

COVID-19 EU Briefing 19 January 2022

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

European:

- The European Union advised EU countries to reimpose restrictions for Argentina, Australia, and Canada.

International:

- **Cyprus:** Authorities in Cyprus have announced that all passengers aged 12 and over, regardless of their vaccination status, will be able to show the results of a PCR test performed within 72 hours before their departure or a rapid antigen test taken in the 24 hours before their departure.
- **Italy:** The Italian Ministry of Health has announced that the country has decided to abolish the travel ban that has been imposed against southern African countries,
- **Romania:** Several countries/areas were removed from the red list, such as South Africa, Brazil, India, Nepal, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi, Angola and Zambia. The new red list includes a total of 74 countries, among them Cyprus, Ireland, France, Greece, Spain, the UK, Italy, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, the US, Australia, and Canada.
- **Bulgaria:** From today, children aged 12 to 18, who arrive from the country in the "red zone", will need to present a negative result from a PCR test conducted up to 72 hours before entering the country.
- **Hungary:** Hungary has announced the shortening of validity for covid-19 vaccination certificates, a decision which becomes effective on 15 February.
- **Estonia:** With the exception of The Vatican, all European countries are on Estonia's travel restrictions "Red" list, meaning unvaccinated individuals must quarantine 10 days on arrival. Romania, previously on the "Green" list (no restrictions) has moved down two levels to the "Red" list, while no countries appear on the intermediate "Yellow" list.
- **Lithuania:** Lithuania has updated its weekly travel restrictions, shortening the self-isolation time from ten to seven days for unvaccinated travellers. Arrivals from the red and grey list countries are also recommended to take a covid-19 PCR test on the third day of arrival at the latest, including those who have been fully vaccinated. Travellers arriving from yellow-zone countries are required to get tested before their trip and take a second test between days 3 and 5 after arrival.
- **Latvia:** The Vatican remains the only place on the 'green list' of European countries. The African countries previously on the 'red list' were announced to have been removed earlier in the week, along with testing requirements.
- **Finland:** Finland has extended covid-19 travel restrictions until 31 January.
- **Sweden:** Adults travelling to Sweden from EU/EEA countries, including the Nordics, will have to show either the EU's Digital Covid Certificate or a valid equivalent which shows that the

person is either fully vaccinated with a first and second dose, tested negative no more than 72 hours before arrival, or recovered from confirmed infection in the past six months. Foreign citizens travelling to Sweden from outside the EU/EEA must be covered by an exemption from the overall entry ban and show a negative Covid test no older than 72 hours.

- **Spain:** The Government has announced that all EU and Schengen Area countries will stay on the covid-19 risk list for at least another week.

Domestic:

- **Italy:** Italian Health Minister Roberto Speranza confirmed that “in the next few hours we’ll open a discussion” with regional authorities “to address issues” with the tiered system.
- **The Netherlands:** The Government have lifted restrictions on non-essential stores, hairdressers and gyms. They will now be able to be open until 5pm. However, bars and restaurants will remain closed.
- **France:** The French Parliament has approved a vaccine pass law. It requires certification of vaccine to enter public areas, such as cinemas, restaurants and bars. Previously, only a negative test was required. All athletes will be required to be vaccinated in order to enter France, with no exceptions.
- **Belgium:** The Consultative Committee will meet on Friday afternoon to discuss the latest coronavirus measures. The ministers are expected to discuss a medium-term strategy and introduce the long-awaited “coronavirus barometer” to provide the population as well as certain sectors more clarity about the measures.
- **Greece:** Greece’s committee of public health experts is expected to recommend an extension of earlier closing times and stricter health protocols by one week, from 23 January to 31 January.
- **Hungary:** The Hungarian Government announced is making a fourth covid-19 shot available to people who ask for it, after a consultation with a doctor.
- **Czech Republic:** The Czech Government will consider making covid-19 vaccinations mandatory for workers in key professions and people over the age of 60 after the daily tally of new coronavirus cases hit a record high.
- **Poland:** 13 of the 17 members of Poland’s Medical Council advising the prime minister on covid-19 resigned, condemning what they said was a lack of scientific influence on policy.
- **Slovenia:** Slovenia has relaxed the rules on mandatory self-isolation after being in contact with a positive case of covid-19. Healthcare, social and educational workers who have been in contact with an infected person will no longer have to spend seven days in isolation but will instead have to take a covid-19 test every day for seven consecutive days after the contact and wear an FFP2 mask at work. Students will also only be required to take a daily rest for seven days.

- **Slovakia:** Slovakia is introducing a number of new measures to combat the Omicron variant. Those fully vaccinated against Covid and recovered from the disease will be given access to most shops and services, as well as mass events held around the country. Starting 1 February, the vaccination certificate will be valid for 9 months from the last vaccination.
- **Malta:** From Monday, covid-19 vaccine certificates will only be valid for three months from the second dose.
- **Estonia:** Persons who have been in close contact with covid-19 infected people, returning travellers, minors, and nationals of other countries only have to stay quarantined for seven days
- **Lithuania:** People who have had contact with a confirmed covid-19 case will have to go into self-isolation for seven days, instead of ten. However, self-isolation from now on is mandatory even for those who have been vaccinated, unless they have recovered from covid-19 within 90 days. In cases of workplace infections, self-isolation will only apply to workers who have spent at least four hours in an enclosed space with a confirmed case. Otherwise, switching to remote work is recommended, as is taking a rapid antigen test. Attending public indoor events will require wearing respirators (of at least FFP2 grade) instead of regular facemasks.
- **Latvia:** Vaccinated and recovered persons who have been in contact with covid-19 can choose to quarantine for 10 days, perform a laboratory test as soon as possible and if the result is negative, the person can continue working onsite using FFP2 respirators and perform another test in 3 or 4 days. Another option is to continue working onsite performing a rapid antigen test for seven days every time before going to work. The shortened quarantine does not apply to unvaccinated persons, who must still be in quarantine for 14 days.
- **Denmark:** Lawmakers have reopened theatres, cinemas, museums, entertainment parks and botanic gardens, and have allowed limited spectators at indoor and outdoor sports events.
- **Finland:** The Finnish government has concluded in its strategy meeting that the current coronavirus restrictions should largely be extended until mid-February. Finland has cut the length of its covid-19 quarantine from 10 days to five for most cases.
- **Austria:** Austria will make coronavirus vaccination mandatory from February, the government confirmed. Unvaccinated people then face a penalty of around €600 and up to €3,600.

Source: DeHavillandEU