

Global Immigration: Weekly round-up of COVID-19 updates

1 March 2021

In brief

Below is a round-up of the most significant global updates on COVID-19 travel restrictions, travel corridors and quarantine measures as at 1 March 2021.

In detail

Global – Vaccination and Health Passport update

The IATA (International Air Transport Association) [Travel Pass](#), an app which verifies a passenger's COVID-19 test result or vaccine certificate, is expected to be implemented widely across the airline industry by the end of March 2021.

Currently, the app is being trialled by a select number of airlines, including Singapore Airlines, Air New Zealand, Etihad, Emirates, Qatar Airways. The hope, particularly across the airline and tourism industries, is that digital health passports, such as IATA's Travel Pass will help with moving towards quarantine-free travel over the next 12-18 months.

Denmark

Denmark has announced that Danish nationals who complete their COVID-19 vaccination course (both doses) will receive a vaccination certificate via Sundhed.dk by the end of this month. This follows Greece, one of the first countries to launch a digital vaccination certificate to persons who have completed their COVID-19 vaccination course. Denmark also stated its intention to launch a digital COVID-19 passport to support with foreign travel (although implementation may take another three or four months according to a government statement). The concept of a COVID-19 health passport is something that other European countries have backed in order to facilitate travel, including Czech Republic, Greece, Estonia, Portugal, Hungary, Cyprus, Italy, Poland, Spain, Iceland and Sweden.

Qatar

Qatar is the latest country to announce a formal position on quarantine exemptions for those who have been vaccinated against COVID-19. Specifically, Qatari citizens and residents who have been vaccinated in Qatar, will be exempt from quarantine measures on return to Qatar, provided 14 days have passed since receiving the second vaccination. The requirement for a negative COVID-19 PCR test certificate remains in place. Interestingly, the Qatari government has stated that the exemption to quarantine lasts for three months from the second vaccination date – and an official noted that the duration of the exemption may be extended once more is known on how long immunity lasts once vaccinated.

PwC continues to monitor the updates around vaccination and health passports – and the impact on international travel, closely and updates are being recorded on the [PwC COVID-19 dashboard](#).

APAC region

Australia and New Zealand – Quarantine-free flights

There have been updates to the quarantine-free flights from New Zealand. Travellers seeking to enter Australia on quarantine free flights from New Zealand to Australia from 25 February 2021, must ensure that they have not been in Auckland for any period over the previous 14 days (except for transit purposes, provided the traveller did not leave the airport) in order to be eligible to travel on a quarantine free flight.

Travellers from New Zealand who have not been Auckland for any period over the 14 days remain eligible for the quarantine free (green) flights. Pre-departure and on arrival screening will continue. Full details and information can be found on the [Australian Government Department of Home Affairs website](#).

Travellers from New Zealand who wish to utilise the 'green' flights should ensure they meet the updated requirements ahead of travel which will exempt them from quarantine upon arrival in Australia. Further, the recent changes are a reminder that the situation is still changeable, and all rules should be checked immediately ahead of travel.

Taiwan – Update to regulations for foreign nationals entering Taiwan

From 24 February 2021, short-term business travellers arriving from low-risk and medium risk countries will be eligible to apply for a shorter quarantine period.

In addition, from 24 February 2021, Cambodia has been moved to the medium risk category and Bhutan has been moved to the low risk category.

All travellers who have been in Brazil, Eswatini, South Africa or the UK within 14 days of entry to Taiwan, will be made to undertake group quarantine facilities for 14 days. Upon completion of the quarantine, these travellers will be required to take a further COVID-19 test and then complete a further seven-day health observation period. Full details can be found [here](#).

Taiwan continues to review and update its travel restrictions and its risk categories of countries. Travellers should ensure they have checked the requirements against their travel history before travel to Taiwan.

Europe

Norway – Requirement for employers to ensure adequate accommodation

Norway has announced that employers who arrange accommodation for foreign national employees must first seek to have this location pre-approved by the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority. Approval will be based on employees being able to socially distance within the accommodation, which includes having their own bathroom, kitchen and access to a private room with internet access. The pre-approval is an application process with an associated processing fee.

Norway has provided employers/sponsors with an option to seek permission for an exemption from the current travel ban for foreign workers, who are essential/critical workers (and where the required skillset is not available via their Norwegian workforce). However, the exemption to bring critical workers is on the provision that all COVID-19 related restrictions (including social distancing and working from home where applicable) are followed.

Middle East

Kuwait – Entry restrictions for foreign nationals extended until further notice

The Kuwait Government has extended its restrictions on foreign nationals entering Kuwait, until further notice. Currently only Kuwaitis and their first-degree relatives and accompanied maids will be allowed to enter Kuwait.

The takeaway

- Employers should take responsibility

In Norway, employers are required to ensure adequate accommodation for their employees. This reflects the Norwegian government's intention to have employers/sponsors to take responsibility for ensuring foreign nationals to be exempt from the travel ban and follow all COVID-19 restrictions.

- Impact of the global situation and cases of new variants of COVID-19

In Kuwait, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation was, prior to the new entry restrictions announcement, preparing to issue an announcement on resuming direct flights from high-risk countries with mandatory institutional quarantine.

However, the change in their decision and the approach to extend the existing entry ban demonstrate how the global situation and cases of new variants of COVID-19 are resulting in cautious and strict border measures.

Therefore, the development in the countries where your assignees are active must be constantly monitored.

Let's talk

For a deeper discussion of how this impacts your business, please contact your Global Mobility Services engagement team or one of the following professionals:

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Meet the [Global Mobility Services global leadership team](#)

Access the [PwC COVID-19 Mobility dashboard](#) for a global round-up of all currently announced travel restrictions and quarantine measures

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