



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

2020-328 | July 24, 2020



European Union – COVID-19: Update of European Commission List of Safe Countries

On 30 June 2020, the member states of the European Union approved a list of 14+1 countries that are considered safe. This list is reviewed every two weeks, and on 16 July the EU member states agreed to remove Montenegro and Serbia as they no longer met the objective criteria set by the European Commission.¹

For more information on the objective criteria and the specifics of the recommendation, please refer to our earlier report in GMS [Flash Alert 2020-305](#) of 7 July 2020.

As of 16 July, residents of the following 12+1 countries should be permitted in principle (see below) to enter Europe: Algeria, Australia, Canada, Georgia, Japan, Morocco, New Zealand, Rwanda, South Korea, Thailand, Tunisia, and Uruguay, plus the People’s Republic of China (on the condition of reciprocal action by the Chinese authorities).

Residents of Andorra, Monaco, San Marino, and the Vatican are considered EU residents for the purposes of this safe country list.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Due to COVID-19, companies worldwide have had to cancel or postpone business trips and assignments. Companies can now slowly start to resume their international travel plans and prepare for upcoming business travel and assignments – however, in some cases, depending on the country, such plans may still need to be “on hold.” The EU’s changing list means that companies and their globally-mobile employees need to monitor the situation as it evolves and may be required to adjust their travel plans accordingly.

KPMG NOTE

Implementation of the Recommendations

Member states ultimately decide individually whether to implement the recommendations of the European Commission. Individual countries can decide to only implement a part of the recommendations or to allow even less or more categories of travellers to cross their borders.

Consequently, travellers should always check up-front if a travel ban has been lifted for their country of destination.

For instance, as communicated in our GMS [Flash Alert 2020-318](#), the Belgian authorities have decided not to open their borders to the third countries on the list of the European Commission for the time being. Some European countries have decided to only partially open their borders (e.g., the Spanish authorities have decided to implement the list of 12+1 countries, but have adapted the list of travel exemptions for travellers with an essential function or need).²

For detailed information about the easing of the travel restrictions in specific countries, we invite you to consult our interactive [GMS & Immigration COVID-19 Global Tracker](#), to visit our [COVID-19 related Flash Alert webpage](#), and to contact the KPMG team in the relevant country.

FOOTNOTES:

1 Press release of the Council of the European Union of 16 July 2020: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/07/16/council-updates-the-list-of-countries-for-which-member-states-should-gradually-lift-travel-restrictions-at-the-external-borders/> .

2 See the Spanish statute published in the official gazette, "Orden INT/657/2020, de 17 de julio, por la que se modifican los criterios para la aplicación de una restricción temporal de viajes no imprescindibles desde terceros países a la Unión Europea y países asociados Schengen por razones de orden público y salud pública con motivo de la crisis sanitaria ocasionada por la COVID-19," *Boletín Oficial del Estado* núm 196, de 18 de julio de 2020, páginas 53505 a 53507.

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The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Belgium.

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