

GMS Flash Alert



Immigration Edition

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Finland - COVID-19: Updated Travel Restrictions with Three Countries under Controls

On 6 August 2020, the Finnish government decided to re-introduce border controls for three countries. Internal border controls are reinstated between Finland and the Netherlands and Belgium, and external border controls between Finland and Andorra, starting on 10 August 2020¹.

On 3 August 2020, a health information point at Helsinki Airport was opened for providing health counselling for arriving passengers. A COVID-19 testing point has been established for arriving passengers who report symptoms that resemble COVID-19 symptoms.² (For prior coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2020-313](#), 28 July 2020.)

WHY THIS MATTERS

The updated travel restrictions mean that holiday/pleasure trips from Andorra, Belgium, or the Netherlands are no longer allowed. Employees arriving from these countries will have to prove the reason for their stay in Finland. This could cause inconvenience and may require a change of plans for travellers between Finland and these three countries. Travellers should make sure they are in compliance with the new rules.

Employment-based travel within the Schengen area's internal borders is still allowed; however, individuals need to carry proof of employment.

Self-quarantine is recommended for those arriving in Finland from countries subject to internal and external border controls.

Updated Travel Restrictions as of 10 August

The government decided to re-introduce internal border controls for travel between Finland and the Netherlands and between Finland and Belgium on 6 August 2020. Restrictions on external border traffic are re-introduced for travel from Andorra to Finland, as the number of coronavirus cases in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Andorra has risen since the previous assessment. The restrictions enter into force on Monday, 10 August 2020.

Other restrictions on entry remain unchanged.

In countries where the incidence of COVID-19 has not exceeded eight new cases per 100,000 persons in the previous 14 days, restrictions on entry may be lifted for travel. For traffic across internal borders, the lifting of entry restrictions may be considered for countries with a maximum of 10 new cases of the disease per 100,000 persons in the previous 14 days. If the epidemic situation in a certain country deteriorates significantly, the restrictions may be imposed again.

Allowed Border Traffic

As of 10 August, based on the current development of the epidemic, travel to Finland is expected to be possible for the following groups of travellers³:

- Finnish nationals and their family members;
- Nationals of EU and Schengen countries residing in Finland and their family members;
- Those coming from Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;
- Those coming from Italy, Greece, Malta, Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, and Liechtenstein;
- Those coming from Cyprus, Ireland, San Marino, and Vatican City;
- Those coming from Georgia, Japan, New Zealand, Rwanda, South Korea, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay, and the People's Republic of China (provided that reciprocity in China's case is confirmed by the EU);
- Third-country nationals who have a valid residence permit granted by the Finnish authorities.

Travel will also be permitted in the following cases:

- Travel across other Schengen internal borders and from the United Kingdom for employment or commission-related commuting;
- Essential travel in order to work and other essential traffic (as defined and substantiated);
- Self-quarantine is recommended for those arriving in Finland.

The purpose and requirements of travel based on an employment relationship or an assignment are determined during the border check. During border checks, the person on a work trip may be asked to present documents to verify that the entry requirements are fulfilled. Such documents, in particular, may relate to information on the employment relationship and assignment. Other essential travel is assessed on a case-by-case basis based on information gathered during the border check.

KPMG NOTE

It is important to note that the authorities update the list of countries based on developments in each countries' epidemic situations. The Finnish government will review the rules on border restrictions in two weeks' time. Based on the information shared by the government, the next changes in cross-border traffic are scheduled to enter into force on 24 August. Restrictions may also be re-introduced if the epidemic situation in a given country significantly deteriorates.

The KPMG International member firm in Finland continues to monitor these matters closely, as further instructions can be expected from the authorities in the forthcoming days to clarify the newly-introduced measures.

FOOTNOTES:

1 6 August 2020 [News release](#) from the government: "Government reinstates entry restrictions for three countries" (in English).

2 3 August 2020 update from Finavia (in English), the Finnish airport authority, "[COVID-19 testing available to arriving passengers at Helsinki Airport](#)."

3 See (in English) "[Guidelines for border traffic during pandemic from 10.8.2020](#)" on the website of the Finnish Border Guard.

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* Please note that KPMG LLP (U.S.) does not offer immigration services or labour law services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.

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