COVID-19 EU Briefing 17 November 2021

The new Weekly EU COVID-19 Briefing will include recent developments from the EU on treatments, vaccines and high-level announcements as well as important restrictions updates on a Member State level.

General EU Developments

Vaccines:

- The European Commission approved a contract with Valneva providing for the possibility for all EU Member States to purchase almost 27 million doses in 2022.

Therapeutics:

- The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has given a positive opinion on two COVID-19 treatments - Ronapreve and Regkirona.

Restrictions Update

European:

- The European Commission is preparing a delegated act to introduce a third dose for the COVID-19 certificate.
- Georgia, Moldova, and Serbia have joined the EU Digital COVID-19 Certificate.

International:

- **France**: Passengers from Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary and Greece will now need to show a negative COVID-19 test from the previous 24hrs to enter French territory.
- **Cyprus**: Cypriot authorities have ended restriction-free entry for all unvaccinated and unrecovered European nationals. Moreover, Andorra has been added to the red category.
- **Greece**: The Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority has extended the current restrictions on travel to Greece from countries outside the European Union and the European Economic Area for an additional two weeks, until 26 November.
- **Slovenia:** Adolescents aged 12 and older are now required to follow quarantine rules when planning to enter Slovenia, as the latter's authorities have reduced the exemptions for children to enter Slovenia quarantine-free, from 15 to 12 years.
- **Estonia**: Andorra is the only state to change its status, moving from the 'Yellow' to 'Red' list.
- **Lithuania:** Italy, France, the Greek islands of Rhodes and Santorini, and Spain's Mallorca have been added to the red list. French Mayotte and Spain's Fuerteventura, Tenerife, and Gran Canaria have been added to the yellow list.
- **Latvia**: The Latvian authorities have announced that the entry rules will remain relaxed for another week for all travellers from Spain, Malta, the Vatican City State, and several other non-EU/Schengen Area countries.

- **Denmark**: Unvaccinated and unrecovered arrivals from Singapore must undergo quarantine upon arrival in Denmark, the authorities have revealed.
- **Sweden**: Fully vaccinated Armenians can travel to Sweden without being subject to the entry ban or additional travel rules such as testing requirements.
- **Italy**: Italy has updated its international travel rules. The five-grade system can effectively ban entry for anything except work and family reasons depending on the tier of the country of origin, but most European countries are still in the middle "C" tier. However, this might change by 15 December, when the rules are supposed to be updated.

Domestic:

- **Germany**: The Government has reintroduced free testing. In Berlin, only vaccinated people are allowed to attend restaurants, cinemas and sporting facilities.
- **France**: Mask wearing in elementary schools has been brought back.
- **Ireland**: The Government have unveiled another round of COVID-19 restrictions. Working from home is to be heavily advised, and bars, restaurants and nightclubs will have to close earlier.
- **The Netherlands**: The Government have announced a three week lockdown. Non-essential shops and close contact services will have to shut by 6pm, with supermarkets, restaurants and bars at 8pm. Households will be limited to 4 guests, and 1.5 meter social distancing in public places will also be reimposed
- Greece: The catering industry, pubs, cafés, and restaurants went on strike on Tuesday 16 November to protest the government's COVID measures. Public health sector workers also protested in Athens overpay and conditions.
- **Bulgaria**: The Ministry of Health has called for the activation of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to receive ventilators, patient monitors, ICU beds, and oxygen masks. It is possible to issue a certificate for the presence of antibodies against COVID-19, proven by a laboratory test.
- **Belgium**: The Federal Government drew up a proposal with a number of measures to be discussed at the Consultative Committee on Wednesday. The Federal Government does not want to close sectors, but teleworking could become compulsory up to four days a week, despite employers' organisations voicing strong opposition to such an obligation. Another measure on the agenda is the obligation for children from the age of nine (3rd and 4th grade) to wear a face mask.
- **Cyprus**: At-home Covid rapid tests could soon be widely available to consumers in the Republic of Cyprus.
- **Romania**: Authorization of the Pfizer vaccine for children aged 5-11 is expected on 25 November, the coordinator of the national anti-Covid vaccination campaign, Valeriu Gheorghiță, announced on Tuesday. At the same time, discussions on the law that imposes the vaccination green certificate on employees are being put on hold.
- **Hungary**: 10 months after the first vaccine was administered, the number of people in Hungary who have received their first vaccine has now exceeded six million.

- **Czech Republic:** The Czech Government is due to discuss various options relating to restrictions, following the recent rise in cases.
- **Slovenia:** It has been reported that Slovenian authorities have launched the 'largest ever' mobilisation of medical staff in order to tackle COVID-19.
- **Slovakia**: The Slovakian Government has confirmed that it will seek to approve measures to limit access to services for unvaccinated people.
- **Estonia**: The rules for indoor and outdoor events have changed to reduce the spread of coronavirus. 1,000 participants can attend indoor events and outdoor events will be capped at 2,000, proof of vaccination or recovery must be presented at entertainment establishments, COVID-19 certificates must be checked against ID, public events and activities must end at 11p.m and masks must be worn in enclosed public spaces.
- **Lithuania:** Employers in Latvia are now permitted to dismiss employees who refuse to get vaccinated against COVID-19, medical facemasks and respirators have become mandatory in Lithuania's schools, except for primary students and kindergartners and mandatory isolation is introduced for those who got vaccinated more than four months (120 days) before when coming into close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- **Latvia**: All services are expected to be provided only in an epidemiologically safe environment, with the exception of essential services, which may also be provided to persons without vaccination or recovery certificates. Those vaccinated or recently recovered may not undergo home quarantine to perform work duties and attend on-site studies.
- **Denmark:** Municipalities need to bring in special infection reduction measures if they have more than 400 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, rather than 500 today, while in parishes, the limit has been dropped from to 800 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, from 1,000.
- **Finland:** Uusimaa region is to see new restrictions on gatherings announced on Thursday and in force a week later, as the region centred on Helsinki struggles to deal with an upsurge in Covid cases. The new measures are expected to be announced on Thursday 18 November and to come into force a week later, on 25 November.
- **Sweden**: Politicians in Stockholm and southern Swedish region Skåne are calling for vaccine passes to be introduced for use in wider society.
- **Malta:** Prime Minister Robert Abela says no new coronavirus restrictions will be introduced in the near future, despite a rise in new cases locally and abroad.
- **Austria**: Austria introduced lockdown for unvaccinated. Unvaccinated people are onlu allowed to leave home for limited reasons, like working or buying food from 15 November.
- **Italy:** Italy has tightened its green pass rules in an attempt to slow down the infection rate before the December holiday season.
- **Croatia:** Croatia's government said it introduced mandatory testing for COVID-19 for all employees at the central and local administrations and majority state-owned companies as of 16 November.
- **Portugal**: Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa said on Tuesday that authorities may bring back some measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the run-up to the holiday season as infections soar across Europe.

Source: DeHavillandEU