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RAC highlights important changes in applying for International Driving Permits

The RAC is warning travellers wanting to drive in many countries outside of Europe that as of 1 February 2019 they will only be able to purchase International Driving Permits (IDPs) that enable them to do so from the Post Office.

This means motoring organisations such as the RAC will no longer issue IDPs – the official document that effectively validates UK driving licences internationally – as they have done for many years.

While an IDP is not a replacement for a UK driving licence, which still must be carried if hiring or driving a car abroad, UK drivers may require one to drive legally in many countries and independent states worldwide.

However, there are three separate international conventions – 1926, 1949 and 1968 – that countries requiring IDPs may work to so it is important to ensure the right IDP is obtained for each country drivers are planning on visiting.

Currently, the UK is only able to issue IDPs to the 1926 and 1949 conventions, but as of 28 March it will formally ratify the more widely recognised 1968 Vienna Convention. This means any UK driver with an existing International Driving Permit may find from 28 March 2019 it is not valid in many non-EU countries that operate to the 1968 IDP convention.

Carrying the wrong documentation may result in not being able to drive when abroad. Anyone needing a 1968 IDP to use soon after 28 March will only have a small 'window' of time to obtain the correct documentation as they can only be bought over the counter from the Post Office from 1

February and only become valid for travel on 28 March. A 1968 IDP has the added benefit of being valid for three years from the issue date as opposed to the 1926 and 1949 ones which are only valid for a year.

The decisions to ratify the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic and for the Post Office to be the sole issuer of IDPs arose as part of the Government's preparations for the UK to leave the European Union on 29 March. While the requirement to obtain an IDP for travel within European Union countries after the UK formally leaves the bloc will depend on what the Government agrees with the EU, the ratification of the 1968 convention will also bring changes to drivers heading to non-EU states.

RAC spokesperson Nicholas Lyes said:

“It is important for those planning to drive abroad from 28 March 2019 that they check they have the correct documentation. There are some countries where previously UK driving licence holders required a 1926 or 1949 IDP, but after this date that version will be superseded by the 1968 IDP. Anyone with an existing IDP for the country they want to drive in who is travelling and returning before 28 March 2019 is not affected.

“Documentation for travel within EU states once the UK formally leaves is dependent on negotiations between the UK Government and the EU. In the event of a ‘no-deal’ Brexit, the [RAC has issued advice to drivers on which EU states would require which version of IDP](#).

“The [Post Office](#) will become the sole issuer of International Driving Permits which can only be obtained over the counter in 2,500 branches. Motorists should check which Post Offices will issue IDPs before going into a branch.

“It’s also important to remember that different IDPs are valid for different lengths of time and that IDPs complement the UK driving licence when abroad rather than replace it.”

International Driving Permits - Key dates

Date	Event
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31 January 2019	The last date RAC will issue IDPs. The RAC will not be able to issue IDPs for travel after 31 January
1 February 2019	The Post Office will become the sole issuer of IDPs. For the first time, three types of IDPs will be issued – 1926, 1949 and 1968. People driving abroad who have existing IDPs for future travel (from 28 March) should check the validity of the IDP from this date. They can be issued the correct IDP from the Post Office.
28 March 2019	The 1968 IDP will become valid for use by UK drivers abroad where they are required.
29 March 2019	The UK is set to leave the European Union. Requirement for IDPs in EU states is dependent on whether a deal is agreed between the UK Government and the EU.

A guide to International Driving Permit validity by convention year and country

International driving permit types available for purchase from 1 February 2019 from the Post Office	Validity and countries from 28 March 2019 (For EU states, a requirement for an IDP is dependent on the UK-EU Brexit negotiations) EU nations are highlighted in bold text
1926 IDP – 3 countries	Valid for 1 year from purchase Somalia, Mexico, Liechtenstein

1949 IDP – 73 countries/states

Valid for 1 year from purchase
Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina,
Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize,
Benin, Bolivia, Brunei, Burkina Faso,
Burundi, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia,
Comoros, Republic of Congo, Costa Rica,
Curacao, **Cyprus**, Dominican Republic,
Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea,
Eswatini, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti,
Holy See (Vatican City), Hong Kong,
Iceland, India, **Ireland**, Jamaica, Japan,
Jordan, Lao People's Democratic
Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya,
Macao, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia,
Mali, **Malta**, Mauritius, Namibia, Nepal,
New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New
Guinea, Paraguay, Republic of (South)
Korea, Rwanda, Samoa, São Tomé and
Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Singapore, **Spain**,
Sri Lanka, Suriname, Syrian Arab
Republic, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo,
Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United
States of America, Venezuela, Zambia

1968 IDP – 103 countries

Valid for 3 years from purchase Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Aruba, **Austria** , Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belarus, Bhutan, **Belgium** , Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, **Bulgaria** , Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, **Croatia** , Cuba, **Czech Republic** , Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, **Denmark** , El Salvador, **Estonia** , **Finland** , **France** , French Polynesia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, **Germany** , **Greece** , Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, **Hungary** , Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, **Italy** , Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, **Latvia** , Liberia, **Lithuania** , **Luxembourg** , Macedonia, Mauritania, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, **Netherlands** , New Caledonia, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, **Poland** , **Portugal** , Qatar, **Romania** , Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, **Slovakia** , **Slovenia** , South Africa, **Sweden** , Sudan, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Notes to Editors

*<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/international-driving-permits-for-uk-drivers-from-28-march-2019>

** If drivers have recently purchased an International Driving Permit from the RAC (or the AA), please note that the new 1968 IDP will supersede older versions (both 1926 and 1949 versions) in many non-EU countries from the 28 March 2019. Countries requiring a 1968 IDP are listed within the release.

About the RAC

First formed in 1897, the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of drivers for more than 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's [roadside assistance](#), [insurance](#), [buying a used car](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#) – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK drivers at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – is one of a kind and provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#). It provides a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump - and tracks these prices daily to help drivers check if the price they pay to fill up is a fair one.

Contacts



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