

# Daniel Dalton MEP

## Travelling in Europe 2015

Holidays should be fun, relaxing and something to look back on with a great deal of pleasure.

In 2015, there is a lot of advice about travelling. So I have collated information from the AA, FCO, DVLA, NHS and the passport agency on your behalf.

I hope this factsheet helps ensure your holiday is memorable for all the right reasons.

Daniel

Daniel Dalton MEP - West Midlands



REMEMBER WHEN ABROAD  
THE EMERGENCY NUMBER IS

112

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## GET AN EHIC CARD NOT A HOSPITAL BILL

The EHIC card is free of charge and enables you to access state-provided healthcare in the EU and a few other countries, such as Switzerland.

It will cover your treatment until you return to the UK. It also covers treatment of pre-existing medical conditions and routine maternity care, providing the reason for your visit is not specifically to give birth.

The NHS website warns the card is not an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover private medical healthcare, mountain rescue in ski resorts, being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is advisable to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy.



If you already have an EHIC card please check its validity.

For more information about what is covered in each country and to apply go to [www.gov.uk/ehic](http://www.gov.uk/ehic).

The card is free so be wary of websites that want to charge you for them. If you come across one of these sites please let me know and I will report it to Trading Standards.

[www.gov.uk/ehic](http://www.gov.uk/ehic)

## YOUR PASSPORT

Thousands of holidaymakers have their holiday ruined by not knowing they have an invalid passport. So please check the validity of your passport and your children's passports.

The Passport Agency advises travellers needing a passport urgently to make an appointment at the local Passport Customer Service Centre.

The Premium Service takes 4 hours but a note of caution, first passports and all child passports can't be obtained this way.

The Fast Track Service again needs an appointment and takes a week.

The Passport Agency says applicants should use the Post Office, or apply by post or online if you don't need your passport within a month.

There are unscrupulous websites that charge to make an appointment at the Passport Office. If you come across one of these sites tell me and I will report it.

The FCO advises that you have at least three months left to run on your passport before you travel as some countries have this an entry requirement.

[www.gov.uk/get-a-passport-urgently](http://www.gov.uk/get-a-passport-urgently)

Sign up for Daniel's email bulletins at [www.danieldaltonmep.co.uk](http://www.danieldaltonmep.co.uk)

# BRING BACK SOUVENIRS NOT A HUGE PHONE BILL

You may have heard that data roaming charges are to be scrapped. It's a great victory for Conservatives in the European Parliament, but, it isn't happening until June 2017.

Here are six simple rules to follow in the meantime.

## 1. Call your operator before you board the plane.

Your operator will almost certainly offer a special 'data and call bundle'. Ring them, even from the airport, and see what's on offer.

## 2. When you land read the text.

All networks will send you a text when you arrive in a foreign country spelling out the charges you will incur.

## 3. Use free Wi-Fi.

Travelsupermarket.com advises downloading Apps like WhatsApp,

and Viber (there are others). These allow you to send texts and make calls for free over wi-fi (your friends will need the same App).

## 4. Be aware of what your phone is doing.

Apps do work in the background and can run up your bill before you've left the plane. So switch off mobile data before you leave the UK.

## 5. Check the roaming cap.

The current pre-2017 EU roaming cap covers the EU countries as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Turkey is not included so if in doubt check with your operator.

## 6. If in doubt keep the phone switched off.



"The new rules are great but don't come into force until 2017 so be aware"

Daniel Dalton MEP



## CONTACT DANIEL

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## HIRING A CAR ON THE CONTINENT

The paper counterpart to the UK photocard licence has now been abolished and information about penalty points are now held on DVLA's driver record.

Anticipating that some European car hire companies may be unaware of this change, the AA recommends you **retain your paper counterpart**.

### The DVLA advises:

Print your own driving licence record from DVLA's website - you'll need to know your driving licence number, national insurance number and your postcode.

Obtain a code from the DVLA's 'share driving licence' service that you can pass to a hire car company. The code will only be valid for 72 hours and will give them one-off access to your online driving licence record.

[www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence](http://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence)

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## TRAVELLING TO GREECE

The situation in Greece often changes by the hour but this shouldn't spoil your holiday.

Banks across Greece are limiting cash withdrawals. However, this should not affect cards issued by non-Greek banks. It's worth checking with your own bank before you fly.

Be warned some banks and ATMs in remote areas and on small Greek islands have run out of cash.

Leading travel agents are warning that some restaurants and hotels have stopped taking VISA and MasterCard. The FCO, at the beginning of July, recommended taking enough

cash to cover your trip and to make sure you keep the money in your hotel safe. **Ask for a safe if there is not one.**

While travelling to and from your destination split the cash among all your party, so if one person loses their money then not all your cash is gone.

There are regular strikes called at short notice and these cause disruption to public transport in and out of Greece. Be warned demonstrations take place regularly across Greece. The FCO says you should avoid these where possible.

**If in doubt, visit the Foreign Office website.**

The situation in Greece is volatile - so please check with your bank and the FCO website before you travel.

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