



TRAVELLING TO EUROPE

WITH YOUR SHOTGUN FOLLOWING BREXIT

Nicola Heron tells us what it will be like travelling with a firearm in 2021 and what you can do to be organised without the European Firearms Pass.

Travelling abroad with shotguns from 2021 onwards will certainly be different without the use of an EFP (European Firearms Pass). But don't panic as it is relatively easy to get the correct licences – if you can be organised.

We will now be treated just like any other shooter coming in from outside the EU, like Australia or the USA. You can forget last minute trips with your shotgun, however, as you will need time to comply with each individual country's requirements by their deadline dates for permits.

If you are going to any international competitions (Worlds or European Championships) organised by World Bodies (WB) such as ISSF, FEDECAT, FITASC or ICTSF, then the information required to take your shotgun into the desired country will be easily available on their online portals, when you make your registration to the championship.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

From 2021 onwards we will all need four important documents to take our shotguns abroad:

- A Shotgun Certificate (SGC)
- A Gun Declaration Form (GDF) – this needs to be returned to the organisers, including a copy of your passport and your SGC, by the deadline date given to you.
- An invitation to the event – again this is normally available as a download from the organiser's registration page.
- Proof of insurance – take your CPSA membership card and a print out of your individual members insurance.

INFORMATION FOR YOUR GDF

It is important to note that in order to complete your Gun Declaration Form, you need to have already decided on, and booked your method of travel. By

far the easiest is to fly on a direct flight to your destination as it involves only one GDF. The GDF form itself will ask detailed information about your entry into their country such as:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Address
- Nationality
- Passport number
- Airport or Port
- Date arriving and date leaving
- Airline and flight numbers (or similar if by ferry)
- Hotel details
- Gun details (brand, model, serial number, calibre, extra barrels)
- Email address
- A copy of your passport and your Shotgun Certificate (SGC)

Some countries will also charge a fee for processing your GDF.

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TRAVELLING BY CAR

For those travelling by car, you will need to complete the required GDF for each country that you drive through, which may involve contacting each of the embassies direct.

You will also need to complete the airline's gun handling form as usual.

THE GDF PROCESS

When the GDF is received by the championship organisers, it is then sent on to that country's police authority for approval. Some countries like Portugal or USA send back a stamped permit in order to enter their county. Others, like Spain, may just add you to the Guardia Civil airport list for that particular championship, without sending a permit.

A similar process as described above will be needed for shooters travelling to other countries to hunt, or to have stocks made. Again, the organiser of your trip will advise the criteria you need to meet. All will involve a GDF.

NICOLA'S TOP TIPS

TIP 1 Always fly direct if you can, even if it costs more.

TIP 2 Take hard copies of all GDF paperwork in your hand luggage so they can be produced easily at customs (if asked for) alongside your SGC, permit, return ticket and proof of insurance.

TIP 3 Keep all email correspondence regarding the GDF, on your mobile as proof of the date it was applied for.

TIP 4 Keep a picture of your passport, SGC and what your gun case looks like on your phone. It comes in handy should the worst happen (items stolen or lost).

TIP 5 Most customs will have someone who speaks a level of English.

If there is a problem and no matter how frustrated you may get with a language barrier, keep calm and polite. It is the difference between getting through customs in 20 minutes or 3 hours.

TIP 6 Always use the armoury at the shooting ground, if there is one provided.

TIP 7 If no armoury is provided and you have to keep your gun at the hotel, then keep the gun in its locked hard case (if you have a lock wire, use it to tie to something immovable), when you go out to dinner leave the TV and light on, put the 'do not disturb' sign on the bedroom door.

TIP 8 Enter and exit the hotel each day without attracting attention. Most onlookers will think that the gun case is a musical instrument.