Transforming the immigration experience:
CREATING THE 'DIGITAL TRAVELLER'

The world is how we shape it

sopra steria

Transforming the immigration experience

Borders across the world are changing. They are becoming more digital, increasingly contactless and easier to cross for the vast majority of passengers who pose no security risk. We have seen this trend developing over the past 10 years and the UK government's 'ic_blue:2025 border strategy', published in December 2020, sets out its vision to achieve this transformation in less than 4 years.

In order to realise this ambition, Sopra Steria believes the border and immigration experience requires radical transformation. The anxiety legitimate passengers can feel as they apply for a visa or wait in a queue should be replaced with a range of excellent digital services that enable seamless applications and journeys. As well as being good for travellers, this digital future means that private and public sector immigration and border staff will be empowered with the modern data and tools they need to enhance both security and performance.

At Sopra Steria, we call this transformation; **'Digital Traveller'.**

The Digital Traveller
A vision for safe, secure and contactless travel
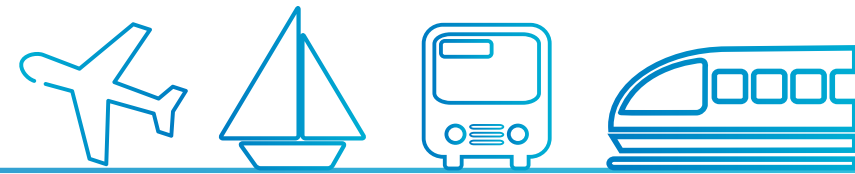
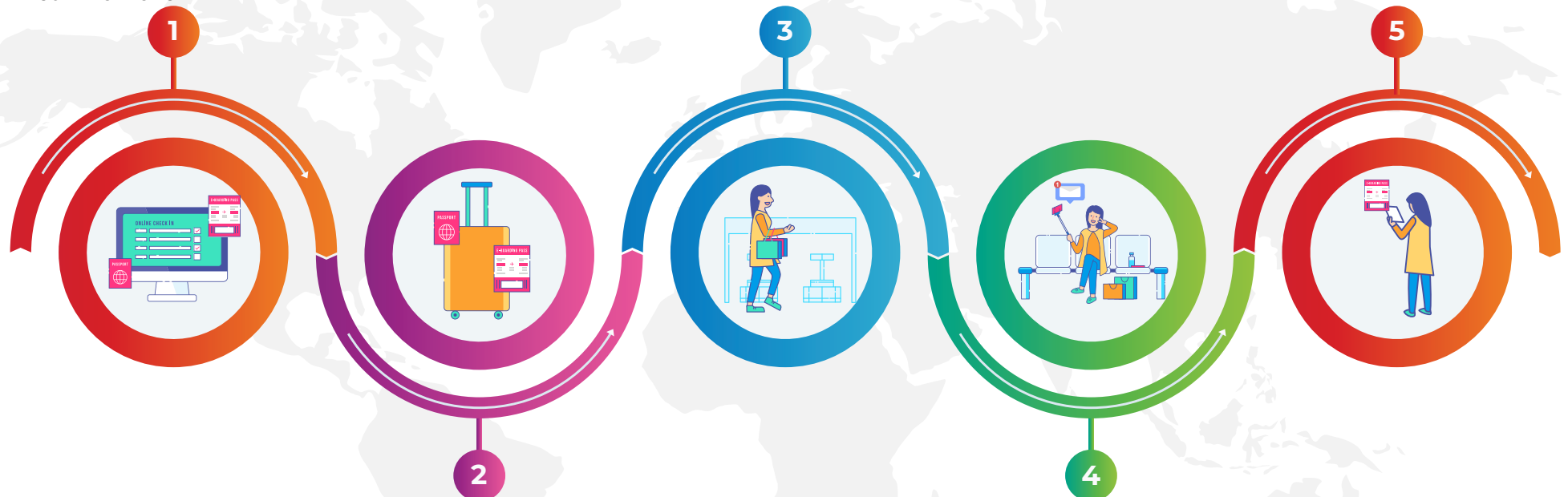**Fully digital applications**

- Smartphone biometric enrollment
- Digital identity and credential creation
- Document upload
- Virtual Interviews

1

Contactless border crossings

- eGates
- Biometrics corridor
- Digital entry/exit checks

3

Digital permissions renewal

- Credential reuse
- Virtual interviews
- Self re-enrolment of biometrics

5

2

Digital permissions to travel

- Automated security checks
- AI assisted decision making
- Secure Digital Wallet

4

Customer Centric notifications

- Tailored advice and guidance
- Personalised visa updates

| Person centric | Ethical | Interoperable | Digital | Automated |

The benefits of a 'Digital Traveller' scheme

In our view, the 'Digital Traveller' concept is a 'win-win'; creating a simpler, more convenient experience for the traveller while significantly enhancing security within the border and immigration system.

The 'smartphone first' revolution, combined with the application of a more sophisticated and ethical use of data, will soon enable fully digital applications and border crossings. Crucially, this extended digital transformation will upstream security checks so that they are completed digitally at the point an applicant seeks permission to enter a host country and at other stages in their journey.

For most travellers, the border of the future will be digital, with checks conducted and permissions granted as a result of an application made on a smartphone from the comfort of their living room. Printed visas, physical passports or interacting directly with a border guard will, for the majority, become a thing of the past. Advanced risk analytics will highlight those few travellers who require closer attention and skilled 'human' intervention to resolve issues.

Enhanced security

Better experiences

Greater efficiencies

Higher performance

More resilience

Increased productivity and improved accuracy

This digital-first approach offers a major opportunity to realise huge operational benefits, by reducing the demand for in person services.

Automated and AI assisted decisions increase productivity and will accelerate the speed and accuracy of visa, entry and residence decisions. This takes place at a time that visa demand continues to rise and new security checks – such as the increased use of Electronic Travel Authorisations are introduced. It also means a smaller overseas footprint and the potential to re-invest those savings into service improvements.

Ability to react to current and future operational challenges

What's more, person centric data analysis and notifications will enable immigration authorities to better understand their customers, enabling them to provide more tailored services and interventions, increasing compliance and the effectiveness of enforcement activity and introducing the comprehensive ability to count people in and out of a country.

Perhaps even more transformative, the Digital Traveller approach will provide agencies, departments and private sector organisations with the data needed to model, scenario plan and dynamically react to both current and future operational challenges. These benefits will be realised by effectively using current and emerging technology, leading to the creation of a truly 'world-class' border for everyone managing and using immigration and border services.

# Implementing a successful Digital Traveller scheme

Based on Sopra Steria's insight and experience in the UK and Europe, we have identified 5 KEY APPROACHES that we believe are critical to private and public sector bodies looking to implement a comprehensive and successful Digital Traveller solution.

Design with ethics at the heart

Over the next few years, Immigration authorities will increasingly rely on 'big' data and technology to help them do their job. This has the potential to amplify and accelerate change of all kinds and impels us to take responsibility for managing the impacts. Ethical considerations should be at the heart of any assessment of impact so that organisational, societal and legally embedded values are built into technology and data approaches and the right outcomes are achieved.

Data-led solutions that have great objectives but are poorly-thought through offer a 'sticking plaster' solution to a deeper problem and often lead to significant adverse issues in the long run. Managing the ethical issues arising from digital technology and data from the start is a way to build and sustain trust with all users, which in turn generates even more opportunities to deliver a secure and brilliant service.
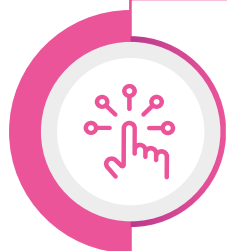
Adopt a Digital first strategy

Digital Traveller schemes are based on a digital first approach: adopting digital user interfaces, digitising and reusing data and embracing technology to support decision making and reduce risk. This includes harnessing the potential of a 'Digital Wallet' to create, store and manage a traveller's identity. This is made possible by advancements in smartphone technology for biometric collection, interviewing and document upload. By embracing a digital first approach, it's clear that, in the near future, the primary user interface for border and immigration purposes will be the smartphone.
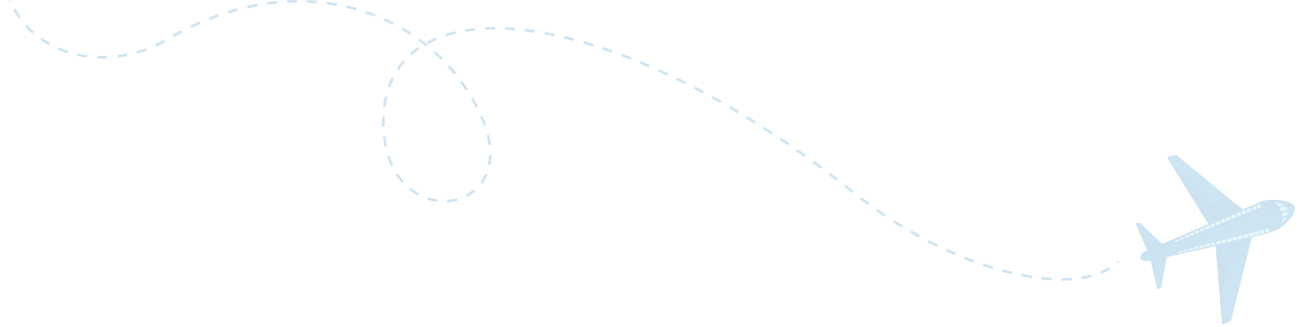
Ensure full Interoperability everywhere

Converging technologies and creating shared solutions across the public and private sector immigration and border estate will build an integrated network that shares and accesses relevant data automatically when it is needed. Interoperable systems, based on an 'open data' approach and connected via standardised, secure and open APIs will ensure that data flows effectively across the network. Establishing an interoperability approach early and setting out the rules that govern the sharing of information creates the foundations for a future where innovation can flourish. It also ensures that any artificial barriers between private organisations, government departments and other agencies are broken down. This is vital to deliver transformation at the scale needed in the immigration context: millions of customers, hundreds of businesses and organisations, global in reach.

Think person centric at core

Interoperability empowers a person centric approach by increasing access to the full range of data held across various systems. Person centricity builds on that capability by bringing information together, across time and services, so that meaningful business insight and intelligence can be derived and better and more secure services can be put in place. Aligned with this, it's increasingly important to adopt a product centric approach to transformation so that user and end outcomes of technology solutions are considered upfront and throughout development.

Use automated human intelligence

Decision makers are being asked to analyse more complex data more quickly in order to make the right decisions. To optimise productivity and accuracy, they must be supported by the right technology. Advanced tools will be powered by Hyper automation, where tasks are completed by machine and, where necessary, decisions makers base their analysis on synthesised and relevant information presented to them via policy aligned decision trees. This is a key part of achieving seamless, effective and truly data driven decision making.

Delivering the successful future of Digital Travel

At Sopra Steria, we know that the Digital Traveller approach requires much more than just data and technology. Having the right strategy, architecture and people in place right from the start is key.

Sopra Steria has been working with border and immigration authorities in the UK and across Europe for more than 30 years. We have continually innovated our practices and ways of working to meet new and emerging challenges. Over the last few years, Sopra Steria has introduced and successfully rolled out machine learning, AI, biometric capture, digital wallets, API platform and data management solutions across multiple clients and geographies.

> *At Sopra Steria, we believe that our vision of the 'Digital Traveller' enables decision makers to meet today's challenges whilst accelerating the changes needed to meet future opportunities.*

More Information

At Sopra Steria, we work with governments across Europe to implement innovative ways to deliver the digital traveller experience. To find out more about our Digital Traveller and Borders consultancy services, please contact Ben Brown at the details below:

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