

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

17 May 2021

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## In brief

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The situation in **India** continues to result in countries announcing enhanced travel restrictions, testing and quarantine requirements. Countries/territories have also started to expand travel restrictions to include Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

This week, **Australia** announced that it would organise three repatriation flights for its citizens currently stranded in India. Notably Australia quickly implemented very strict entry restrictions for travellers from India (including via indirect flights) which extended to its citizens. The repatriation flights aim to prioritise Australian citizens in India who are deemed most vulnerable. However, it has since been reported that over half the passengers scheduled to depart via the first repatriation flight on 14 May 2021 tested positive for COVID-19 and were unable to travel. Whether commercial flights from India will resume in the near future, to facilitate the ongoing repatriation of citizens and residents, is a decision that is still under review by the Australian authorities.

In other news, the **UK** will implement its traffic light system from 17 May 2021, meaning quarantine measures will ease for those arriving from 'green list' countries. However, most of the countries on the 'green list' still have travel restrictions in place with the UK meaning the ability to travel may still be limited.

**France** has also announced this week that it will likely implement a traffic light system by the end of May 2021.

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## In detail

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### Americas

#### Peru – Entry suspension with the UK lifted

From 10 May 2021, the Peruvian authorities confirmed that the entry ban for all non-resident foreign nationals who have been in the UK in the previous 14 days, has been lifted.

The entry ban remains in place for all non-resident foreign nationals who have been in Brazil, India or South Africa in the previous 14 days, until 30 May 2021 (subject to extension).

**The takeaway** – *The Peruvian authorities review the entry bans every two weeks and determine whether an entry ban should be extended or lifted, based on the development of the pandemic globally. Eligible travellers should ensure that they continue to meet all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing and quarantine measures.*

### APAC

#### Hong Kong SAR – Easing of quarantine for vaccinated travellers arriving from low-risk regions

From 12 May 2021, fully vaccinated travellers who have not been in a high-risk or very high-risk region in the 14 days before arrival, can benefit from reduced quarantine periods provided they have completed their vaccination course (and the vaccine is recognised by HKSAR).

Eligible travellers must have completed the vaccination course (i.e. all required doses) at least 14 days from the last dose, before arrival in Hong Kong SAR.

Fully inoculated arrivals from low-risk countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Singapore will still be required to undergo seven days quarantine and another seven days of self-monitoring and take a COVID-19 test on the 12<sup>th</sup> day after arrival.

Fully inoculated arrivals from medium and high-risk countries will still be required to quarantine for 14 days, plus seven days self-monitoring and COVID-19 tests on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> day.

Fully inoculated arrivals from higher risk countries such as Ireland and the UK will not currently benefit from shorter quarantine periods and are required to do the full 21 days in quarantine.

Flight suspensions remain in place for extremely high-risk countries such as India, Brazil, South Africa and the Philippines.

**The takeaway** – *Hong Kong SAR is cautiously easing its 21-day quarantine period for some fully vaccinated travellers. However, all eligible travellers are still required to meet all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing requirements, even if fully vaccinated. Quarantine is still required, albeit for a shorter period of time than the 21 days. Travellers who think they may meet requirements should also ensure the vaccination is recognised by HKSAR.*

#### Japan – Entry ban for foreign nationals with a travel history to India, Nepal or Pakistan

From 14 May 2021, all foreign nationals (including those who hold residence status in Japan) will be banned from entering Japan if they have been in India, Nepal or Pakistan in the previous 14 days before their intended arrival date in Japan. Foreign nationals who hold 'Special Permanent Residence' are exempt.

**The takeaway** – *Japan is increasing restrictions on entry for those who have a recent travel history in India, Nepal and Pakistan. There are very limited exemptions available under exceptional circumstances.*

#### Malaysia – Suspension of The Reciprocal Green Lane with Singapore

The Health director-general confirmed that the Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) for business travellers from Singapore will be suspended from 13 May 2021. This comes after Singapore reported Variants of Concern.

Individuals looking to enter Malaysia from Singapore for business purposes should use the One Stop Centre (OSC) provided by the MIDA. All pre-arrival health checks will need to be fulfilled.

The Periodic Communicating Arrangement Scheme is still in place and travellers arriving via the PCA from Singapore must quarantine for 14 days, effective 13 May 2021.

**The takeaway** – *Following reports in Singapore of variants of concern, Malaysia has increased restrictions and suspended the RGL.*

## Europe

### UK – Introduction of the traffic light system

The UK government published its categorisation of countries and the associated rules travellers must follow when entering England.

From 17 May 2021, travellers arriving from 'green list' countries/territories are not required to quarantine, unless their Day 2 test is positive. All arrivals from 'Amber list' countries/territories must self-isolate for ten days and take COVID-19 tests on Day 2 and Day 8. Only eligible arrivals can enter from 'Red list' countries (Irish nationals, UK nationals and residents) and must quarantine in a managed hotel and take two COVID-19 tests.

Individuals looking to travel overseas from England can only travel for leisure if the country is on the green list. Otherwise travellers must continue to make sure their purpose of travel meets a legally permitted reason.

**The takeaway** – *While the UK government has released its categorisation of countries, travellers are reminded that countries on the 'green list' may continue to have travel restrictions in place for those arriving from the UK. Further, all inbound travellers (even those arriving from 'green list' countries) must continue to meet all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 test requirements. The UK government link should be checked ahead of travel as the categorisation of countries is under regular review.*

### France – Traffic light system to be implemented by the end of May

France will look to categorise non-EU countries/territories via traffic light system from the end of May 2021. A number of EU member states already apply the EU traffic light categorisation system. The traffic light system will determine the quarantine measures and testing requirements travellers will need to meet, depending on their recent travel history and the COVID-19 situation in the country they have travelled from.

**The takeaway** – *Currently, the categorisation of countries has not been implemented in France, but it is expected to follow the same approach as other EU member states who have adopted the traffic light system. Travellers from outside the EU will need to check the traffic light system, once implemented, to understand the required quarantine and testing measures.*

## MIDDLE EAST

### Bahrain and UAE – Quarantine free travel corridor for vaccinated travellers

The UAE and Bahrain have announced a quarantine-free travel corridor for citizens and residents who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Travellers will be required to evidence receiving the full dose of the COVID-19 vaccine via the respective applications, i.e. the UAE's Al Hosn app and Bahrain's BeAware app. Passengers will also be required to take and can upload their COVID-19 PCR test results to the apps.

**The takeaway** – *The travel corridor will mean quarantine-free travel for fully vaccinated citizens or residents of the two countries. However, eligible travellers must continue to ensure they meet all other pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing requirements.*

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – Seven-day quarantine for unvaccinated travellers

From 20 May 2021, unvaccinated travellers are required to quarantine for seven days in a government designated facility.

The Saudi Civil Aviation Authority (GACA) has confirmed that those who can present a vaccination certificate will not be required to quarantine.

***The takeaway*** – *These enhanced quarantine restrictions are part of the authorities' ongoing efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 as the country cautiously starts to reopen their borders. Travellers should continue to ensure they meet all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing requirements.*

UAE – Entry ban for travellers from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka

In addition to the current travel ban with India, the UAE has confirmed that from 12 May 2021, entry is also banned for travellers from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Like the travel ban with India, the ban includes extending the suspension of entry for travellers who have been in any of these countries in the 14-day period before arrival in the UAE.

Flights via the UAE to these countries continue to operate.

***The takeaway*** – *Travellers with a recent travel history to these countries are subject to the entry ban. There are very limited exemptions for UAE citizens, diplomats and golden residence visa holders (who will be subject to enhanced testing and quarantine measures).*

Kuwait – Suspension of all direct commercial flights arriving from Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka

Following the entry ban with India, Kuwait has since announced a suspension of all direct commercial flights arriving from Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, until further notice. As with the India travel ban, all passengers who have a recent travel history (previous 14 days) in these countries are not permitted to enter the State of Kuwait.

***The takeaway*** – *Kuwait already has strict entry restrictions in place and has enhanced these following the worsening situation in India and the subcontinent. All other eligible arrivals should ensure they continue to meet all pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing and quarantine measures.*

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## Let's talk

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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