently

open in Frankfurt, and additional centers are scheduled to open at a future date. According to CBP, after a German citizen preregisters for Global Entry, the German Federal Police will notify CBP that the applicant is eligible to apply for Global Entry. The applicant can then apply for Global Entry through the **Global Online Enrollment System (GOES)**.

Likewise, U.S. citizens can now apply for **EasyPASS**, which can be used when members cross the external borders of the Schengen area across four airports: Hamburg, Frankfurt, Munich, and Düsseldorf. CBP explains that U.S. citizens can register for EasyPASS by visiting an enrollment center operated by the German Federal Police in Terminal 1 at Frankfurt Airport, and in Terminal 2 at Munich Airport.

In an era where in-house HR and mobility teams develop creative strategies to support their business and talent around the world, organizations should explore practical, cost-effective solutions to help further their efforts. Although membership in a trusted travel program in the U.S. or abroad will not solve the challenges faced by business travelers, it is certainly a valuable option to explore.

*Danielle Lifrieri, Global Visa Manager at Mintz Levin, contributed to this article.*

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