

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

12 April 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 12 April 2021.

In detail

Global – Vaccination and Health Passport update

On 9 April 2021, the UK government published further details on its [Global Travel Taskforce](#) and the new traffic light system which is tasked with facilitating the further easing of international travel, from 17 May at the earliest. The UK will look to categorise countries and territories based on the COVID-19 risk posed, and considerations will include:

- how far the country or territory is with its vaccination programme;
- the rate of infection;
- prevalence of new variants of concern; and
- the access to reliable scientific data within the country/territory.

Full details on the proposed approach can be found on the [UK government website](#). While the method has been outlined, countries and territories have yet to be categorised. The UK Transport Minister suggested further information would be available in the next two or three weeks.

India meanwhile is reporting its highest ever number of COVID-19 cases since the start of the pandemic, with the government warning of vaccine shortages despite India being the largest manufacturer of COVID-19 vaccines. Consequently, **New Zealand** has implemented a new travel ban on those arriving from India, including its own citizens, for an initial two-week period.

Singapore has announced that it is on schedule to vaccinate its population by the end of 2021, confirming plans to invite all those under 45 years old to receive a vaccination from June 2021. Previously, the Singapore government had confirmed that all residents (including Permanent Residents, Employment Pass, S-Pass and Work Permit holders, foreign domestic workers, Dependent Pass, Long-Term Visit Pass and Student Pass holders) would be eligible to access the vaccine.

Americas

Chile — Update to border closures

The Chilean authorities have announced further border closures for non-resident foreign nationals, for an initial 30-day period (subject to further extension). There are limited exemptions to the border closures including transit passengers, travellers who have not been in a country that has community transmission, as confirmed by the [World Health Organisation](#), and travellers who have obtained pre-authorisation from a Chilean consulate for emergency purposes.

Those who remain eligible to enter the country, specifically Chilean nationals and residents, need to ensure that they meet all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing and quarantine requirements including obtaining and presenting a negative COVID-19 PCR test certificate, taken within 72 hours before departure, completing the [declaration](#) within 48 hours before entry to Chile and being prepared to quarantine for ten days, with at least the first five days spent in a designated quarantine hotel, followed by home quarantine provided a negative COVID-19 test result is obtained after five days.

It should also be noted that there is an exit ban in place for Chilean citizens and residents. Exemptions to the exit ban may be sought in urgent and emergency cases only and are subject to the discretion of the Chilean authorities. Further details can be found [here](#).

The takeaway – *Chile has increased border restrictions in attempts to mitigate the rising cases of COVID-19. Those looking to enter Chile should ensure that they are still eligible to enter and if so, that they meet all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing and quarantine requirements.*

APAC

New Zealand – Suspension of travel from India

Following a rise in COVID-19 cases detected at the border in New Zealand, the government has decided to temporarily suspend entry for all travellers from India, including New Zealand citizens and residents, for an initial period of two weeks. The suspension will commence from 11 April until 28 April (subject to extension).

News of the travel suspension from India comes days after New Zealand announced its trans-Tasman travel bubble with Australia, which will take effect from 19 April 2021, permitting two-way quarantine free travel with Australia. Travellers will still be required to provide contact details whilst in New Zealand and ensure pre-departure COVID-19 testing requirements are met. However, the New Zealand government highlighted that the travel bubble will be under review and react quickly to rising COVID-19 cases in both New Zealand and Australia.

The takeaway – *New Zealand is reported to have recorded 23 new cases of COVID-19 with a high number thought to come from India. New Zealand's announcement demonstrates the government's ongoing efforts to mitigate community transmission by reacting quickly. As the restriction applies to all travellers from India, including citizens and residents of New Zealand, over the next two weeks, all impacted travellers should contact their airlines for an update on their flights.*

Europe

United Kingdom – Updates to England's red list

Effective 4am on 9 April 2021, Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines have been added to England's ['red list'](#). Those who have been in a 'red list' country in the 14 days before intended arrival, will be banned from entry. There are exemptions for British and Irish nationals and those who hold UK residence status (including Skilled Worker visa holders),

who will be permitted entry but will be required to stay in a designated quarantine hotel for ten days. There are variations of the rules across each of the home nations.

Quarantine hotels must be pre-booked before departure, as must the day 2 and day 8 COVID-19 tests to be taken whilst in quarantine/self-isolation at home. All pre-departure testing requirements remain in place and eligible travellers must ensure they have completed the passenger locator form before travel.

The takeaway – *The UK government continues to review and update its COVID-19 related travel restrictions, with specific focus on the red list countries. Travellers planning on entering the UK from a red list country should ensure that they are eligible for entry and if so, that they have met all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing and quarantine requirements.*

Middle East

Israel – Update to regulations for the entry of foreign nationals

The Israeli authorities have updated their regulations on the entry of foreign nationals in a number of sectors. Specifically, the revised regulations confirm that foreign nationals are required to obtain a new special entry permission from the Ministry of Interior, before their journey, each time they travel into Israel. This requirement also applies to those holding multiple entry visas.

Purpose of travel will be considered by the Ministry of Interior. Legitimate reasons for travel include attending urgent business meetings, entry for foreign experts (as determined by the Ministry as being essential to the Israeli market) who are undertaking work activities in Israel, those who are attending funerals of an immediate family member, those undergoing urgent medical treatment and other compassionate reasons.

In addition, the Israeli Government has confirmed that foreign national experts in Israel are now eligible to be vaccinated. Those who have completed their COVID-19 vaccinations in Israel, will receive the green pass, which allows for exemption from quarantine measures upon re-entry to Israel.

The takeaway – *Foreign national experts already in Israel who wish to receive the vaccine should contact their local healthcare provider for more information on access and appointments. Foreign nationals looking to enter Israel should ensure that they have met all pre-entry approval and testing requirements.*

Africa

Kenya – Flight suspension with the UK

Following the UK government's decision to add Kenya to its 'red list', the government of Kenya has suspended all passenger flights (both commercial and charter) between Kenya and the UK. The suspension will be reviewed by the government of Kenya after four weeks.

The takeaway – *Travel between Kenya and the UK has become increasingly challenging, with both countries implementing additional restrictions / flight suspensions. Travellers due to travel to Kenya from the UK should check with their airlines. Travellers travelling intending to travel to the UK from Kenya, via indirect routes, will still be subject to the restrictions. Please see the UK update below for full details on UK inbound restrictions.*

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