

Council recommendation: COVID-19 restrictions on travel from third countries

EU countries have agreed on a common approach to temporary restrictions on travel into the EU and the possible lifting of such restrictions.



Who should be allowed to travel into the EU from third countries?



vaccinated persons



essential travellers



non-essential travellers from countries on the EU list

Vaccinated persons

Vaccinated persons should be allowed to travel into the EU if:

- they are fully vaccinated with an EU-approved COVID-19 vaccine
- they have received the last recommended dose of the vaccine at least 14 days before arrival



EU countries could also accept vaccines approved by the World Health Organization.



Children who are excluded from vaccination due to their age should be able to travel with their vaccinated parents if they present a negative PCR test, taken at the earliest 72 hours before.

Essential travellers

Essential travellers should always be allowed to travel into the EU, independently of where they come from.

Who is considered to be an essential traveller?



EU citizens and their family members



long-term EU residents and their family members



travellers with an essential function or need

Non-essential travellers from countries on the EU list



Every 2 weeks, the EU reviews the list of third countries for which travel restrictions should be lifted.



All travellers from third countries on the EU list should be allowed to travel into the EU.



Criteria to determine which countries are on the list:

- not more than 75 new COVID-19 cases per 100 000 population in the previous 14 days
- stable or decreasing trend of new cases
- more than 300 tests per 100 000 population in the previous 7 days
- not more than 4% of those tests positive
- whether variants of interest or concern have been detected
- vaccination progress
- overall response to COVID-19
- reliability of information and data
- reciprocity, on a case-by-case basis



Measures for all travellers

All persons who are travelling from any third country for an essential or non-essential reason should have tested negative in a PCR test taken at the earliest 72 hours before.



In addition, member states may require:



self-isolation, quarantine and contact tracing for a period of up to 14 days



further COVID-19 testing as needed during the same period

Emergency brake mechanism



An urgent, temporary restriction on all travel into the EU from a third country can be adopted by member state:

- if the epidemiological situation in that country has rapidly worsened
- in particular where a variant of concern or interest is detected



This emergency brake should not apply to:

- EU citizens
- long-term EU residents
- certain categories of travellers with an essential function or need



Such restrictions should be reviewed at least every 2 weeks.