

United States and The Netherlands launch air travel initiative to streamline border processing

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Washington, United States

The Dutch Minister of Justice Ernst Hirsch Ballin and the US Customs and Border Protection Acting Commissioner Jayson P. Ahern today formally launched a new initiative to open membership in their expedited air travel programs to citizens of both countries in an effort to streamline entry processes for pre-screened fliers.

Citizens of the two nations now may apply to join the other country's frequent traveler program allowing streamlined processing at the border. This arrangement is the first for the United States with a nation outside of North America.

"By mutually recognizing these two programs, the governments of the United States and the Netherlands will be making travel between our nations more convenient and more secure," said Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. "We are pleased to join the government and immigration officials of the Netherlands in using technology and modern security tools to strengthen and streamline our entry processes."

See also:

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Membership in the U.S. program, Global Entry, is limited to those considered low-risk after a vigorous background check. Once approved, members can use a kiosk at international airports in New York, Washington, D.C., Houston, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago and Miami to streamline the entry process. Identification is confirmed by fingerprints and all arriving passengers are subject to inspection.

To become a member of Privium, the Netherlands program, travelers are subject to an extensive background check. The program provides members faster border passage through an iris scan. Privium is available at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.

"In a world with growing numbers of travelers and a strong demand for border control and safety, the United States and the Netherlands have managed to promote mobility for well-intentioned travelers, without making concessions to safety and security," said Dutch Minister of Justice Ernst Hirsch Ballin. "We have done so by trusting each other and by using innovative technology. I am pleased with what we have jointly achieved today and hope more countries will join us in the future."

This agreement stems in part from successful partnerships between the two countries on securing global trade and on immigration policies. Today's launch follows a joint

agreement signed last May by representatives of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Netherlands Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Global Entry is a pilot program for frequent travelers to help assess biometric performance and to test the Global Entry kiosks. More information, including application instructions, is available at GlobalEntry.gov.

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