



# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

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# Vietnam - Immigration and Quarantine Policies Updated 15 March 2022

On 15 March 2022, the Vietnam deputy prime minister agreed to resume pre-COVID-19 immigration policies, in effect lifting all travel restrictions from 15 March 2022.<sup>1</sup> On the same date, the government also announced its approval for resuming the unilateral visa exemption policy for expatriates from 13 countries, many of which make up Vietnam's main tourist market. Quarantine upon arrival was also removed from 15 March 2022, and other relaxations on COVID-19 testing were introduced in the latest guideline on medical requirements for inbound passengers to Vietnam in the guidance that the Ministry of Health issued on 15 March 2022.

With these significant changes Vietnam aims to foster business travel and tourists to Vietnam. This is expected to support the recovery of tourism and the economy as a whole, while safely and effectively controlling the COVID-19 epidemic.

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## WHY THIS MATTERS

For nearly two years Vietnam closed its border for inbound tourism and allowed a very limited number of foreigners – allowing only certain experts, managers, CEOs, and technicians – to enter Vietnam under an administrative entry approval procedure. Subjecting the limited inbound passengers to lengthy and frequently changing quarantine and medical supervision measures also caused difficulties for businesses and individuals in terms of planning their mobility, especially for urgent business matters.

For businesses and individuals that plan to travel to Vietnam for cross-border business activities, awareness of these changes is important to manage mobility plans and budgets and to ease travel-making arrangements.

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## Resumption of Immigration/Emigration Policies from 15 March 2022

The Government Office, according to the Official letter No.1606/VPCP-QHQT dated 15 March 2022, agreed to resume all procedures on immigration/emigration for foreigners and Vietnamese citizens residing overseas from 15 March 2022.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, entry approval for all travellers to Vietnam will be removed from 15 March 2022 and the visa schemes (including e-visa, unilateral and bilateral visa exemption schemes) will resume to those in place pre-COVID-19, in accordance with current regulations on immigration, emigration, transit and residing of foreigners in Vietnam.

In the letter, the Government Office also asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to negotiate with other countries for mutual agreements on recognising vaccine passports, facilitating the travel of Vietnamese citizens overseas, giving guidance on the use of overseas vaccine passports in Vietnam, as well as informing other countries/jurisdictions on the changes of Vietnam's immigration/emigration policies.

## Resumption of Unilateral Visa Exemption Policy for Expatriates from Citizens of 13 Countries

On the same date, the government also issued Resolution No.32/NQ-CP dated 15 March 2022 on the resumption of unilateral visa exemption policy for expatriates being citizens of 13 countries.<sup>3</sup> According to the Resolution, citizens of the following countries will be allowed to visit Vietnam for up to 15 days without a visa, regardless of passport type and entry purpose:

Germany	Denmark	Sweden
France	Finland	Belarus
Italy	Russia	UK (excluding British Overseas Citizens)
Spain	Japan	
Norway	South Korea	

The Resolution is effective for 3 years, from 15 March 2022 to 14 March 2025.

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### KPMG NOTE

The changes in Vietnam's immigration/emigration policies are expected to considerably help in enabling inbound passengers to travel to Vietnam and consequently encourage economic recovery.

For citizens of 13 countries who are exempted from the visa requirement to enter Vietnam, according to current applicable immigration regulations, they are not required to plan for 30 days out of Vietnam between each trip and can therefore arrange their visits to Vietnam more flexibly. However, it is important to comply with Vietnam labour regulations for work permit applications if they travel to Vietnam visa-free for more than three trips in a year.

# New Medical Requirements for Inbound Passengers to Vietnam from 15 March 2022

After the Vietnamese government announced its resumption of immigration and emigration policies to those in place pre-COVID-19 on 15 March 2022, the Ministry of Health issued guidance on measures to prevent COVID-19 applicable for inbound passengers entering Vietnam by air, sea, train and road.

Highlighted below are key points to note from Official letter No.1265/BYT-DP of Ministry of Health.<sup>4</sup>

- **COVID-19 test requirements**

- a. For inbound passengers travelling by air, a negative COVID-19 test certificate issued by authorised clinics of the issuing country is required. Either of the following are acceptable:
  - i. RT-PCR/RT-LAMP method test taken within 72 hours; or
  - ii. Antigen rapid test within 24 hours before departure.
- b. For inbound passengers travelling by other means of transportation:
  - i. COVID-19 test certificate as mentioned above is required, or;
  - ii. If the test certificate is not available upon arrival in Vietnam, passengers must be tested using RT-PCR/RT-LAMP method or antigen rapid test within 24 hours upon arrival;
    - If the test result is negative, the passengers can leave their property.
    - If the test result is positive, the result must be reported to the local medical centre for further guidance.
    - The passengers are encouraged to not stop on their way from the border gates to their property in Vietnam and avoid contact with the community before the negative test result is released.
- c. Children under two years old accompanied by their parents/relatives to Vietnam by all means of transportation are not required to take a COVID-19 test or provide a vaccination certificate or certificate of recovery from COVID-19. Instead, they may travel within Vietnam with their accompanied family members.

- **Medical declaration and medical scanning at border gates**

- a. Inbound passengers must complete a medical declaration before arrival and must use the medical declaration app, "PC-COVID," during their stay in Vietnam.
- b. At the border gates, if any COVID-19 symptoms are exhibited, the passengers are required to inform the medical centre at the border gates for suitable application of medical measures.

- **Health observation and application of COVID-19 preventive measures**

During the first 10 days upon arrival in Vietnam, passengers are required to self-monitor their health for any symptoms of COVID-19 and must inform the nearest medical centre for suitable guidance and medical supervision measures if they show any symptoms of COVID-19. Further, they are required to wear masks and frequently sanitise their hands to prevent COVID-19.

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## KPMG NOTE

In this latest guidance of the Ministry of Health, the authority did not refer to a COVID-19 vaccination requirement for inbound passengers. However, vaccination status is likely to be checked by airlines prior to boarding the flight to Vietnam. Therefore, passengers are recommended to check with the airlines ahead of their departure to clarify requirements.

Also, as the quarantine requirement is removed, inbound passengers entering Vietnam with a qualified negative COVID-19 test certificate can travel right after arrival in Vietnam. Since it is not clearly regulated whether unvaccinated passengers are required to quarantine/self-isolate, travellers should confirm with the airlines/transportation agencies/hotel/accommodation as to their specific requirements.

For those who require a COVID-19 test upon arrival, it is still unclear who will perform the test and how the test is recognised such that the passengers are qualified for traveling. Further guidance might be available in the coming days.

The KPMG International member firm in Vietnam continues to monitor the situation as well as the latest requirements and will endeavour to keep readers of *GMS Flash Alert* apprised of any new developments.

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## FOOTNOTES:

1 See the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Government News webpage (15 March 2022): "[Gov't resumes pre-pandemic visa issuance as Viet Nam seeks to reopen inbound tourism.](#)"

2 Ibid.

3. See the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Government News webpage (15 March 2022): "[Viet Nam resumes visa exemption policy for citizens from 13 countries.](#)"

4. See the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Government News webpage (17 March 2022), "[Viet Nam lifts quarantine requirements for foreign arrivals.](#)"

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