



# The Visa Waiver Program makes it too easy for terrorists

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Designed to encourage tourism and promote American business, the Visa Waiver Program allows as many as 20 million citizens from 38 countries to travel to the US for up to 90 days without a visa. The program however, has come under recent scrutiny in light of the rising threat of ISIS, concern over incoming refugees, and the use of visas by attackers in the Paris and San Bernardino

shootings.

In today's Wall Street Journal, AEI Visiting Fellow and former Department of Homeland Security official [Matt Mayer](https://www.aei.org/scholar/matt-a-mayer/) (<https://www.aei.org/scholar/matt-a-mayer/>) examines the program's security gaps and suggests how they can be improved. He notes:

Getting into the Middle East from Europe—and back again to Europe—without being monitored by a European security agency has never been easier. And if these agencies don't know, we don't know. ISIS today is likely working hard to identify a group of Europeans who can reach America with only a perfunctory security check to launch an attack. That cannot be allowed to happen.

On Tuesday the House passed legislation to require anyone who traveled to Syria, Iraq, Iran or Sudan in the past five years to get a visa before entering the US. Congress should also adopt a Senate proposal requiring countries in the Visa Waiver Program to collect fingerprints from all travelers and for air carriers to send Homeland Security the Passenger Name Records (PNR) for all travelers headed here no later than 24 hours before their departure. And Congress should determine if the current PNR data collected is sufficient, or if additional data should be collected, even if this means tough new negotiations with the European Union.

Read the full piece: [It's Too Easy for Terrorists](http://www.wsj.com/articles/its-too-easy-for-terrorists-1449705080) (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/its-too-easy-for-terrorists-1449705080>)

To arrange an interview with Matt Mayer, or for other media requests, please contact AEI Media Services at [mediaservices@aei.org](mailto:mediaservices@aei.org) or 202-862-5829.

This article was found online at:

<http://www.aei.org/press/the-visa-waiver-program-makes-it-too-easy-for-terrorists/>