



**Health
Information
and Quality
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

Rolling review of International Public Health Guidance in relation to the Omicron variant (B.1.1.529)

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About the Health Information and Quality Authority

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is an independent statutory authority established to promote safety and quality in the provision of health and social care services for the benefit of the health and welfare of the public.

HIQA's mandate to date extends across a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector services. Reporting to the Minister for Health and engaging with the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, HIQA has responsibility for the following:

- **Setting standards for health and social care services** — Developing person-centred standards and guidance, based on evidence and international best practice, for health and social care services in Ireland.
- **Regulating social care services** — The Chief Inspector within HIQA is responsible for registering and inspecting residential services for older people and people with a disability, and children's special care units.
- **Regulating health services** — Regulating medical exposure to ionising radiation.
- **Monitoring services** — Monitoring the safety and quality of health services and children's social services, and investigating as necessary serious concerns about the health and welfare of people who use these services.
- **Health technology assessment** — Evaluating the clinical and cost-effectiveness of health programmes, policies, medicines, medical equipment, diagnostic and surgical techniques, health promotion and protection activities, and providing advice to enable the best use of resources and the best outcomes for people who use our health service.
- **Health information** — Advising on the efficient and secure collection and sharing of health information, setting standards, evaluating information resources and publishing information on the delivery and performance of Ireland's health and social care services.
- **National Care Experience Programme** — Carrying out national service-user experience surveys across a range of health services, in conjunction with the Department of Health and the HSE.

Version History

Version number	Date	Details
V1.0	9 December 2021	
V2.0	13 December 2021	Updated review of public health guidance as of 13 December
V.3.0	15 December 2021	Updated review of public health guidance as of 14 December

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Public Health Guidance Summary

Key points

Changes in public health measures are being advised or taken internationally following the identification of the Omicron variant. This report provides a summary of all **changes to mitigating measures from 26 November 2021**, when the Omicron variant was declared a variant of concern. Changes to public health measures reflect efforts to reduce the ongoing risks posed by the Delta variant as well as the threat posed by Omicron. This report is accurate to 14 December 2021.

Movement of people

- The ECDC recommends reducing contacts between groups of individuals in social or work settings and that authorities should consider advising reduced inter-household mixing.
- In Ireland, visits to private homes over the coming weeks should be kept to a maximum of three other households (that is, four households in total); with some flexibility depending on individual circumstances.
- International guidance generally recommended that people limit the number of visitors to their home. This ranged from four visitors a day in the Netherlands, three households at a time in Scotland and no more than 10 guests in your home in Norway.
- It is also recommended in the Netherlands and Scotland to self-test before visiting others; being particularly careful when children 12 years or under come into contact with those aged 70 years or older.

Social or mass gatherings

- The ECDC recommends that large public or private gatherings should be avoided.
- Restrictions introduced relating to social or mass gatherings depend on the type of event and whether it is being held indoors or outdoors, these include for example maximum attendance numbers, reduced opening hours and social distancing. In the Netherlands, event venues are closed between 17.00 and 5.00 until 14 January 2022.
- Additionally, a COVID-Pass is now required to attend events in Finland, Italy, Portugal and Switzerland. This may be a 2G pass (proof of vaccination or recovery) or a 3G pass (proof of vaccination or recovery and negative test), depending on the country.

Primary schools

- In Ireland, parents are being asked to prioritise their children's activities so as to minimise contacts. Face masks are also required in third class and above in primary school.
- In Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands, the Christmas holiday period has been extended for primary schools.
- In Portugal, face-to-face classes have been suspended from 2-9 January 2022.
- In general, face masks are to be worn by children in primary school; the age from which they should be worn ranges from, all children in primary school in Germany, to those aged 11 years or older in England.

Second-level education

- There are similar mitigation measures in second-level education as those in primary schools, with some additional measures.
- In Belgium, in addition to extending the Christmas holidays, lessons should be delivered using a mix of online and face-to-face teaching.
- In the Netherlands, pupils and staff should do a self-test at home twice a week and everyone should wear a face mask indoors, except when in classrooms.

Higher and adult education

- Mitigation measures in higher and adult education are the same as those for primary and second-level education. In Ireland, educational events can proceed without capacity limits.
- In addition, Italy requires proof of vaccination, recovery or a recent negative test to access university. All face-to-face classes have been suspended in Portugal from 2-9 January 2022 and the Netherlands have introduced a maximum group size of 75 people per room.

Business activities

- In general, all countries advise working from home where possible. A number of countries have restricted opening hours for certain business.
- In Ireland, from 7 December 2021 until 9 January 2022, strict social distancing is required in all bars and restaurants, including hotels (that is, reverting to the measures in place pre-22 October 2021).
- The opening hours in the catering industry are from 5 a.m. (in Belgium, Czechia, Denmark and the Netherlands) to 5p.m. (in the Netherlands) 10 p.m. (in Czechia), 11 p.m. (in Belgium) and 12 midnight (in Denmark).

- In Germany, people who have not been vaccinated or do not have proof of infection are only allowed to shop in grocery shops and pharmacies. In all other shops, only vaccinated and recovered people are allowed to enter.
- In Italy, proof of vaccination, recovery or a recent negative test is required to access workplaces and shopping malls.

Amateur sport and recreation

- In general, access to sports facilities is only possible through proof of vaccination, recovery or a negative test.
- In Ireland, there is a maximum capacity of 50% at indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events, all of which must be fully seated.
- In Belgium, audiences are not permitted at indoor sporting activities and in the Netherlands, amateur sports matches and training are not permitted between 5 p.m. and 5 a.m.
- In Austria, operators of sports and recreation centres have to collect contact details, appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol.

Professional sport

- Similar to amateur sport, access to professional sports is only possible through proof of vaccination, recovery or a negative test.
- In Italy, spectator capacity is reduced to 60% indoor and 75% outdoor. In Germany the maximum number of spectators is 5,000 indoors and 15,000 outdoors.

Religious activities

- In Ireland, religious services and weddings can proceed without capacity limits but with all other protective measures remaining in place.
- COVID certification or proof of vaccination or recovery is now required to attend religious ceremonies in Italy, Portugal and Switzerland (where there are more than 50 people attending).
- In Czechia, the number of people that can take part in religious activities is limited to 100 people.

Public transport

- In Ireland, on a temporary basis, the wearing of face masks is recommended for children aged nine years and older on public transport.
- FFP2 masks are now required on all public transport in Austria, with face masks required by law in England and Norway, and recommended in Sweden if congestion cannot be avoided.

- COVID certification or proof of vaccination or recovery is required in specified circumstances in Italy (inter-regional rail transport) and Austria (cable cars and cogwheel railways, on bus trips and on excursion boats).
- The Swedish Public Health Agency has recommended that, where possible, all adults should use public transport outside of rush hour or they should use other modes of transport, such as walking, cycling or driving.

International travel

- Thirteen of the countries (Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Spain) included in this review have introduced stricter travel restrictions for some or all of the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe due to the Omicron variant. These restrictions vary, however, most include a negative PCR or antigen test result prior to travel along with a requirement to quarantine regardless of vaccination status.
- As of 14 December 2021, there are no countries on the red list in the UK.
- In Germany, all people over the age of 12 who do not have a recovery or vaccination certificate and who are coming from abroad must now provide a negative test upon arrival even if the country is not listed as a high-risk or virus variant area.

Domestic travel

- No updated guidance identified.

Culture, leisure and entertainment

- In general there are restrictions on the capacity allowed at indoor and outdoor cultural, leisure and entertainment events. In Ireland, there is a maximum capacity of 50% at indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events, all of which must be fully seated.
- In Czechia the maximum attendance at leisure activities for children and adults has reduced to 100 participants.
- Nightclubs have closed in Denmark from 10 December 2021, for a 4-week period from 9 December 2021 in France and have been closed since 26 November in Belgium.
- In Germany, Italy and Switzerland, restaurants, cinemas, theatres and other leisure facilities are now only accessible to vaccinated or recovered individuals.
- In Germany, there is a national requirement to close nightclubs and discos when the 7-day incidence is greater than 350 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Changes in infection, prevention and control guidance

- The ECDC recommends that for probable or confirmed cases of Omicron infection, contact tracing should be prioritised, regardless of vaccination status.
- In Ireland, household close contacts who are fully vaccinated and showing no symptoms should restrict their movements until they have three negative antigen test results taken within a 5-day period.
- In Denmark, stricter guidelines were introduced in response to the Omicron variant. Close contacts are recommended to self-isolate regardless of vaccination status. They should also get a PCR test on days 1, 4 and 6. Self-isolation can be ended with a not-detected result from the last test on day 6.
- In residential facilities and hospitals in Austria, employees and visitors must be vaccinated, recovered or have a negative test (PCR or lateral flow). FFP2 masks are compulsory in all closed rooms, unless other suitable protective devices are available. Operators have to collect contact details and residents can have a maximum of two visits per day in residential facilities or one visit per day in hospitals.
- In Finland, COVID-19 testing has been recommended for a broader range of situations including; patients admitted to hospital, those exposed to COVID -19 in the previous two weeks, those at risk from severe COVID-19, people who have not yet received their booster vaccine dose and health and social care workers and residents of care units for older people.

Face coverings

- The WHO and ECDC continue to advise that the use of masks (in addition to physical distancing, ventilation of indoor spaces, crowd avoidance and hand hygiene) remains key to reducing transmission of SARS-CoV-2 even with the emergence of the Omicron variant.
- In general, face coverings are recommended in all indoor and crowded outdoor spaces.
- In Ireland, face coverings are now required in third class and above in primary school, on public transport and in bars, restaurants and hotels for those aged nine and older (when not eating or drinking).
- In Austria, it is mandated that FFP 2 masks are to be used if physical contact with people cannot be ruled out.
- In Switzerland, the requirement to wear a mask applies in all situations where a COVID-19 certificate requirement applies - except at private gatherings.

COVID-19 Pass

- A number of countries announced changes to COVID-19 passes relating to the vaccination status requirement.
- In Ireland, an EU Digital COVID Certificate (COVID-19 pass) (vaccine or recovery certificate) is now required for indoor hospitality and events, gyms and leisure centres and hotel bars and restaurants.
- France reduced the duration of validity to less than 48 hours for PCR and antigen test results.
- Five countries (Austria, Czechia, Denmark, France and Italy) recently announced expiry dates for COVID-19 Passes which range from 7 months to 270 days, after the final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine series or recovery. Austria and Denmark reduced the duration of validity of vaccination certificates. However, Austria announced that the reduction from 360 days to 270 days did not apply for people who are vaccinated at least once and also recovered. In France, people aged 18 to 64 who had their last dose of vaccine before 17 June 2021 must have their booster by 15 January 2022, so that their pass is not deactivated. Czechia announced the booster dose will extend vaccination certificates validity for an unlimited period.
- For people who were given the Janssen vaccine, an additional dose is required to maintain the validity of COVID-19 passes in Belgium and France.

Vaccination programme

- The ECDC recommends administration of a booster dose three months from completion of the primary vaccination.
- In Ireland, a booster (fourth dose) of an mRNA vaccine no sooner than three months after the third dose is recommended for those who are immunocompromised and for those whom a third dose had been previously recommended as part of an extended vaccine schedule.
- Depending on the country, individuals can have booster doses administered two (England) to six (Czechia) months after the primary vaccination schedule has been completed.
- Access to booster doses for over 18s was announced in Scotland and England.
- Children aged between five and 11 who live in Spain will be offered a vaccine.

Christmas and or end of year arrangements

- The ECDC recommends setting limits for the number of participants in social and public events during end-of-year celebrations.
- In Denmark, Christmas lunches and major social events (excluding those in private homes) should be cancelled. Everyone who attends a private home

Christmas get-together should be vaccinated, and may take a self-test beforehand.

- In Norway, up to 20 guests can gather in one household once during the Christmas and New Year holidays, but there should be a 1 metre distance between the guests.

Introduction

On 26 November 2021, Omicron (B.1.1.529) was declared a variant of concern. Subsequently, changes in public health measures are being advised or taken internationally to mitigate the spread of the Omicron variant. This report summarises changes in mitigating measures from 26 November 2021 onwards. Changes to public health measures reflect efforts to mitigate the ongoing risks posed by the Delta variant and the threat posed by Omicron. Although a comprehensive search of international resources for the included countries was undertaken, it is possible that the sources identified in this review are not current or do not accurately capture all public health measures and strategies that are being undertaken. The public health measures adopted by countries to limit the spread of COVID-19 are constantly changing. As such, the review may have missed relevant information that was just (or about to be) published at the time of the review. To the best of our knowledge, the review is accurate as of 14 December 2021.

Methods

The countries listed below were chosen, based on them being in a similar phase of pandemic response, guidance being available in English, widespread use of the organisation's advice, and/or the working constraints of the HTA team. The international resources included for review were from a range of ministries of health and public health agencies. These were reviewed to identify new or updated public health guidance on measures being advised or taken internationally in relation to Omicron. Mitigating measures taken from 26 November 2021 (when the Omicron variant was declared a variant of concern) were eligible for inclusion.

EU/EEA countries

- Austria
- Belgium
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Ireland
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Norway

- Portugal
- Spain
- Sweden.

Non-EU/EEA countries

- England
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- South Africa
- Wales
- Switzerland
- United States.

International public health agencies

- WHO
- ECDC.

Data were extracted under the following headings:

- Movement of people
- Social or mass gatherings
- Primary schools, second-level schools, higher and adult education
- Business activities
- Amateur sport and recreation, professional sport
- Religious activities
- Public transport
- International and domestic travel
- Culture, leisure and entertainment
- Changes in infection, prevention and control guidance (to include close contact status, restriction of movement)
- Face coverings
- COVID Pass
- Vaccination programme
- Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period.

Results

Movement of people

In Ireland, visits to private homes over the coming weeks should be kept to a maximum of three other households (that is, four households in total). While recognising the need for flexibility depending on individual circumstances, people should limit their contacts throughout the period ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Finland, the recommendation to work remotely has been reintroduced. All employees in the public sector should work remotely as extensively as possible if their duties so allow. The Government also recommends that private employers adopt similar extensive remote work practices, recognising, however, that workplaces will determine how to combine in-office and remote work in a way that ensures health security. At the same time, employers should promote work arrangements that reduce close contacts and other risk factors at workplaces ([30 November 2021](#)).

In response to the increasing number of infections, the Netherlands has advised everyone to stay at home as much as possible, do a self-test before meeting others, not receive more than four visitors a day in your home (>12 years of age) and to limit visits to one a day ([26 November 2021](#)).

On 7 December, Norway introduced new measures which come into effect on [8 December 2021](#). One of the measures related to movement of people, states that no more than 10 guests can be invited to one's home, in addition to your own household members.

In anticipation of the arrival of winter and a phase of growth in the pandemic in the coming weeks, Portugal has made working from home, where possible, mandatory from the 2 to the 9 of January 2022 ([1 December 2021](#)).

In England and Scotland office workers who can work from home should do so.

In Scotland, measures announced on [14 December 2021](#) advised that social interaction at home or in indoor public places should be reduced to a maximum of three households at any time, with everyone encouraged to take a lateral flow test before meeting. For people in sectors where working from home is not possible, regular testing with lateral flow tests should be undertaken.

In Austria, a general lockdown came into effect on 22 November 2021. It has been reported that this lockdown has been effective in reducing COVID-19 cases. The federal government and federal states have therefore agreed, with the involvement

of experts, to end the general lockdown in Austria under careful safety measures - but only for those who have been vaccinated and those who have recovered ([12 December 2021](#)). There is still a general restriction for people without a valid 2G certificate. These people are only allowed to leave their own living space under certain conditions (work, training, purchasing essential goods). People under the age of 12 are exempt from these restrictions. For people aged 12 and over attending compulsory schooling, the Ninja Pass Test system is equivalent to a 2G certificate until the end of compulsory schooling.

The ECDC ([15 December 2021](#)) recommends reducing contacts between groups of individuals in social or work settings. Authorities should consider advising reduced inter-household mixing.

Social or mass gatherings

In Ireland, there has been no updated advice since 26 November 2021.

Restrictions on social and mass gatherings vary across Finland. For example, in areas with community transmission, many are requiring public events and general meetings to be limited to 50 people indoors for the month of December. The organiser of the public event may introduce a corona passport, in which case the order does not have to be complied with ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Germany, only persons of one's own household and a maximum of two persons of another household may attend private meetings with unvaccinated persons. Children under 14 years of age are exempt. In areas with a 7-day incidence above 350 per 100,000, a limit of 50 persons (vaccinated and recovered) indoors and 200 persons (vaccinated and recovered) outdoors applies to private parties and gatherings ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Italy, proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test is required to attend gatherings ([5 December 2021](#)).

In the Netherlands, the government announced stricter measures to curb the number of infections and stop the health and care sector being further overburdened. These restrictions applied as of [28 November 2021](#) and have now been extended until at least 14 January 2022; the government will reassess the situation on 14 January 2022. For example, the following locations are closed between 17.00 and 05.00:

- indoor and outdoor sports venues
- non-essential shops such as clothing shops
- non-essential locations, such as event venues, locations where contact-based professions are carried out, zoos, amusement parks, spas, saunas and tanning salons
- food and drink venues such as restaurants and bars
- locations for artistic and cultural activities, such as cinemas, theatres and concert halls.

In Norway, at indoor events without fixed, allocated seats, 600 people are allowed. Those present must be divided into groups of up to 200 people and there must always be at least 2 metres distance between the groups. The groups can be replaced during the event if the changeover takes place in an infection controlled manner and there is no contact between the groups. At indoor events, without fixed, allocated seats for everyone in the audience (for example member meetings, courses/conferences, indoor sports and cultural events) 50 people are allowed. As of

[8 December 2021](#), a maximum of 20 people are permitted to attend a private gathering in a public place (whether it is rented or borrowed).

In Portugal, the presentation of a digital certificate (or proof of vaccination or a negative laboratory test result) is mandatory for those aged 12 years and older when accessing small events (less than 5,000 people outdoors or less than 1,000 people indoors), whether indoors, outdoors or outside fixed venues, and family or corporate events. Testing is required to access large events (from 5,000 people outdoors or 1,000 people indoors); this is waived for workers in spaces or establishments as well as any suppliers or service providers; children under 12 years are exempt ([1 December 2021](#)).

In Northern Ireland, ([29 November 2021](#)) there are no restrictions on the number of persons that can gather outdoors at private dwellings for example in a garden. Social distancing however is still recommended. The maximum number of persons that can gather indoors at a private dwelling is 30, including children aged 12 and under. Large house parties and raves indoors are not permitted. Indoor gatherings in a private dwelling are permitted for the purpose of a marriage, a civil partnership or funeral up to a maximum of 30 persons. This number includes the officiant and children aged 12 and under. There are no limits to indoor or outdoor gatherings that are not at private dwellings.

In Scotland, from [10 December 2021](#) people should think about deferring work Christmas parties. The Scottish Government's strong recommendation continues to be that everyone should take a lateral flow test before any occasion where they will be meeting another household ([14 December 2021](#)).

In Wales, according to the advice from [13 December 2021](#) people over the age of 11 are encouraged to take a lateral flow test twice a week (every 3 or 4 days) if they do not have COVID-19 symptoms. Lateral flow tests are also encouraged in higher-risk situations including spending time in crowded or enclosed spaces, before visiting people who are at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and before travelling to other areas of Wales or the UK.

On [3 December 2021](#), Switzerland introduced measures that would apply from 6 December 2021. While there is no general limit on the number of people at social and or mass gatherings, presentation of a COVID-19 certificate is recommended and or mandatory for people aged 16 or over, depending on the setting. That is, it is recommended for private gatherings such as family meals if there are more than 10 people aged 16 or over. It is mandatory for all indoor public events, including all amateur sporting and cultural activities. For outdoor events, a certificate is required for all outdoor events with over 300 people. Switzerland has updated rules to limit indoor private gatherings to a maximum of 10 people of any age, if proof has not

been provided that a person has been vaccinated, has recovered from the disease or has tested negative for COVID, and a maximum of 30 if proof is provided. For outdoor gatherings, a maximum of 50 people is allowed.

The ECDC ([15 December 2021](#)) recommend that large public or private gatherings should be avoided.

On [9 December 2021](#) South Africa advised avoiding potential superspreader events such as festivals and parties to prevent the spread of the virus.

Primary schools

In Ireland, parents are being asked to prioritise their children's activities by minimising indoor community gatherings and indoor mixed household gatherings, reducing the risk of exposure to the virus by opting for outdoor activities instead of indoor and reducing the number of children involved in any particular activity. Face masks are also required in third class and above in primary school ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Belgium, the Christmas holidays for pre-primary and primary education will be brought forward by one week and will start on 20 December 2021. Mandatory CO₂ meters are required in every classroom and in areas where many people gather. Where there are two infected cases in a class, the class is suspended from school attendance. Face masks should be worn by all children aged six years and older. All extracurricular activities are banned and parents are recommended to regularly test (lateral flow) their children ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Denmark, all children from the first grade and older can be offered lateral flow tests if they have not been vaccinated or previously infected. These tests cannot be used instead of the PCR test on day 4 and day 6, in instances where the student has been identified as a close contact in school. Self-tests are not reported, and the result will therefore not appear on the corona passport ([29 November 2021](#)). On [8 December 2021](#) Denmark extended school holidays from 15 December 2021 to 5 January 2022, instead of 17 December 2021 to 3 January 2022.

France has moved to level 3 of the health protocol in primary schools (that is, face mask must be worn in the playgrounds and there should be limited mixing in the canteen and high-intensity sports activities indoors). The rule of closing the class for a period of seven days from the first positive case no longer applies to primary school since the week of 29 November 2021; students presenting a negative PCR test within 24 hours can continue to go to school ([6 December 2021](#)).

In Germany, since 2 December 2021, an incidence-independent and nationwide mask requirement has been applied in schools for all grade levels. If the federal state meets the criteria for the alarm levels, singing in closed rooms is only allowed with a mask. Playing wind instruments is only permitted in very large rooms or outdoors ([26 November 2021](#)).

On [26 November 2021](#) the government in the Netherlands announced stricter measures these new restrictions came into effect on 28 November 2021. Extra rules and arrangements had been implemented which included the use of fixed routes in schools, a requirement to wear a face mask in hallways for pupils in primary six to

eight. It had been recommended that children aged 12 years and under with cold symptoms must stay at home and get a PCR test even if their symptoms are mild. Following a press conference held on [14 December 2021](#), it was announced that primary schools, schools for special (primary) education, and out-of-school care facilities will be closed in the week before Christmas. Out-of-school care facilities will be open during the regular Christmas break. Primary schools will reopen again on 10 January 2022. The situation will be reviewed on 14 January, or possibly at an earlier date if the Outbreak Management Team gains important new insights into the Omicron variant. Schools will remain open for emergency care for vulnerable children and children of key workers. Schools are allowed to provide distance learning until the Christmas holidays, but it is not necessary.

In Portugal, primary education, childhood support activities, family daycare centres and social support activities will be suspended between 2 to 9 January 2022 ([1 December 2021](#)).

In England, as of [7 December 2021](#), face masks should be worn in communal areas of schools by staff, visitors and pupils in year seven and above.

Second-level education

In Ireland, there has been no updated advice since 26 November 2021.

In Belgium, additional regulations are the same as those for primary-level education settings. Additionally, second-level education should be provided as a mix of in-person classes and online classes until the examination period starts. Socially distanced learning can be organised in the school for students who do not have access to digital resources ([3 December 2021](#)).

Regulations for second-level schools in Denmark are the same as those for primary schools ([29 November 2021](#)). On [8 December 2021](#) Denmark extended school holidays from 15 December 2021 to 5 January 2022, instead of 17 December 2021 to 3 January 2022.

In France, middle school students (typically age 11 and older), who have a complete vaccination schedule can continue face-to-face lessons. Unvaccinated students should take their lessons from home during the isolation period ([6 December 2021](#)).

In Germany, masks are mandatory for all when attending second-level education.

In the Netherlands, second-level and vocational schools remain open, but there should be one-way systems and regular self-testing. Pupils and staff should do a self-test at home twice a week. Everyone should wear a face mask indoors, except when in classrooms ([26 November 2021](#)).

In Portugal, second-level education will be suspended from 2 to 9 January 2022 ([1 December 2021](#)).

In England, as of [7 December 2021](#), face masks should be worn in communal areas of second-level schools by staff, visitors and pupils in year seven and above.

In Wales, from [29 November 2021](#) face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in all indoor areas of all settings, including classrooms, where physical distance cannot be maintained. Face coverings also should be worn by secondary aged learners in all indoor areas, including classrooms, where physical distance cannot be maintained.

Higher and adult education

In Ireland, there has been no updated advice since 26 November 2021.

In Germany, masks are mandatory for all when attending higher and adult education.

In Italy, proof of vaccination, recovery or a recent negative test is required to access university ([5 December 2021](#)).

In the Netherlands, higher professional education institutions and universities are open and further education may take place in the evenings. The maximum group size is 75 people per room. In theatres and auditoriums up to 1,250 people are allowed at once ([14 December 2021](#)).

In Portugal, all face-to-face activities of higher education institutions will be suspended from 2 to 9 January 2022 ([1 December 2021](#)).

In England, as of [7 December 2021](#), face masks should be worn in communal areas of universities and colleges by staff and visitors.

Business activities

In Ireland, from 7 December 2021 until 9 January 2022, strict social distancing is required in all bars and restaurants, including hotels (that is, reverting to the measures in place pre-22 October 2021). This means table service only (no counter service), there should be one metre between tables, a maximum of six adults can be seated per table (or a maximum of 15 persons can be seated at a table when including children aged 12 years and younger), multiple table bookings and intermingling are not permitted, masks must be worn when not seated at the table and closing time remains to be midnight for all on-licensed premises. Everyone should work from home unless it is necessary to attend the workplace in person. This means a return to the situation on working from home as it applied before 20 September 2021 ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Austria, retail establishments (including close body services) may only be entered with valid 2G proof (proof of vaccination or recovery from COVID-19). Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol ([12 December 2021](#)). An FFP2 mask is mandatory for customers in all situations. However, there are some exceptions to the 2G rule (for example, when entering public pharmacies, grocery retailers and farm direct marketers, banks and gas stations) ([12 December 2021](#)). The 3G obligation (proof of vaccination or recovery from COVID-19 and negative test) continues to apply at the place of work. An FFP2 mask is compulsory in all closed rooms. Regarding restaurants, access is only permitted with a 2G certificate. FFP2 masks are required indoors and outdoors except when seated. Indoor functions can take place for up to 25 people indoors and up to 300 people outdoors. At markets where there is no consumption of food or drink, access is only permitted with valid 2G certificate, an FFP2 mask is required and operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. The same rules are in place for markets at which food and or drink is consumed, but there is a maximum limit of 300 people allowed to access the market at one time; contact data must also be collected.

In Belgium and France, remote working, where possible, is obligatory, with a maximum of one day per week in the office (Belgium) and two to three days per week (France). Team building and parties in the workplace are prohibited in Belgium ([3 December 2021](#)), with France recommending that in-person assemblies should be postponed ([6 December 2021](#)). In the Netherlands, the rules for working from home have been tightened to "Work from home. If this is impossible, stay 1.5 metres apart at work."

In Belgium, the opening hours in the catering industry are limited to 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. The number of people per table is limited to six, although a household may share a table, regardless of the size of that household. Only seats at the table are allowed ([26 November 2021](#)).

In Czechia, legal entities' board meetings and elections are allowed to take place, however, it is necessary to adhere to all public health regulations ([26 November 2021](#)). Catering establishments and music, dance, gaming and similar social clubs and discos, gaming rooms and casinos must close between 22:00 and 04:59 ([25 November 2021](#)). The operation of Christmas markets is prohibited, with the exception of the sale of Christmas trees, and in shopping centres it will not be possible to eat directly in food courts ([26 November 2021](#)).

In Denmark, closure of nightlife - understood as premises and locations where a nightclub, disco or similar is run, i.e. consideration is given to whether there is a dance floor - has been announced ([8 December 2021](#)). Bars and restaurants should close at 24:00 to 05:00 from Friday 10 December 2021, and the sale of alcohol will be forbidden between 24:00 to 05:00. Companies are encouraged to enable staff to work from home where possible, in both the public and private sectors. This is not a restriction but a recommendation ([8 December 2021](#)). Companies are recommended to cancel Christmas parties, this is also not a restriction but a recommendation.

In Finland, at general meetings, the organiser does not have to check for COVID-19 passes, but the meeting must comply with general restrictions. Serving of alcoholic beverages in all food and beverage service businesses will end at 17.00 only in areas where the epidemic is in the community transmission phase, unless business requires COVID-19 passport. For all other areas, there are no separate restrictions on the number of customers or on licensing and opening hours. The restrictions laid down in the decree do not apply to the activities of staff restaurants or to takeaway sales of food to customers. The restrictions on opening hours do not apply to food and beverage service businesses on vessels and aircraft that operate between Finland and other countries or abroad or to food and beverage service businesses that operate at distribution stations for liquid fuels ([26 November 2021](#)).

In Germany, people who have not been vaccinated or do not have proof of infection are only allowed to shop in grocery shops and pharmacies. In all other shops, only vaccinated and recovered people are allowed to enter ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Italy, proof of vaccination, recovery or a recent negative test is required to access workplaces for public workers and private individuals, and during weekends and holiday period to access shopping malls ([5 December 2021](#)).

In the Netherlands, on [26 November 2021](#), the government announced stricter measures that came into effect on 28 November 2021. Bars and restaurants, non-essential shops such as clothing stores as well as event venues, locations where contact-based professions are carried out, zoos, amusement parks, spas, saunas and tanning salons must remain closed between 17.00 and 5.00. These measures were extended on [14 December 2021](#) until 14 January 2022. Essential shops, such as supermarkets and chemists, can stay open until 20.00, while essential service providers, such as notaries, lawyers, mortgage advisors and medical health professionals, can open for their normal opening hours. In public locations, everyone must stay 1.5 metres apart. This means fewer people can be admitted (no more than the maximum number of seats available with 1.5-metre distancing or, at locations where there is a continuous flow of visitors, one visitor per five square metres). Assigned seats are mandatory at food and drink venues, events and art and culture venues. This does not apply at locations where there is a continuous flow of visitors. Individuals should work at home if possible and if this is not possible they should keep 1.5 metres apart at work ([14 December 2021](#)).

In Norway, as of 2 December 2021, there has been a recommendation for workplaces to ensure that employees work from home for all, or part of the week, to limit the spread of the new Omicron variant. Bars must close at midnight ([8 December 2021](#)).

In Portugal, guidance published on [1 December 2021](#), stated that teleworking will be mandatory between the 2 and 9 January 2022. Those attending bars, clubs and dance halls must provide a negative test or recovery certificate; this is waived for workers in spaces or establishments as well as any suppliers or service providers. Children under 12 years are exempt from testing. Bars, clubs and dance venues must close from 2 to 9 January 2022.

From [8 December 2021](#), the Swedish Public Health Agency have recommended that employers make it easier for employees to get vaccinated and inform them about the importance of staying at home when they have symptoms. Employers should also ensure that it is possible for employees to keep their distance from each other, for example at meetings, in coffee rooms and changing rooms. Large indoor gatherings with many participants should be avoided. Where possible, employees should work from home. In restaurants, the number of visitors should be limited to allow physical distancing, or additional space should be created. Distances should be marked on the floor so that visitors know what distance to keep from each other. Queuing should be limited through pre-booking. These recommendations are in place until 31 January 2022.

In [Northern Ireland](#), the advice is to work from home where possible. Travel for work purposes is allowed, including to provide voluntary or charitable services, where you cannot work from home.

In Wales, the [advice](#) is to work from home if you can.

In Scotland, the advice from [10 December 2021](#) is to work from home if you can. In Scotland anyone who was working from home at the start of the pandemic is requested to do so now again. For those in sectors where working from home is not possible, regular testing with lateral flow tests should be undertaken ([14 December 2021](#)).

In [Wales](#) the requirement to check individuals' COVID passes are required in any venue that meets the following three criteria:

- authorised to serve or supply alcohol
- open late at night between the hours of midnight and 5am
- where music is provided for dancing (this includes silent discos).

The venue must meet all three criteria to be captured by the requirement to operate a COVID pass. However, if music is provided for dancing, the requirement to operate the pass applies at all times in the venue (not just between the hours of midnight and 5am).

Amateur sport and recreation

In Ireland, there is a maximum 50% capacity at indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events, all of which must be fully seated. This does not include religious or educational events or normal workplace business activity. Face masks should be worn at all times unless eating or drinking. A COVID pass (vaccination or recovery) is required for access to gyms and leisure centres (excluding access to swimming pools or standalone swimming pool facilities) ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Austria, access to sports facilities is only permitted with a valid 2G certificate. There is an FFP2 mask requirement in all accessible areas. There is no need to wear a mask or keep a minimum distance during sport. Operators have to collect contact details, appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. For meetings held indoors without assigned seating, the maximum number of people who can attend is 25, if seating is assigned, the maximum number is 2,000. For meetings held outdoors without assigned seating, the maximum number of people who can attend is 300, if seating is assigned the maximum number is 4,000 ([12 December 2021](#)).

In Belgium, guidance published on [3 December 2021](#) stated that indoor sports competitions must be organised without an audience. Minor participants can be accompanied by two adults. These measures took effect on 4 December 2021.

In Czechia, entry to sports grounds is prohibited for persons who cannot present proof of immunity or a negative test. During group lessons, individuals must be 1.5 metres apart and those in charge must ensure air circulation ([26 November 2021](#)).

In Germany, only vaccinated and or recovered people can access leisure facilities ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Italy, proof of vaccination, recovery or a recent negative test is required to access indoor gyms, indoor team sports activities and indoor swimming pools, including changing rooms; rehabilitation and therapeutic activities are excluded from this requirement ([5 December 2021](#)).

In the Netherlands, on [26 November 2021](#), the government announced stricter measures that came into effect on 28 November 2021. Amateur sports matches and training are not permitted between 5 p.m. and 5 a.m.; however, this restriction does not apply to organised outdoor sports activities for up to four people (excluding instructors), which are permitted. During this time everyone must stay 1.5 metres apart. Everyone aged 18 and over must show a coronavirus entry pass to enter

public indoor spaces, such as clubhouses, changing rooms and toilets. No spectators are allowed. These measures apply until at least 19 December 2021; the government will reassess the situation on 14 December 2021.

The Swedish Public Health Agency introduced new advice and recommendations to limit the spread of COVID-19 in society and to reduce the risk of healthcare being overburdened. From [8 December 2021](#), everyone is recommended to keep their distance in public environments. The recommendations apply until 31 January 2022. The recommendations do not distinguish between amateur and professional sporting activities. Instead, it is stated that sports activities can be carried out if the organiser follows infection, prevention and control measures in accordance with the Swedish Public Health Agency's regulations and general guidelines.

In Switzerland, as of [6 December 2021](#), a valid COVID certificate is mandatory for any sporting (no distinction made between professional and amateur sporting activities) or cultural activity that takes place indoors. Regarding outdoor sports events, a COVID certificate is required for outdoor events with over 300 people; previously this requirement was only applied to outdoor events with over 1,000 people. These measures reflect the sharp rise in the number of COVID-19 patients admitted to hospital and the emergence of the new Omicron variant. The new measures will remain in place until 24 January 2022.

Professional sport

In Ireland, there has been no updated advice since 26 November 2021.

In Germany, it has been proposed (although not yet implemented) that a maximum of 30-50% of the seating capacity may be used. However, the maximum number of visitors will be 5,000 indoors and 15,000 outdoors ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Italy, [5 December 2021](#) proof of vaccination or recovery is required to access sporting events and competitions in stadiums and arenas (60% indoor capacity and 75% outdoor capacity).

In the Netherlands, in accordance with recommendations made on [26 November 2021](#), professional sports matches and training are permitted, even after 5 p.m.; spectators are not permitted at any matches.

Religious activities

In Ireland, religious services and weddings can proceed without capacity limits but with all other protective measures remaining in place ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Czechia, as of [26 November 2021](#), up to 100 people can take part in religious activities.

In Italy, proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test is required to attend civil and religious ceremonies ([5 December 2021](#)).

In Portugal, as of [1 December 2021](#), weddings and baptisms are permitted; those attending must have a valid EU Digital Certificate.

In Northern Ireland, face coverings are mandatory when entering and leaving a place of worship to attend an act of worship. It is recommended they continue to be worn at all times, particularly when moving around the building or while singing. Face coverings are mandatory at all times within places of worship where the indoor gathering is not an act of worship ([29 November 2021](#)).

In Switzerland, masks must be worn in churches and other places of worship. If there are more than 50 people, a valid COVID certificate is required. This came into effect on [6 December 2021](#) in response to the sharp rise in COVID-19 patients admitted to hospital and the emergence of the Omicron variant.

Public transport

In Ireland, on a temporary basis, subject to review in mid-February 2022, the wearing of face masks is recommended for children aged nine years and older on public transport, in retail and other indoor public settings as currently required for those aged 13 years and older. Public transport services are operating at full capacity. Face masks must be worn when using public transport (including taxis and in train and bus stations) unless an individual has a “reasonable excuse” ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Austria, there is an obligation to wear FFP2 masks on all public transport. There is a 2G obligation in cable cars and cogwheel railways, on bus trips and on excursion boats. Operators of cable cars and cogwheel railways, bus trips and excursion boats have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol ([12 December 2021](#)).

In Italy, inter-regional rail transport requires proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test. This is not required within regional transport and local transport ([5 December 2021](#)).

In Norway, the Government introduced a national order for the use of face masks in public transport and taxis if distance cannot be maintained ([13 December 2021](#)). Previously face mask guidance on public transport was only aimed at individuals who are unvaccinated or individuals with COVID-19.

From [8 December 2021](#), the Swedish Public Health Agency has recommended that, where possible, all adults should use public transport outside of rush hour, or they should use other modes of transport, such as walking, cycling or driving. Face masks should be worn on public transport if congestion cannot be avoided. Those responsible for running public transport should do so at full frequency.

In England, masks are required by law on public transport, including taxis ([30 November 2021](#)).

International travel

In Ireland, current advice is to avoid all non-essential travel to or from scheduled States (that is, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe). Since 29 November 2021 a person who has been in a scheduled State in the past 14 days is not permitted to travel to Ireland. Passengers from or who have visited a scheduled country have to quarantine for 14 days at the address declared on the Passenger Locator Form (except diplomats and transport workers).

Individuals may only leave the address for an emergency, to leave the State, or to take a COVID-19 RT-PCR test. There is no home quarantine requirement for passengers arriving to Ireland from a non-scheduled state. Post arrival RT-PCR testing is required for all passengers from a scheduled State at day 2 and day 8 without exemptions. Those who are already in the country having arrived from any scheduled State since 1 November 2021 are asked to present for RT-PCR testing. If your post arrival RT-PCR tests have returned negative, you may leave home quarantine at day 10 following arrival from a scheduled State. Should a test return positive, the passenger is required to home quarantine for 10 days from the date of the positive test ([10 December 2021](#)).

As of [27 November 2021](#), due to the new virus variant Omicron, entry into Austria from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa is generally prohibited and flights from these countries are banned. Upon entry into Austria from other countries, individuals must complete a pre-travel clearance form and present a negative PCR test from not more than 72 hours before arrival. Upon arrival, individuals must quarantine for ten days; this can be ended if a PCR test is carried out, at the earliest, on the fifth day after entry, and a negative result obtained. The day of entry is regarded as "day zero".

In Belgium, an entry ban applies to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe; this has been in place since [28 November 2021](#).

Due to the possible risks associated with the new coronavirus variant Omicron, Czechia citizens are strongly recommended not to travel to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The measure also prohibits the entry of those who have stayed in one of these countries for more than 12 hours in the last 14 days. Proof of negative PCR and a pre-booked PCR test within 24 hours of arrival is required at entry. The next RT-PCR test must then be performed no earlier than day 10 and no later than day 14 after return. An exception is given only to holders of a valid Czech residence (minimum 90 day) permit ([26 November 2021](#)).

If you enter Denmark, having resided within the previous 10 days in Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia or Zimbabwe, there is a requirement to quarantine and get a PCR test ([1 December 2021](#)). All passengers on planes from Doha Hamad International Airport and Istanbul Airport must be tested at the airport as these two airports have the most transit from the affected countries of southern Africa. A negative PCR test at day six after entry to Denmark can end the quarantine. Upon entry from countries not on the red list, the length of validity of immunity passports after previous infection is reduced from 12 months to 6 months. In addition, children aged 15 and older will also have to present a COVID-pass upon entry to be exempt from restrictions.

Due to Omicron, the Ministry of Health in Finland recommends avoiding all travel to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mosambik, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe ([26 November 2021](#)).

Following the discovery of the Omicron variant, the French Government has suspended flights from seven countries in southern Africa ([6 December 2021](#)). In addition, the classification of countries, defined on the basis of health indicators, has changed, with the addition of a "scarlet" country classification ([9 December 2021](#)). Countries on the scarlet list are: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. From 4 December 2021, any person aged 12 and over entering French territory must present a negative PCR or antigen test less than 24 or 48 hours old, respectively, depending on the country of origin. The only exception is for people with a complete vaccination schedule arriving from a Member State of the European Union, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, the Holy See or Switzerland.

In Germany, since 28 November, due to Omicron, the federal government has imposed a transport ban on people arriving from: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Vaccinated and recovered people over 12 years of age from virus variant areas have to show a negative COVID-19 test before starting their journey to Germany. The swab for the test may have been taken a maximum of 24 hours (antigen test) or 72 hours (PCR test) prior to entry. All those entering from virus variant areas are obliged to a 14-day quarantine at home. In principle, this cannot be terminated prematurely with a negative test result or with evidence of recovery or vaccination ([6 December 2021](#)). All people over the age of 12 who do not have a recovery or vaccination certificate and who are coming from abroad must prove a negative test upon arrival even if the country is not listed as a high-risk or virus variant area ([9 December 2021](#)).

On [26 November 2021](#) the Italian government declared a ban on entry into Italy from eight African countries (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe due to the Omicron variant). Entry requirements into Italy varies by country. Countries are rated either A, B, C, D or E with different requirements applied for different ratings.

In the Netherlands, from [26 November 2021](#), there has been a ban on passenger flights to the Netherlands, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The ban will be in place until 23.59 on 15 December 2021. Some exemptions do apply as reported in Table 1.

In Norway, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has advised against non-essential travel to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. This advice is being evaluated on an ongoing basis in consultation with the health authorities. The following measures have been introduced for travellers from these countries (with effect from midnight on [27 November 2021](#)):

- A ban on direct flights from these countries.
- All people who arrive in Norway after having visited the countries should test before departure, upon arrival, and seven days after arrival. They must also complete 10 days quarantine, even if they can present documentation that they are fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19 in the last six months; however, they may end quarantine early if they present a negative result from a PCR test taken no sooner than seven days after arrival.
- People who have visited the countries in question after 16 November 2021, and who arrived in Norway before 26 November 2021, must get a PCR test as soon as possible. It is recommended that they go into travel quarantine for 10 days from their arrival date.

As of [1 December 2021](#), passengers on airlines and ships arriving or stopping over in Portugal, must present an EU COVID Digital Certificate and a negative PCR test carried out within 72 hours prior to the time of departure, or present a negative rapid antigen test carried out within 48 hours prior to departure. All passengers must complete the Passenger Locator Form. Airline arrivals will be subject to thermal screening. Those with a temperature of 38°C or above will have their temperature retested and if this remains at 38°C or above they will have to take a rapid antigen test in the airport. Additionally, arrivals from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe are required to comply with a 14-

day quarantine after entering mainland Portugal, at home or in a place indicated by the health authorities.

The Embassy of Spain in the UK released a statement to say that from midnight on [1 December 2021](#), travellers from the UK travelling to Spain for nonessential purposes need to be fully vaccinated. This change does NOT apply to those under 12 years old or Spanish or EU citizens and their family members. Additionally, nine countries have been classified as high-risk (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe). Travellers from these countries will need to present a negative COVID-19 test (for example, a PCR test taken within 72 hours or a Rapid Antigen Detection Test within 48 hours) regardless of whether they are fully vaccinated or have recovered from the disease. Travellers from these nine countries will also be subject to a mandatory 10-day quarantine, according to a separate order published by the Spanish Health Ministry. The order will take effect from [13 December 2021](#) until 26 December 2021.

On [7 December 2021](#) the UK harmonised travel requirements across [Northern Ireland](#), [England](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#). Everyone aged 12 and over must show a negative PCR or lateral flow test result before travelling to the UK from abroad. These tests must be taken in the two days before travelling. Requirements on arrival in the UK differ depending on the individual's vaccination status and whether or not they have been in a country on UK's red list in the 10 days before arriving in UK. Only British or Irish nationals, or those with residency rights in the UK, are permitted to travel to the UK from a red list country ([7 December 2021](#)).

- For non-red list countries:
 - Everybody aged 12 or over must take a COVID-19 PCR or lateral flow test 2 days before boarding a flight to Scotland from abroad
 - Everyone aged 18 and over and fully vaccinated must isolate at home or in the place you are staying for 10 days (self-isolation). Isolation ends for those over 18 if Day 2 PCR test is negative or is positive isolate for the full 10 days
 - Everyone aged 18 and over and not fully vaccinated or cannot provide proof of full vaccination must isolate at home or in the place you are staying for the full 10 days (self-isolation) and complete a Day 2 PCR test (on or before) and Day 8 PCR test (on or after).
 - Children aged under 18 do not need to isolate on arrival. However, children aged 11 to 17 must take a day 2 PCR test (on or before).

- The travel rules on arrival in UK only apply if travellers have been outside the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or Channel Islands in the 10 days before arriving in the UK.
- If changing flights on the way to UK, the COVID-19 test must be taken in the two days before boarding the first flight.
- On [14 December 2021](#) all countries were removed from the red list.

In Switzerland, from [3 December 2021](#), there are no countries on the quarantine list. In order to continue to prevent the Omicron variant from entering the country as far as possible, a stricter testing regime will apply for all arrivals into Switzerland. This testing requirement also applies to those who have been vaccinated or have recovered from the disease. In addition to taking a PCR test before travelling, a second test (PCR test or rapid antigen test) must be carried out between the fourth and seventh day after arrival. Non-vaccinated third-country nationals wishing to enter the Schengen area from countries or regions at risk will be refused entry to Switzerland for short-term stays without gainful employment of up to 90 days within a period of 180 days. This is being updated on an ongoing basis, taking into account the recommendations for the Schengen states issued by the European Commission.

As of [26 November 2021](#), the ECDC has strongly advised against travel to and from the known affected areas. Recommended measures for incoming travellers from the known affected areas may include:

- increasing awareness about the new variant by providing necessary information to incoming travellers and healthcare workers and prompting early testing and identification of cases with a possible epidemiological link with the known affected countries
- requirement of proof of negative test pre-departure or upon arrival, and quarantine for a minimum of five to seven days with a negative test before release
- quarantine for 14 days without a test, if testing capacity is not sufficient.

The ECDC ([15 December 2021](#)) recommends as a more precautionary approach, and if resources allow, contact tracing of all passengers and cabin crew members that have travelled on a flight with a confirmed or probable case.

As of 6 December 2021, all air passengers aged two years or older with a flight entering the US from a foreign country are required show a negative COVID-19 viral test result taken no more than one day before travel. Alternatively, they must present documentation of having recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days, before they board their flight. The [CDC](#) continues to recommend that all travellers

get a COVID-19 viral test three to five days after arrival, and that unvaccinated travellers should quarantine for seven days after travel.

Domestic travel

No updated guidance identified.

Culture, leisure and entertainment

In Ireland, from 7 December 2021 until 9 January 2022, a maximum of 50% capacity is allowed at indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events which must be fully seated. This does not include religious or educational events or normal workplace business activity. Face masks should be worn at all times unless eating or drinking. Nightclubs are closed and a COVID-19 pass (based on vaccination or recovery) is required to attend cinemas and theatres ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Belgium, nightclubs and dance halls were closed on [26 November 2021](#). Since [3 December 2021](#), all indoor private activities and gatherings are temporarily prohibited, including organised activities, with the exception of sport, private meetings at home or in small tourist accommodation, and weddings and funerals. Events with more than 4,000 visitors can no longer take place from 4 December 2021. Since [6 December 2021](#), indoor activities (events, cultural and other performances and conferences) are allowed under the following conditions: a maximum of 200 visitors, sitting, with face masks and the use of the Covid Safe Ticket if 50 visitors or more.

In Czechia, events such as concerts and performances in theatres a maximum attendance of 3,000 people is permitted, and strict public health rules must be observed ([26 November 2021](#)). Fairs and similar traditional events can take place with a limit of 2,000 people outside and 1,000 indoors, but public health measures must be followed ([26 November 2021](#)). The maximum attendance at leisure activities for children and adults has been reduced from 1,000 to 100 participants ([26 November 2021](#)).

In Denmark, concerts with crowds of over 50 standing people are banned from 10 December 2021. It should be noted that this does not apply to concerts where the public is seated, and gatherings of more than 50 in other settings, such as museums or sporting events, are not affected ([8 December 2021](#)). A temporary ban on alcohol consumption on buses has been implemented from [10 December 2021](#), aimed particularly at party buses. As of [10 December 2021](#), nightclubs, discos or similar type venues have closed. Restaurants, bars and cafés must close from 12 a.m. to 5 a.m. Face masks must be worn at restaurants, bars and cafes when guests are not sitting down ([10 December 2021](#)).

On [6 December 2021](#), France announced that nightclubs would close from 9 December for a 4-week period. Protocols are being developed for external events such as Christmas markets, so that the consumption of food products is strictly regulated.

In Germany, since [3 December 2021](#) only vaccinated or recovered individuals can visit restaurants, cinemas, theatres and other leisure facilities. There is a requirement to close nightclubs and discos when the 7-day incidence increases to greater than 350 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Italy requires proof of vaccination or recovery when attending restaurants and bars, shows (such as theatre performances), parties and nightclubs, theatrical halls, concert halls, cinematographic, local entertainment live music, dance halls and discos (with capacity at 100%) since [05 December 2021](#). Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test is required for indoor access to exhibitions, museums and other places of culture ([5 December 2021](#)).

More stringent measures exist in the Netherlands, where there is a requirement for culture, leisure and entertainment venues to close between 5 p.m. and 5 a.m. Professional artistic and cultural activities are exempt from this requirement, even after 5 p.m.; however spectators or audiences are not permitted. These measures were implemented on [28 November 2021](#).

In Norway, it is recommended that organised sports, cultural and leisure activities be carried out outdoors as much as possible ([9 December 2021](#)). For children and young people under 20 years of age there is no number limit for outdoor or indoor organised training or practice. For adults 20 years and over, indoor, training and or exercises should be carried out in groups of up to 20 people. Where possible, a 2-metre distance should be kept between people during high-intensity training. These rules and recommendations will be implemented for a period of four weeks, but will be reconsidered after two weeks.

In Switzerland since [6 December 2021](#), valid COVID-19 certificates are mandatory for any sport or cultural activity that takes place indoors; there is no longer an exemption for gatherings of less than 30 participants. The certificate is also required for outdoor events of over 300 participants. At outdoor Christmas markets, the protective measures are defined by organisers in collaboration with the authorities. Depending on the Christmas market, access may be limited to people who hold a certificate, or, where necessary, there may be a mask-wearing requirement. In indoor spaces, people must be seated to eat or drink. Whenever they get up from their table in a restaurant or nightclub, they must wear a mask. These restrictions do not apply in restaurants or nightclubs that restrict access to people aged 16 or over with a certificate that proves that they are fully vaccinated or recovered.

Changes in infection, prevention and control guidance

In [Ireland](#), household close contacts who are fully vaccinated and showing no symptoms should restrict their movements until they have three negative antigen test results taken within a five-day period.

On [1 December 2021](#), Austria announced a recommendation that a distance of two metres should be kept from people outside the household. In retirement and nursing homes as well as residential facilities for the disabled, and in hospitals and places where health services are provided [12 December 2021](#). Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol ([12 December 2021](#)). For employees inside these facilities, the 3G ("*Geimpft, PCR-Getestet, oder Genesen*" – meaning "vaccinated, negatively PCR-tested, or recovered" from COVID-19) obligation applies at the place of work. If PCR tests are not available, antigen tests are also permitted. An FFP2 mask is compulsory in all closed rooms, unless other suitable protective devices are available. Visitors are only permitted access with a valid 2G certificate and a valid PCR test must also be presented. If PCR tests are not available, antigen tests are permitted. An FFP2 mask is required, operators have to collect contact details and residents can have a maximum of two visits per day in retirement and nursing homes as well as residential facilities for the disabled, those in hospitals and places where health services are provided can have one visit per day.

Czechia updated guidance recommending all other members of the household will need a PCR test if a member of the household tests positive, even if vaccinated and are asymptomatic. They do not need to quarantine but must wear a respirator until they receive a not-detected result from a PCR test (days 5 to 7 after contact with the infected person) ([29 November 2021](#)).

In Denmark, stricter guidelines were introduced in response to the Omicron variant ([29 November 2021](#)). Close contacts are recommended to self-isolate regardless of vaccination status. They should also get a PCR test on days 1, 4 and 6. Self-isolation can be ended by a not-detected result from the last test on day 6.

In Finland, The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health updated the national strategy for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing on [10 December 2021](#). According to the strategy, people of all ages who are experiencing symptoms indicative of COVID-19 regardless of vaccination or recovery status should be tested. It is especially justified to conduct a COVID-19 test in the following situations:

- all patients admitted to hospital or visiting 24-hour service units at hospitals

- people exposed to COVID-19 within the past two weeks
- people at high risk of contracting a severe form of the COVID-19 disease, including pregnant women
- people who received their second COVID-19 vaccine dose over five months ago but who have not yet received their booster dose
- healthcare and social welfare workers, and residents at care units for older people.

Children under the age of 12 should be tested, particularly if their family members include persons who are not fully vaccinated, the child has been exposed to the virus within the past two weeks or has symptoms. The strategy also states that the use of home testing will be expanded and people will be provided with guidance on the use of home tests.

On [6 December 2021](#), France announced a recommendation to ventilate enclosed spaces for 10 minutes every hour. The rule of closing the class for a period of 7 days from the first positive case no longer applies to primary school since the week of 29 November 2021: students presenting a negative test within 24 hours can continue to go to school ([6 December 2021](#)).

In [Italy](#), face masks are mandatory indoors and in crowded outdoor spaces. In bigger cities, mask mandates are in place regardless of levels of crowding.

In the Netherlands, on [26 November 2021](#), the government announced stricter measures to curb the number of infections and stop the health and care sector being further overburdened. These new restrictions have applied as of [28 November 2021](#). IPC guidance recommends that anyone testing positive for coronavirus must self-isolate. All other members of the household must self-quarantine for 10 days (or five days if PCR test is negative), even if they have been vaccinated or have had coronavirus before.

In Norway, several national measures were introduced to limit and delay the spread of the Omicron variant. Per the requirements introduced on [29 November 2021](#) the isolation period has been extended to seven days for people who receive a positive test result when there is reason to believe they have been infected with the Omicron variant. Transmission quarantine is required for ten days for close contacts who are household members or corresponding close relations of people for whom there is reason to believe have been infected with the Omicron variant; they are required to take a PCR test as soon as possible and on day seven. They may leave quarantine if

they receive a negative test result on day seven. These measures apply regardless of a person's vaccination status.

In Portugal since [1 December 2021](#) there is a mandatory negative test requirement (even for vaccinated people) in accessing home visits, visits to patients admitted to health facilities, large events without marked seats (or in improvised venues) and sports venues, discos and bars.

On [30 November 2021](#), guidance in England was updated to reflect changes to self-isolation requirements for contacts of people who have been identified as a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. Contacts of individuals with a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant, must self-isolate, regardless of their vaccination status. They must complete their full isolation period even if they receive a negative test result during this period. From [14 December 2021](#) fully vaccinated contacts of someone with COVID-19 should take rapid lateral flow tests every day for 7 days. If a person tests positive or develops symptoms, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days.

In Scotland from [11 December 2021](#) all household contacts of any confirmed COVID case should isolate for 10 days regardless of their vaccination status and even if they initially get a negative PCR test. Non household contacts should continue to isolate pending a PCR result. If that is negative they can leave isolation at that point if they are double vaccinated. An announcement was also made on [10 December 2021](#) encouraging individuals to take regular lateral flow tests if they don't have symptoms – especially before mixing with other people.

In [Wales](#), close contacts of someone who is confirmed or suspected to have the Omicron variant must self-isolate from the day they were last in contact with the person who tested positive and for the next ten days, regardless of their vaccination status or age. These individuals are also advised to take a PCR test on day 2 and day 8 even if they do not have symptoms. Even if these tests are negative, individuals must complete the isolation period.

The ECDC ([15 December 2021](#)) recommend that for probable or confirmed cases of Omicron infection, contact tracing should be prioritised, regardless of vaccination status, in a timely manner and as completely as possible. For probable or confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron infection, the following is also recommended:

- backward contact tracing (that is, tracing back contacts further than two days before symptom onset or positive result)

- testing of all high and low-risk exposure contacts (that is, starting to trace the contacts of the household members of a case while awaiting their testing results)
- releasing high-risk exposure contacts only after a negative RT-PCR test taken on day 14.

In guidance published on [28 November 2021](#), the WHO stated that contact tracing of COVID-19 cases to interrupt chains of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 is strongly advised and that early warning systems should be in place to inform efficient adjustment of public health and social measures. The ECDC published similar advice on [26 November 2021](#), their guidance states at this early stage increased testing (with the sequencing of confirmed cases), and contact tracing of COVID-19 cases with an epidemiological link to the affected areas is strongly advised.

Face coverings

In Ireland, face coverings are now also required in third class and above in primary school. The wearing of face masks is recommended for children aged nine years and older on public transport, in retail and other indoor public settings as currently required for those aged 13 years and older ([10 December 2021](#)).

On 1 December 2021 Austria mandated that FFP 2 masks be used if physical contact with people cannot be ruled out. This requirement also applies at the workplace (if no other suitable protective devices are in place).

Belgium announced on [2 December 2021](#) that it is now mandatory for children from six years old to wear a face mask.

On [8 December 2021](#), Denmark announced that face masks must be worn at restaurants, bars and cafes when guests are not sitting down. A requirement for face mask use in the hospitality sector was in place earlier this year but was not initially brought back when mask use in stores and on public transport was reintroduced late last month. This changes from 10 December 2021.

On [26 November 2021](#), Finland reissued its recommendation for mask use in public indoor spaces where many people are gathered close to each other and in public transport throughout the country, regardless of vaccination status. The use of face masks is not recommended outdoors, unless in crowded spaces. The recommendation is aimed at those over 12 years of age.

Facemasks were made mandatory in France in all establishments open to the public from [29 November 2021](#).

In Italy, masks have been made mandatory indoors and in crowded outdoor spaces; in bigger cities, mask mandates have been put in place for all outdoor spaces, regardless of the level of crowding ([5 December 2021](#)).

In the Netherlands, 1.5-metre distancing and face masks while moving around are required at all locations where people have assigned seats, such as restaurants, bars, cinemas and theatres. This means fewer people can be admitted to these locations. Face masks must also be worn in all indoor public spaces, including supermarkets and train stations ([28 November 2021](#)).

In Norway, since [7 December 2021](#) it is mandatory to wear a face mask where social distancing (1 metre) cannot be maintained; this includes public transport, in taxis, in shops and in shopping centres.

In Portugal, masks were made mandatory in all public spaces on [1 December 2021](#).

The use of face coverings were made mandatory in England on [30 November 2021](#) in indoor settings including, but not limited to shops, including personal care services, and on public transport, including taxis. From [10 December 2021](#), the face covering requirement will be extended to other settings including, but not limited to, places of worship, public areas in hotels and hostels, indoor areas of sports stadiums, community centres (including village halls), youth centres, members clubs and social clubs and libraries.

In Northern Ireland, face coverings are mandatory on public transport (including school transport services, in taxis, private buses, coaches and on aircraft), in train and bus stations and in airports, in enclosed public areas of premises to which the public have or are permitted access, cafes, restaurants, public houses and bars unless seated at a table and when providing or receiving a close contact service ([29 November 2021](#)).

In Scotland, masks are [recommended to be worn in outdoor crowded](#) areas such as Christmas markets or festive celebrations.

In [Wales](#), everyone should wear face coverings in pubs and restaurants, when they are not eating or drinking and in most other indoor public places, in line with the law, including in cinemas and theatres.

In Switzerland, as of [6 December 2021](#), the requirement to wear a mask applies in all situations where a COVID-19 certificate requirement applies - except at private gatherings.

The ECDC ([15 December 2021](#)) recommend that rapid reintroduction and strengthening of non-pharmacological interventions is necessary to reduce the ongoing transmission of the Delta variant, slow down the spread of the Omicron variant and keep the COVID-19-related burden manageable. These measures include encouraging the use of face masks.

The [WHO](#) advised that, the use of masks (in addition to physical distancing, ventilation of indoor spaces, crowd avoidance and hand hygiene) remains key to reducing transmission of SARS-CoV-2 even with the emergence of the Omicron variant.

COVID Pass

In Ireland, an EU Digital COVID Certificate (COVID-19 pass) (vaccine or recovery certificate) is required for indoor hospitality and events. The COVID pass is now also required for access to gyms and leisure centres (excluding access to swimming pools or standalone swimming pool facilities) and hotel bars and restaurants (that is, removing exemption for residents). There are appropriate exemptions for those for whom a hotel setting is their permanent resident (for example, those in emergency accommodation or other state-supported accommodation arrangements) ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Austria, the duration of validity of vaccination certificates will be reduced from 360 to 270 days. This regulation comes into effect on 6 December 2021. This does not apply to people who have recovered and have been vaccinated at least once. For this group, the vaccination certificate is still valid for 360 days. For Janssen vaccinated persons (from 3 January 2022), a second dose is required for a valid Green Passport ([1 December 2021](#)).

In Belgium, COVID Safe Tickets are required for indoor public events with more than 50 visitors ([3 December 2021](#)).

Czechia announced from 1 January 2022 vaccination certificates will be valid for nine months after last dose of primary series; the booster dose will extend their validity for an unlimited period. ([2 December 2021](#)).

On [8 December 2021](#) Denmark announced the reduction of the duration of vaccine passport validity. The validity period of a Covid-19 health pass or COVID-Pass will be reduced to seven months after completed vaccination or booster vaccination. As such, the validity of Denmark's vaccine pass will be shortened from 12 to 7 months for fully vaccinated people (after a second dose) or those who have received boosters (after a third dose).

In Finland, the Government supports expanding the use of COVID-19 passports and introducing the passport system on a voluntary basis ([30 November 2021](#)). The obligation to present a COVID-19 passport does not apply in connection with statutory services (such as libraries), essential services (such as health and social services) or acquiring supplies or materials (food, medicines). In addition, the obligation to present a COVID-19 passport must not prevent people from fulfilling their rights and obligations.

In France, people aged 18 to 64 who had their last dose of vaccine before 17 June 2021 must have their booster by 15 January 2022, so that their pass is not

deactivated. Since 29 November 2021, only PCR and antigen tests dating back less than 24 hours will be acceptable proof for the “sanitary pass” ([6 December 2021](#)). People vaccinated with Janssen are eligible, regardless of their age, for an additional dose of mRNA vaccine one month after their first injection, and from 15 December 2021 the additional dose will be a condition of the maintenance of their vaccination certificate under the “health pass” ([12 December 2021](#)).

In Italy, from [15 December 2021](#), for doses following the first dose, the validity of the COVID-19 green certification for vaccination will expire if more than nine months have passed since your last dose. A new COVID-19 Green Certification will be issued within 48 hours of receiving a booster dose and will be valid for 9 months from the date of administration.

In the Netherlands ([26 November 2021](#)), everyone aged 13 and over must show a COVID-Pass (that is, proof of vaccination or proof of recovery of COVID-19) at certain locations, for example, to go to a bar or restaurant, an event, the cinema or theatre, or to a sports match. Those visiting the Netherlands who do not have a COVID-Pass will need a negative test result to attend. At present, a 3G admission policy (proof of vaccination, proof of recovery or negative test result) applies in certain sectors. However, under the government’s proposed 2G policy it will be possible to require visitors at certain locations to show a coronavirus entry pass based on proof of vaccination or recovery only. These locations may include high-risk settings in the cultural, hospitality and events sectors as well as non-essential locations such as amusement parks and zoos. In addition, the government want to make it possible to require people to show a coronavirus entry pass at their place of work, non-essential shops and services and schools.

In Portugal, the presentation of the digital certificate (or proof of vaccination or a negative laboratory test result) will be mandatory when accessing restaurants, tourist establishments and local accommodation, events with marked places and gyms ([1 December 2021](#)).

In England, from [15 December 2021](#), certain venues and events will be required by law to check that all visitors aged 18 years or over are fully vaccinated, have proof of a negative test in the last 48 hours, or have an exemption. A recommendation was also made to expand the booster vaccination eligibility to include all adults aged 18 years to 39 years. COVID Pass required for nightclubs, some venues and large events to show you’re fully vaccinated, have had a negative test result in the last 48 hours, or you have an exemption.

In Northern Ireland COVID certification is required for events that consist, or are expected to consist of more than 10,000 people, events which will take place wholly indoors and consist, or are expected to consist, of 500 or more people, where not all attendees will be seated or an event which will take place wholly outdoors and consists, or is expected to consist, of 4,000 or more people, where not all attendees will be seated. This includes attendees, staff, performers and persons responsible for the event. COVID certification is also required for premises that sell or provide intoxicating liquor for consumption on the premises and for other premises to which the public have access, including private members clubs, theatres, concert halls, cinemas, indoor premises when used for the purpose of a performance, recording or rehearsal, other than private dwellings, premises used for the purpose of a conference or exhibition and premises hosting a relevant event as described ([29 November 2021](#)).

In Wales, people over the age of 18 need to show their COVID-19 status to attend nightclubs, cinemas, theatres and concert halls indoor venues with more than 500 people in the audience where some or all of the audience are not normally seated, any outdoor or indoor venues with over 4,000 in the audience, where some or all of the audience are not normally seated and any event, which has more than 10,000 people in attendance ([3 December 2021](#)).

In Switzerland, private establishments, such as restaurants, bars and nightclubs, as well as cultural, recreational or sporting facilities and establishments open to the public must restrict access to people aged 16 or over who hold a certificate that proves that they are either fully vaccinated or recovered. Access to these establishments or events cannot be obtained solely on the basis of a negative test; certificates are not required for outdoor ice rinks (this applies to both spectators and skaters). This requirement also applies to event organisers ([3 December 2021](#)).

Vaccination programme

On [13 December 2021](#), the Minister for Health in Ireland accepted new recommendations in relation to Ireland's COVID-19 vaccination programme. It is recommended that the interval between the primary vaccine series and booster dose should be reduced to three months. A booster (fourth dose) of an mRNA vaccine is also recommended, no sooner than three months after their third dose, for those who are immunocompromised and for whom a third dose had been previously recommended as part of an extended vaccine schedule. It is also recommended that those individuals who have received one dose of a two-dose primary vaccine schedule and who subsequently have a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, should complete their primary vaccination course four weeks after diagnosis or onset of symptoms. Vaccine booster doses should continue to be offered in the priority order previously recommended.

In Czechia, patients and people over 60 years of age can get a booster dose of the vaccine five months after the second dose. Others may receive a booster dose six months after the second dose. People who are vaccinated with Janssen can be vaccinated with a booster dose as early as two months ([2 December 2021](#)).

Due to the Omicron variant, Denmark has changed the timing of the booster to 4.5 months after the second dose for everyone aged 40 and over ([13 December 2021](#)). On [29 November 2021](#) it was announced children aged 5 to 11 years are eligible for vaccination.

Finland recommends at-risk children and those who are severely immunocompromised aged 5 to 11 years for vaccination. Non-at risk children are currently not recommended. ([2 December 2021](#))

In Germany, The Standing Commission on Vaccination (STIKO) recommends vaccination of children 5 to 11 years of age who have risk factors for severe COVID-19 or have relatives at high risk. Those aged 5 to 11 years without previous illnesses can be vaccinated if they wish, after appropriate medical advice, provided that the children and parents or guardians make an individual request ([9 December 2021](#)). STIKO recommended the COVID-19 booster vaccination for all people 18 years and over ([29 of November 2021](#)).

From [13 December 2021](#), children aged between five and 11 who live in Spain will be offered a vaccine.

In England, booster vaccinations should now be offered in order of descending age groups, with priority given to the vaccination of older adults and those in a COVID-

19 at-risk group. Booster vaccinations should not be given within three months of completion of the primary course ([03 December 2021](#)). From [13 December 2021](#) people aged 30 or over can obtain a booster dose appointment two months after their second dose. From [15 December 2021](#) people aged 18 or over will be able to get a booster dose three months after the second dose.

In Northern Ireland, from [12 December 2021](#) booster vaccinations are available to those aged 30 or over and at least three months since the second dose.

In Scotland, the COVID-19 booster programme continues to accelerate, with the online portal for 18-29 year-olds opening on [15 December 2021](#).

In Wales, booster vaccinations are being offered to people aged 40 to 49 at present ([12 December 2021](#)).

On [09 December 2021](#) South African Health Products Authority announced the approval of a third dose of COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine in individuals aged 18 years and older.

Only the special Comirnaty® formulation for children, as authorised by Swissmedic on [10 December 2021](#), can be used to vaccinate children aged between 5 and 11. The Comirnaty vaccines for children will be available in Switzerland from the beginning of January 2022.

On 10 December 2021 the CDC expanded COVID-19 booster recommendations to 16- and 17-year-olds.

The ECDC ([15 December 2021](#)) recommend a booster dose as early as three months from completion of the primary vaccination. It is acknowledged that shortening the administration interval to three months may require adaptation of national vaccine deployment plans.

Christmas and or end of year arrangements

In Ireland, while visits to private homes should be kept to a maximum of three other households (that is, four households in total), the government recognises there are specific days and dates (25, 26 and 31 December) in the calendar which are important social and cultural occasions where families will likely choose to come together in larger household numbers ([10 December 2021](#)).

In Denmark, the advice provided on [8 December 2021](#) to cancel Christmas lunches and major social events only applies to companies and not to private homes. Everyone who attends a private home Christmas get-together should be vaccinated and may take a self-test beforehand.

In Norway, up to 20 guests can gather in one household once during the Christmas and New Year holidays, but there should be a 1-metre distance between the guests. Everyone must think through how many close contacts they have seen in total ([8 December 2021](#)).

In Sweden, if all adults are vaccinated and everyone is healthy, there is no reason to advise against celebrating Christmas with relatives and friends. However, citizens should be prepared to adjust quickly if they have symptoms of COVID-19 ([8 December 2021](#)). The ECDC recommend setting limits for the number of participants in social and public events during end-of-year celebrations. Due to the current epidemiologic context, in combination with the uncertainties involved with the rapidly evolving situation concerning Omicron, timely and urgently reinforced implementation of public health measures is strongly advised ([26 November 2021](#)).

Table 1 Changes in public health measures as of 26 November 2021 (when WHO confirmed Omicron as a variant of concern)

Austria	Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 14 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	<p>A nationwide lockdown came into effect on 22 November 2021 for all citizens. Lockdown restrictions eased for vaccinated people across most of the country (12 December 2021). The easing of restrictions varies by region within the country (12 December 2021).</p> <p>Persons without a valid 2-G certificate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All day exit restrictions ▪ Exceptional reasons for leaving your own private living area are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoidance of an immediate danger to life, limb and property ○ Care and help for people in need of support as well as the exercise of family rights and the fulfillment of family duties ○ Covering the basic needs of daily life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ necessary errands of daily life ▪ contact with individual close relatives, important caregivers or the partner who does not live in the household ▪ healthcare including the way to the corona vaccination and testing for SARS-CoV-2 ▪ covering basic religious needs ▪ animal care and veterinary visits ▪ Professional and educational purposes, if necessary ▪ Stay outdoors for physical and mental relaxation ▪ Perception of administrative or judicial processes that cannot be postponed ▪ Participation in elections provided by law ▪ Entering certain customer areas ▪ To attend certain gatherings, such as funerals or demonstrations <p>Persons with a valid 2-G certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a curfew from 11 p.m. for gastronomy (12 December 2021). 	<p>Due to the still imminent danger of a collapse of medical care in Austria (30 November 2021) Regulations from 12 December 2021 The general lockdown that came into effect on 22 November has taken effect. The corona numbers are falling, the trend is going in the right direction. The federal government and federal states have therefore agreed, with the involvement of experts, to end the general lockdown in Austria under careful safety measures - but only for those who have been vaccinated and those who have recovered.</p> <p>There is still a general exit restriction for people without a valid 2-G certificate. These people are only allowed to leave their own living space under certain conditions (work, training, purchasing essential goods, etc.).</p> <p>People under the age of 12 are exempt from the exit restrictions and regulations. For people aged ≥ 12, the ninja pass is equivalent to a 2-G certificate until the end of compulsory schooling.</p>
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	<p>Customer areas, trade & services (12 December 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retail establishments as well as (close to the body) services may only be entered with valid 2-G proof. ▪ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. ▪ An FFP2 mask is mandatory for customers ▪ Exceptions to the 2-G obligation are basic service facilities. Here, too, customers must wear an FFP2 mask, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ public pharmacies 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ grocery retailers and farm direct marketers○ drug stores○ banks○ gas stations <p>Place of professional activity (12 December 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The 3-G obligation continues to apply at the place of work.■ An FFP2 mask is compulsory in all closed rooms, unless other suitable protective devices are available.■ A home office arrangement is generally recommended. <p>Gastronomy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ General ban on night gastronomy■ General ban on standing gastronomy■ General ban on bar operations■ Unvaccinated people can also pick up food and drinks.■ An FFP2 mask is mandatory. <p>Indoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof.■ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, except at the seat.■ Operators have to collect contact details.■ No events are permitted in restaurants with more than 25 people.■ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol <p>Outdoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof.■ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, except at the seat.■ Operators have to collect contact details.■ No events are permitted in restaurants with more than 300 people.■ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. <p>Occasional markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Pure sales market (only sales of goods, food, beverages - no consumption):<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof.○ An FFP2 mask is required.○ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol.■ Occasional markets (with services and consumption, e.g. Christmas markets):<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof.○ An FFP2 mask is required.○ Obligation to notify from 50 people○ Authorisation required from 250 people	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maximum limit: max. 300 people at the same time ○ Collection of contact data <p>Accommodation establishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement in all accessible areas. ▪ Operators have to collect contact details. ▪ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. 	
<p>Amateur sport and recreation</p>	<p>Sports facilities (12 December 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement in all accessible areas. There is no need to wear a mask or keep a minimum distance during sport. ▪ Operators have to collect contact details. ▪ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer. ▪ Operators of non-public sports facilities also have to create a COVID-19 prevention concept. ▪ In the case of training, competitions and championship games, the regulations for meetings also apply. <p>Meetings</p> <p>Generally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisers have to collect contact details. ▪ Organisers have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and draw up a COVID-19 prevention protocol. <p>Indoor without assigned seats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. ▪ An FFP2 mask is required. ▪ Maximum limit: max. 25 people (including family reunions, birthday parties, wedding parties, Christmas parties, etc.) <p>Indoor with assigned seats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2G proof. ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, also at the seat. ▪ Obligation to notify from 50 people ▪ Authorisation required from 250 people ▪ Maximum limit: 2,000 people <p>Outdoor with no assigned seating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2G proof. ▪ An FFP2 mask is required. ▪ Obligation to notify from 50 people ▪ Authorisation required from 250 people ▪ Maximum limit: 300 people 	

	<p>Outdoor with assigned seating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2G proof. ▪ An FFP2 mask is required. ▪ Obligation to notify from 50 people ▪ Authorisation required from 250 people ▪ Maximum limit: 4,000 people 	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	<p>Carpooling by people outside the household is subject to the FFP 2 mask requirement. The use of coaches and excursion boats is currently not possible. (1 December 2021)</p> <p>An FFP2 masks obligation applies to all public transport. There is a 2-G obligation in cable cars and cogwheel railways, on bus trips and on excursion boats. Operators of cable cars and cog railways, bus trips and excursion boats have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol (12 December 2021).</p>	
International travel	<p>Due to the new virus variant Omicron, entry from these countries is generally prohibited into Austria and flights from these countries are banned: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.</p> <p>The following rules now apply to people upon entry from other countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Registration for pre-travel clearance ▪ Presentation of a negative molecular biological test result (PCR test); the sampling must not have taken place more than 72 hours ago ▪ Immediate commencement of a 10-day quarantine. The quarantine is deemed to have ended if a further PCR test is carried out at the earliest on the fifth day after entry, the result of which is negative. The day of entry is to be regarded as "day zero". (27 November 2021) <p>Trips abroad are possible for everyone. For unvaccinated people they represent an exception to the exit restriction (mental and physical recreation in the open air). The entry requirements must be taken into account when entering the destination country and Austria. However, you may not leave the country in order to circumvent national regulations (lockdown unvaccinated persons) (12 December 2021).</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Leisure and cultural facilities in general (12 December 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General ban on standing gastronomy ▪ General ban on bar operations ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, except at the seat. ▪ Operators have to collect contact details. ▪ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. <p>Leisure and cultural gatherings - indoor without assigned seats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, also at the seat. ▪ Maximum limit: 25 people <p>Leisure and culture gatherings - indoor with assigned seats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, also at the seat. ▪ Obligation to notify from 50 people ▪ Authorisation required from 250 people ▪ Maximum limit: 2,000 people <p>Leisure and culture gatherings - outdoor without assigned seats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, also at the seat. ▪ Maximum limit: max. 25 people ▪ Obligation to notify from 50 people ▪ Authorisation required from 250 people ▪ Maximum limit: 300 people <p>Leisure and culture gatherings - outdoor with assigned seats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. ▪ There is an FFP2 mask requirement, also at the seat. ▪ Obligation to notify from 50 people ▪ Authorisation required from 250 people ▪ Maximum limit: 4,000 people <p>Extracurricular youth education and youth work, supervised holiday camps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children and adolescents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access is only permitted with a valid 2.5 G certificate. If PCR tests are not available, antigen tests are also permitted. ○ Maximum number of persons: 25 ▪ Supervisors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 3G obligation applies at the place of work. ○ Personnel limit: max. 4 people in addition to the 25 children and adolescents 	
<p>Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)</p>	<p>A distance of 2 metres should be kept from people outside the household. (1 December 2021)</p> <p><u>Retirement and nursing homes as well as residential facilities for the disabled</u> (12 December 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol ▪ Employees: inside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 2.5 G obligation applies at the place of work. If PCR tests are not available, antigen tests are also permitted. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An FFP2 mask is compulsory in all closed rooms, unless other suitable protective devices are available. ■ Visitors: inside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. A valid PCR test must also be presented. If PCR tests are not available, antigen tests are also permitted. ○ An FFP2 mask is required. ○ Operators have to collect contact details. ○ Visitors: upper limit: maximum 2 people per day (from the first day of stay). <p>Hospitals and health resorts and other places where health services are provided</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. ■ Employees: inside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 2.5 G obligation applies at the place of work. ○ An FFP2 mask is compulsory in all closed rooms, unless other suitable protective devices are available. ■ Visitors: inside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. A valid PCR test must also be presented. If PCR tests are not available, antigen tests are also permitted. ○ An FFP2 mask is required. ○ Visitors: upper limit: maximum 1 person per day (from the first day of stay). ○ Operators have to collect contact details. 	
Face coverings	<p>FFP 2 mask compulsory if physical contact with people cannot be ruled out – this also applies at the workplace (if no other suitable protective devices are in place). (1 December 2021)</p> <p>Children from the age of 6 up to the age of 14 are allowed to wear a face mask or a close-fitting mechanical protective device instead of FFP2. Children up to the age of six are exempt from the mask requirement. Pregnant women are also allowed to wear a face mask or a close-fitting mechanical protective device instead of FFP2. (1 December 2021)</p> <p>An FFP2 mask is compulsory in all closed rooms. This also applies at the workplace (unless other suitable protective devices are available) (12 December 2021).</p>	
COVID Pass	<p>The validity of the vaccination certificates in the Green Pass will be reduced from 360 to 270 days. This regulation comes into effect on 6 December 2021. This does not apply to people who have recovered and have been vaccinated at least once. For this group, the vaccination certificate is initially still valid for 360 days. For Janssen vaccinated persons, from 3 January 2022 a 2nd dose is required for the Green Passport to be valid. (1 December 2021)</p>	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	
Belgium	<p>Date extracted: 13 December 2021 Last updated: 3 December 2021</p>	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	<p>The Consultation Committee notes that the number of infections has increased</p>
Social or mass gatherings	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	

Primary schools	The Christmas holidays for pre-primary and primary education will be brought forward by one week and will start on 20 December 2021. Mandatory CO ₂ meters in every classroom and in areas where many people gather. New protocol requires closure of a class if 2 or more people are identified as infected. General face mask obligation from 6 years. Ban on all extracurricular activities. Recommendation to parents to regularly (self) test their children. (3 December 2021)	<p>further. New hospital admissions and hospital burden have also increased further. Four out of ten beds in intensive care have been taken by corona patients today (3 December 2021) at a time when 220 beds are closed due to the loss of healthcare staff. The reproduction number is still above 1, which means that the epidemic is still growing, as is the tax on healthcare.</p> <p>In order to reduce the high number of infections and reduce the pressure on care to a feasible level as quickly as possible (3 December 2021)</p> <p>The Consultation Committee will re-evaluate the epidemiological situation in the week of 20 December 2021.</p> <p>No reference made to Omicron, other than international travel.</p>
Second-level education	Secondary education is organised in a hybrid form until the examination period. Distance learning can be organised in the school for students who do not have access to digital resources. Mandatory CO ₂ meters in every classroom and in areas where many people gather. New protocol requires closure of a class if 2 or more people are identified as infected. General mouth mask obligation from 6 years. Ban on all extracurricular activities. Recommendation to parents to regularly (self) test their children. (3 December 2021)	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	The obligation to telework is confirmed with a maximum of 1 return day per week. Team building and parties in the workplace are prohibited. (3 December 2021) The opening hours in the catering industry are limited to 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. The number of people per table is limited to 6. A household may share a table, regardless of the size of that household. Only seats at the table are allowed. (26 November 2021)	
Amateur sport and recreation	Indoor sports competitions must be organised without an audience. Minor participants can be accompanied by 2 adults. These measures will take effect on 4 December 2021. (3 December 2021)	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	Since 28 November 2021 , entry ban applies to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe.	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	Discotheques and dance halls must close. (26 November 2021) All indoor private activities and gatherings are temporarily prohibited, including organised activities, but with the exception of sport, private meetings at home or in a small tourist accommodation, and weddings and funerals. (3 December 2021) Events with more than 4,000 visitors can no longer take place from 4 December 2021. From 6 December 2021, only events, cultural and other performances and conferences are allowed inside under the following conditions: a maximum of 200 visitors, sitting, with mouth mask, the use of the COVID Safe Ticket from 50 visitors. (3 December 2021) Cinemas can receive the public with a maximum of 200 people per room and with respect for 1.5 metres between people. (3 December 2021)	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	Mandatory mask for persons aged six years and older (2 December 2021)	
COVID Pass	The use of the COVID Safe Ticket for indoor public events with more than 50 visitors. (3 December 2021)	

Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Czechia	Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 2 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	State of emergency in the Czech Republic from 12:00 am on 26 November 2021 for 30 days, due to health risks related to the proven incidence of coronavirus (25 November 2021) No reference made to Omicron, except for international travel.
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	Legal entities' board meetings and elections are allowed to take place, however, it is necessary to adhere to all public health regulations. (26 November 2021) Catering establishments and music, dance, gaming and similar social clubs and discos, gaming rooms and casinos must close between 22:00 and 04:59. (25 November 2021) The operation of Christmas markets will be prohibited, with the exception of the sale of Christmas trees and in shopping centres. It will not be possible to eat directly in food courts. (26 November 2021)	
Amateur sport and recreation	Entry to the sports grounds is prohibited for persons who do not present proof of immunity or negative test. During group lessons participants must keep 1.5 m apart and the operator must ensure air circulation. (26 November 2021)	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	Up to 100 people can take part (26 November 2021)	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	Due to the possible risks associated with the Omicron variant, it is strongly recommended not to travel to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. (26 November 2021) The measure also prohibits the entry of all third-country nationals who have stayed for more than 12 hours in the last 14 days in the territory of one of these countries. Citizens of the Czech Republic, the EU or holders of long-term stays in the Czech Republic, returning to the Czech Republic from these countries must submit a valid negative RT-PCR test before entering the Czech Republic and prove that they have a reservation for another RT-PCR test, which they must undergo within 24 hours of entering the Czech Republic. The next RT-PCR test must then be performed no earlier than day 10 and no later than day 14 after return. (29 November 2021)	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	Concerts, performances in theatres, etc. must not be attended by more than 3,000 people, but strict public health rules must be observed. E.g. when more than 300 people participate, a ratio is given - how many people must be vaccinated, tested or within the protection period (26 November 2021) Fairs and similar traditional events up to 2,000 people outside and 1,000 indoors can take place, but several public health rules must be followed (26 November 2021) For leisure activities for children and adults, such as various club, sports, cultural, dance, traditional and similar events and celebrations, the maximum number of participants is reduced from 1,000 to 100 people. (26 November 2021)	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	In the case of an infected person within one household, other members of the household will also need a PCR test, even if they are vaccinated and do not have symptoms of the disease. They do not need to quarantine	

	but must wear a respirator until PCR test (days 5 to 7 after contact with the infected person) result show negative (29 November 2021).	
Face coverings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
COVID Pass	From 1 Jan 2022, vaccination certificates will be valid for only 9 months, the booster dose will extend their validity for an unlimited period. Patients and people > 60 years of age can be vaccinated 5 months after the 2 nd dose with a booster dose of the vaccine. Others may receive a booster dose 6 months after the 2 nd dose. People who are vaccinated with Janssen can be vaccinated with a booster dose as early as 2 months (2 December 2021). As of 29 November, the rules for visits to reception and accommodation centers are the same as for prisons or detention facilities where proof of immunity or negative test is required. (29 November 2021)	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Denmark	Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 13 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	<p>The Epidemic Commission makes the recommendation for new measures to curb the infection and keep hospitalisations down. The epidemic is growing across the country. The incidence is the highest at any time during the pandemic. Infection rates have increased 13-fold over the autumn. The infection is highest among school children who have not been vaccinated. The group with the second highest infection is the parent generation.</p> <p>The Delta variant is twice as contagious as other variants we have had in the past. But we are in a different place than before due to the vaccines. The best solution to curb the infection is to continue to be vaccinated. (24 November 2021)</p> <p>Omicron cited as reason for changing travel restrictions and isolation and testing requirements for close contacts.</p>
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	For children from the first grade onwards who have not been vaccinated or previously infected, municipalities can offer self-tests to students as a supplement to the existing test efforts at the schools. The test can be used instead of the screening tests and Day 0 tests that students can have taken at school, but will not be used instead of the PCR test on the 4 th and 6 th day if the student has been identified as a close contact in school. Self-tests are not reported, and the result will therefore not appear on sundhed.dk or in the corona passport. (29 November 2021) Updated 8 December 2021 School holidays will now run from 15 Dec to 5 Jan, instead of 17 Dec to 3 Jan. (8 December 2021)	
Second-level education	For children from the first grade onwards who have not been vaccinated or previously infected, municipalities can offer self-tests to students as a supplement to the existing test efforts at the schools. The test can be used instead of the screening tests and Day 0 tests that students can have taken at school, but will not be used instead of the PCR test on day 4 and day 6 if the student has been identified as a close contact in school. Self-tests are not reported, and the result will therefore not appear on sundhed.dk or in the corona passport. (29 November 2021) School holidays will now run from 15 Dec to 5 Jan, instead of 17 Dec to 3 Jan. (8 December 2021)	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	Closure of nightlife - understood as premises and locations where a nightclub, disco or similar is run, where it i.e. consideration is given to whether there is a dance floor. (10 December 2021) Bars and restaurants should close at 24:00 to 05:00 from Friday 10 December 2021, and the sale of alcohol will be forbidden between 24:00 to 05:00. (8 December 2021) Working from home Companies recommended to enable staff to work from home where possible, in both the public and private sectors. This is not a restriction but a recommendation. Christmas parties Companies recommended to cancel Christmas parties. This is not a restriction but a recommendation.	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	Ban on alcohol consumed in buses, including so-called party buses, and tourist buses (10 December 2021)	
International travel	<p>To detect and contain possible infection with the Omicron variant: The requirement for isolation and testing after entry from the red countries is changed, so that you must be tested and isolate if you have resided in a red country within 10 days prior to entry, as at the time of stay or entry: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe. (27 November 2021)</p> <p>All passengers on planes from Doha Hamad International Airport and Istanbul Airport must be tested at the airport as these 2 airports have the most transit from the affected countries of southern Africa. (13 December 2021). Regardless of vaccination status, PCR-test is require before boarding when coming direct from a variant country. In addition, all arriving travellers must be tested within 24 hours of entry and go into isolation for 10 days. Previously infected people are exempt from the requirement for testing, but must go into isolation without undue delay. A negative PCR test at the earliest on day 6 after entry into Denmark allows isolation to be lifted. (27 November 2021).</p> <p>Reduction in the length of valid immunity passports after previous infection from 12 months to 180 days, upon entry into Denmark. In addition, children aged ≥ 15 will also have to present corona passport upon entry to be exempt from restrictions. (27 November 2021)</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Restaurants, bars and cafés must close from 12 am to 5 am. Face masks must be worn at restaurants, bars and cafes when guests are not sitting down. (10 December 2021)</p> <p>Standing concerts limited to 50 guests</p> <p>Concerts with crowds of over 50 standing people will be banned from Friday 10 December 2021. It should be noted that this does not apply to concerts where the public is seated, and gatherings of more than 50 in other settings, such as museums or sporting events, are not affected. Updated 8 December 2021</p>	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>More strict guidelines for Omicron (29 November 2021)</p> <p>For close contacts with a person who is infected or suspected of being infected with Omicron, it is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To go into self-isolation regardless of vaccination status. ▪ PCR test on days 1, 4 and 6. ▪ Self-isolation can be eliminated by negative response to the last test on day 6. 	
Face coverings	<p>Updated 8 December 2021</p> <p>Face masks must be worn at restaurants, bars and cafes when guests are not sitting down.</p> <p>A requirement for face mask use in the hospitality sector was in place earlier this year but was not initially brought back when mask use in stores and on public transport was reintroduced late last month. This changes from Friday 10 December 2021.</p>	
COVID Pass	<p>The vaccination program was extended on 29 November 2021 to include children aged 5-11 years.</p> <p>Due to the Omicron variant, Demark has changed booster regime to 4.5 months after the 2nd dose for everyone aged ≥ 40 (13 December 2021).</p> <p>The duration of the corona passport after the primary vaccination course is shortened to 7 months, and a booster is required to maintain validity of corona passport. The amended rules will enter into force in mid-January 2022 (10 December 2021)</p>	

Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	Updated 8 December 2021 Advice to cancel Christmas lunches and major social events only applies to companies and not to private homes. Everyone who attends the Christmas get-together should be vaccinated, and you may also be able to take a self-test beforehand.	
Finland	Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 10 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	Reintroduced the recommendation to work remotely which applies to all areas experiencing community transmission of COVID-19. All employees in the public sector to work remotely as extensively as possible if their duties so allow. The Government also recommends that private employers adopt similar extensive remote work practices, recognising, however, that workplaces will determine how to combine in-office and remote work in a way that ensures health security. At the same time, employers should promote work arrangements that reduce close contacts and other risk factors at workplaces (30 November 2021)	The Government has as of 3 December amended the decree restricting the activities of restaurants and other food and beverage service businesses due to the COVID-19 epidemic. The amendment to the decree will enter into force on 5 December 2021 (3 December 2021)
Social or mass gatherings	Gathering restrictions are different in different parts of Finland. For example, in areas with community transmission many are requiring public events and general meetings be limited to 50 people indoors. This is said to last for the month of December. The organiser of the public event may introduce a corona passport, in which case the order does not have to be complied with (3 December 2021).	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	At general meetings, the organiser is not required to demand a corona passport, but must comply with restrictions. Serving of alcoholic beverages in all food and beverage service businesses will end at 17.00 only in areas where the epidemic is in the community transmission phase, unless business requires COVID-19 passport. For all other areas, there are no separate restrictions on the number of customers or on licensing and opening hours. The restrictions laid down in the decree do not apply to the activities of staff restaurants or to takeaway sales of food to customers. The restrictions on opening hours do not apply to food and beverage service businesses on vessels and aircraft that operate between Finland and other countries or abroad or to food and beverage service businesses that operate at distribution stations for liquid fuels. (26 November 2021)	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	All travellers arriving in Finland are required to have a COVID certificate or a test. The decision to repeal the Government Decree, which provided an exemption for some countries, was due to the new Omicron variant. (3 December 2021) Due to Omicron, the MoH also recommends avoiding all travel to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mosambik, Namibia, and South Africa, Zimbabwe. (26 November 2021)	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health updated the national strategy for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing on 10 December 2021 . People of all ages who are experiencing symptoms indicative of COVID-19 regardless of vaccination or recovery status should be tested. According to the strategy, it is justified to conduct a COVID-19 test especially in the following cases:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ all patients admitted to hospital or visiting 24-hour service units at hospitals ▪ people exposed to COVID-19 within the past two weeks ▪ people at high risk of contracting a severe form of the COVID-19 disease, including pregnant women ▪ people who received their 2nd COVID-19 vaccine dose over 5 months ago but who have not yet received their booster dose ▪ healthcare and social welfare workers, and residents at care units for older people. <p>Children under the age of 12 should be tested particularly if their family members include persons who are not fully vaccinated, the child has been exposed to the virus within the past two weeks or the child has symptoms of infection which require testing based on a physician's assessment.</p> <p>In accordance with the updated strategy, home testing will be taken into wider use and people will be provided with guidance on the use of home tests. Testing will be expanded to include home testing with a view to improving the health security of both workplaces and schools.</p>	
Face coverings	The Finish institute of public health has reissued its recommendation for mask use in public indoor spaces where many people are gathered close to each other and in public transport throughout the country, regardless of vaccination status. The use of the mask is not recommended outdoors, unless long-term congestion occurs in the premises, where movement is difficult. The recommendation is aimed at those over 12 years of age. The recommendation can also be used by regional and local authorities and actors when drawing up local or situation-specific guidelines. (26 November 2021).	
COVID Pass	The Government supports expanding the use of COVID-19 passports and introducing the passport system on a voluntary basis (30 November 2021). The obligation to present a COVID-19 passport does not apply in connection with statutory services (such as libraries), essential services (such as health and social services) or acquiring supplies or materials (food, medicines). In addition, the obligation to present a COVID-19 passport must not prevent people from fulfilling their rights and obligations.	
	Finland recommends at-risk children and those who are severely immunocompromised aged 5 to 11 years for vaccination. Non-at risk children are currently not recommended as additional information is needed on the safety of vaccinations in this age group, and in particular for rare side effects. As in situations when a group's own disease burden is low, very few side effects are tolerated with the vaccine. If society wants to influence the course of the epidemic by vaccinating children, and their own benefits are small, safety information is even more important. (2 December 2021)	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021.	
France	Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 12 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	To deal with the epidemic circulation and the fifth wave, new measures come into force. (6 December 2021)
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	Passage to level 3 of the health protocol in primary schools (wearing a mask obligatory in the playgrounds and limiting mixing in the canteen and high-intensity sports activities indoors).	

	The rule of closing the class for a period of 7 days from the first positive case no longer applies to primary school since the week of 29 November 2021: students presenting a negative test within 24 hours can continue to go to school. (6 December 2021)	Omicron cited as reason for introduction of new category of country classification "scarlet red" (6 December 2021)
Second-level education	Middle school students from the 6th year onwards who have a complete vaccination schedule can continue face-to-face lessons. Unvaccinated students should take their lessons from home during the isolation period. (6 December 2021)	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	Establishment of 2 to 3 days of telework per week when possible Limitation of face-to-face meetings. Postponement of in person assemblies (6 December 2021)	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	From 4 Dec 2021, any person aged ≥ 12 entering French territory must present a negative PCR or antigen test result taken less than 24 or 48 hours before departure, depending on the country of origin (6 December 2021). For countries on the scarlet red list it is 48 hours for a PCR and 24 for an antigen test (8 December 2021). The only exception is for people with a complete vaccination schedule arriving from a Member State of the EU, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, the Holy See or Switzerland. Seven countries in southern Africa were added the scarlet red list on 26 November 2021 due to Omicron: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. (8 December 2021)	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	Nightclubs closed until 6 January 2022 (9 December 2021). Limitation of festive gatherings in the private sphere. Concerning external events and events, for example Christmas markets: evolution of protocols, under the control of the prefects, so that the consumption of food products is strictly regulated. (6 December 2021)	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	Frequent ventilation of enclosed spaces is more necessary than ever. It is recommended to ventilate each room for 10 minutes every hour. (6 December 2021) The rule of closing the class for a period of 7 days from the first positive case no longer applies to primary school since the week of 29 November 2021: students presenting a negative test within 24 hours can continue to go to school. (6 December 2021)	
Face coverings	Wearing a mask is mandatory indoors in all establishments open to the public from 29 November 2021. (6 December 2021)	
COVID Pass	If an infection occurs before the injection of the Janssen dose, then the booster dose occurs one month after the first dose. If an infection occurs after the first injection: two scenarios: 1) The person is positive for Covid-19 less than 15 days after their dose of Janssen and therefore eligible for: An additional dose of messenger RNA vaccine 1 month after the Janssen dose injection date is required; or a booster dose 5 months after the additional dose. 2) The person is positive for Covid-19 more than 15 days after their dose of Janssen, they do not need to do an additional dose but they are eligible for the booster dose 5 months after infection. Finally, if the person is positive after the additional dose, they are eligible for the booster dose 5 months after infection. (12 December 2021)	

	<p>People vaccinated with Janssen are eligible, regardless of their age, for an additional dose of messenger RNA vaccine 1 month after their first injection, and from 15 December 2021 the additional dose will be conditional the maintenance of their vaccination certificate under the "health pass " (12 December 2021)</p> <p>People aged 18 to 64 who had their last dose of vaccine before 17 June 2021 must have their reminder by 15 January 2022, so that their pass is not deactivated, since they will have passed the 5-month deadline by that date to be eligible for the recall and 8 weeks to carry out this recall.</p> <p>Starting on 15 December 2021, people ≥ 65 who were vaccinated with a Janssen vaccine must provide proof of booster vaccination for their COVID certificate to be extended. Since 29 November 2021, only PCR and antigenic tests dating back less than 24 hours will be acceptable proof for the "health pass". (6 December 2021)</p>	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Germany	Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 9 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Social or mass gatherings	Only persons of one's own household and a maximum of two persons of another household may attend private meetings with unvaccinated persons. Children under 14 years of age are exempt. In areas with a 7-day incidence above 350, a limit of 50 persons (vaccinated and recovered) indoors and 200 persons (vaccinated and recovered) outdoors applies to private parties and gatherings. (3 December 2021)	New measures introduced to deal with the epidemic circulation and the fifth wave. (26 November 2021)
Primary schools	Since December 2, 2021, an incidence-independent and nationwide mask requirement has also applied in schools for all grade levels. If the federal state meets the criteria for the alarm levels, singing in closed rooms is only allowed with a mask; Playing wind instruments is only permitted in very large rooms or outdoors. (26 November 2021)	Omicron cited as reason for introduction of travel restrictions (26 November 2021)
Second-level education	Since December 2, 2021, an incidence-independent and nationwide mask requirement has also applied in schools for all grade levels. If the federal state meets the criteria for the, singing in closed rooms is only allowed with a mask; Playing wind instruments is only permitted in very large rooms or outdoors. (26 November 2021)	Since November 18, 2021, nationwide access restrictions have been in effect in public life, which are based on the hospitalisation rate in the respective federal state. In the event of a high infection rate with a particularly high burden on the public health system, restrictions also apply to vaccinated and recovered people. (3 December 2021)
Higher and adult education	Masks are mandatory	
Business activities	People who have not been vaccinated and do not have proof of infection are now only allowed to shop in grocery shops, pharmacies and drugstores. In all other shops, only vaccinated and recovered people are allowed to enter. (3 December 2021)	
Amateur sport and recreation	Only vaccinated and recovered people have access to leisure facilities. (3 December 2021)	Alarm level I: From a hospitalisation rate of 3 per 100,000, only those who have been vaccinated or have recovered have nationwide access to leisure, cultural and sporting events, gastronomy and access to body-friendly services and accommodation.
Professional sport	National sports, cultural and other major events are limited in terms of the number of participants. There is a maximum capacity of 5,000 people indoors and 15,000 people outdoors. 2G (Only vaccinated and recovered people) and 2GPlus (vaccinated and recovered people must also have a negative test) rules apply. (3 December 2021)	Alarm level II: If the hospitalisation rate is above 6 per 100,000, only those who have
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	Since 28 November, due to Omicron, the federal government has imposed a transport ban on people arriving from: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. People >12	

	<p>years of age from virus variant areas are obliged to have themselves tested before starting their journey to Germany. Vaccinated and convalescent people also have to show a negative COVID-19 test. The swab for the test may have been taken a maximum of 24 hours (antigen test) or 72 hours (PCR test) prior to entry. All those entering from virus variant areas are obliged to a 14-day quarantine at home. This cannot be terminated prematurely with a negative test result or with evidence of recovery or vaccination. (6 December 2021)</p> <p>All people over the age of 12 who do not have a recovery or vaccination certificate and who are coming from abroad must prove a negative test upon arrival if the country is not listed as a high-risk or virus variant area. (9 December 2021)</p>	<p>been vaccinated and those who have recovered after a negative test can access places with a particularly high risk of infection - such as discos, clubs or bars.</p> <p>Alarm level III: At the latest when the hospitalisation rate exceeds 9 per 100,000, further measures (e.g. contact restrictions) will be taken by the federal states.</p>
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	<p>If the threshold is not reached for 5 days in a row, the 2G regulations can be withdrawn.</p> <p>Children and young people under 18 as well as people who cannot be vaccinated are excluded from the 2G rule.</p>
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Restaurants, cinemas, theatres and other leisure facilities may only be visited by vaccinated and recovered persons.</p> <p>Clubs and discotheques must close when the 7-day incidence increases to 350 or higher per 100,000 inhabitants. (3 December 2021).</p> <p>The negative test result of a RADT is valid for a maximum of 24 hours (30 November 2021).</p>	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
COVID Pass	In public consultation: The Standing Commission on Vaccination (STIKO) recommends vaccination of children 5 to 11 years of age who have risk factors for severe COVID-19 or have relatives at high risk. In addition, 5 to 11 year old children without previous illnesses can be vaccinated if they wish, after appropriate medical advice, provided that the children and parents or guardians have an individual request. 2 doses of the mRNA vaccine Comirnaty (10µg) at an interval of 3-6 weeks is recommended (9 December 2021) STIKO recommends the COVID-19 booster vaccination for all people 18 years and over (29 of November 2021).	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021.	
Ireland	<p>Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 13 December 2021</p>	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	<p>Visits to private homes (10 December 2021)</p> <p>Visits to private homes over the coming weeks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ should be kept to a maximum of 3 other households (that is, 4 households in total) ▪ recognising the need for flexibility depending on individual circumstances, people should limit their contacts throughout the period 	
Social or mass gatherings	<p>General guidance on social gatherings (10 December 2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collection of contact tracing data in certain settings. ▪ COVID-19 passes and fixed capacity limits do not apply for outdoor events. However, sectors should ensure appropriate protective measures are in place. ▪ Organisers of indoor and outdoor group activities should ensure that appropriate protective measures are in place, and where indoor groups have a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people indoors, pods 	

	of 6 should apply. For children under 18, the “pod of 6” system can be adjusted to allow for indoor games and competition activities only, with all other protective measures remaining in place. The “pod of 6” system should be retained for all other settings such as training activities and games as part of training. Fixed capacity limits will not apply to these indoor and outdoor group activities.	
Primary schools	<p>Parents and children’s activities (10 December 2021)</p> <p>Parents are being asked to prioritise their children’s activities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ minimising indoor community gatherings and indoor mixed household gatherings ▪ reducing the risk of exposure to the virus by opting for outdoor activities instead of indoor ▪ reducing the number of children involved in any particular activity <p>On a temporary basis, subject to review in mid-February 2022, the wearing of face masks/coverings is recommended for children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ aged ≥ 9 years on public transport, in retail and other indoor public settings as currently required for those aged ≥ 13 ▪ in third class and above in primary school (guidance will issue to schools from the Department of Education on this) 	
Secondary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	<p>Bars and restaurants (10 December 2021)</p> <p>(comes into effect from 7 Dec 2021 – 9 Jan 2022)</p> <p>Strict social distancing is required in all bars and restaurants, including hotels (reverting to pre-22 Oct 2021 measures), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ table service only (no counter service) ▪ 1 metre between tables ▪ maximum 6 adults per table (maximum 15 persons when including children aged ≤ 12) ▪ no multiple table bookings and no intermingling ▪ masks when not seated at table ▪ closing time remains unchanged (midnight closing time for all on-licensed premises) <p>Working from home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Everyone should work from home unless it is necessary to attend the workplace in person. This means a return to the situation on working from home as it applied before 20 September 2021 	
Amateur sport and recreation	<p>Indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events (10 December 2021)</p> <p>(comes into effect from 7 Dec 2021 – 9 Jan 2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximum 50% capacity at indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events which must be fully seated. This does not include religious or educational events or normal workplace business activity. ▪ Face masks should be worn at all times unless eating or drinking. ▪ Requirement for COVID pass (vaccination or recovery) for gyms and leisure centres (excluding access to swimming pools or standalone swimming pool facilities) and hotel bars and restaurants (that is, removing exemption for residents). With appropriate exemptions for those for whom a hotel setting is their permanent resident (for example, those in emergency accommodation or other state-supported accommodation arrangements). 	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

Religious activities	<p>Religious services and weddings (10 December 2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can proceed without capacity limits but with all other protective measures remaining in place. 	
Public transport	<p>COVID travel overview (3 December 2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport services are operating at full capacity. You should use your Leap card or TFI card when paying for your trip. You must wear a face covering when using public transport (including taxis, and in train and bus stations) unless you have a "reasonable excuse" 	
International travel	<p>New rules for travelling to Ireland (10 December 2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are travelling to Ireland from overseas you must fill out a Passenger Locator Form before departure. Since 5 December 2021, passengers to Ireland are asked to show a negative test for COVID-19. If you do not have proof of vaccination or recovery, you will have to show a negative ('not detected') RT-PCR test which was carried out no more than 72 hours before you arrive in Ireland. If you have proof of vaccination or recovery from COVID-19, you can show a negative ('not detected') antigen test which was carried out no more than 48 hours before you arrive in Ireland. Alternatively, you can show a negative ('not detected') RT-PCR test which was carried out no more than 72 hours before you arrive. Only Rapid Antigen Tests which are listed on the common EU Rapid Antigen Test list will be accepted and it must be carried out by a health professional or skilled testing personnel. You can't test yourself. A passenger arriving into Ireland without the required negative pre-departure test result shall also be required to home quarantine and take a RT-PCR test within 36 hours of arrival. If no RT-PCR test is taken the passenger must remain in home quarantine for 10 days after arrival. Passengers arriving from Great Britain are advised to undertake daily antigen tests for 5 consecutive days, beginning with the day of arrival (and to self-isolate immediately and seek a PCR test if they develop symptoms or have a positive antigen test). <p>Travelling to Ireland from a scheduled State Current advice is to avoid all non-essential travel to or from scheduled States. In response to cases of the new variant SARS-CoV-2 Variant B.1.1.529 (Omicron), Ireland discourages Irish residents from travelling to and from the following scheduled States:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Botswana Eswatini Lesotho Mozambique Namibia South Africa Zimbabwe <p>Since 29 November 2021, a person who has been in a scheduled State in the past 14 days is not permitted to travel to Ireland. (10 December 2021) Exemptions are allowed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> diplomats and those with diplomatic immunity transport workers (travelling in the course of performing their duties) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Irish and EU citizens and their family members ▪ UK citizens ▪ those with a right of residence in Ireland (or right to free movement within the EU). <p>Home quarantine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Passengers from or who have visited a scheduled country have to quarantine for 14 days at address declared on the Passenger Locator Form (except diplomats and transport workers). ▪ Individuals may only leave the address for an emergency, to leave the State, or to take a COVID-19 RT-PCR test. <p>Post-arrival RT-PCR testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post arrival RT-PCR testing is required for all passengers from a scheduled State at day 2 and day 8 without exemptions. ▪ Those who are already in the country having arrived from any scheduled State since 1 November 2021 are asked to present for RT-PCR testing. <p>Release from home quarantine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If your post arrival RT-PCR tests have returned negative, you may leave home quarantine at day 10 following arrival from a scheduled State. ▪ Should a test return positive, the passenger is required to home quarantine for 10 days from the date of the positive test. <p>(10 December 2021)</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events (10 December 2021) (comes into effect from 7 Dec 2021 – 9 Jan 2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximum 50% capacity at indoor entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events which must be fully seated. This does not include religious or educational events or normal workplace business activity. ▪ Face masks should be worn at all times unless eating or drinking. ▪ Requirement for COVID pass (vaccination or recovery) for gyms and leisure centres (excluding access to swimming pools or standalone swimming pool facilities) and hotel bars and restaurants (that is, removing exemption for residents). With appropriate exemptions for those for whom a hotel setting is their permanent resident (for example, those in emergency accommodation or other state-supported accommodation arrangements). ▪ Nightclubs will regrettably not be able to open. ▪ There will be no change to weddings or outdoor gatherings. ▪ COVID-19 passes (based on vaccination or recovery) are required for cinemas and theatres. 	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>If you are a close contact of COVID-19</p> <p>Household close contact who is fully vaccinated against COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to do 3 antigen tests with 2 days between each test. ▪ This does not apply if you had a positive PCR test in the last 9 months. ▪ If you have a weak immune system, you may also be offered a COVID-19 PCR test. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to restrict your movements (stay at home) for 5 days from when you get the close contact text message from the HSE. ▪ This does not apply if you had a positive PCR test in the last 9 months. <p>Non-household close contact who is fully vaccinated against COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to do 3 antigen tests with 2 days between each test. ▪ This does not apply if you had a positive PCR test in the last 9 months. ▪ You do not need to get a PCR test unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ one of your antigen tests is positive ○ you develop symptoms of COVID-19 ▪ If you have a weak immune system, you may be offered a COVID-19 PCR test. ▪ You do not need to restrict your movements (stay at home). ▪ But, if any of your antigen tests are positive, you should self-isolate (stay in your room) and get a COVID-19 PCR test. <p>A close contact who is not fully vaccinated against COVID-19</p> <p>The advice is the same whether you're a household or non-household close contact. It also applies to partially vaccinated people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to get a COVID-19 PCR test. Some people will need to do 2 PCR tests. We will let you know if you need to. ▪ But, if you had positive PCR test in the past 9 months you do not need another test unless you develop symptoms of COVID-19. ▪ If you had COVID-19 over 9 months ago, you need to get the PCR test we arrange for you as a close contact. ▪ You need to restrict your movements (stay at home) for 14 days from when you get the close contact text message from the HSE. ▪ You can stop restricting your movements if you get a negative PCR test result on day 10. That is, 10 full days after your last contact with the person who tested positive. ▪ If you had a positive PCR test in the past 9 months, you do not need to restrict your movements. ▪ If you're caring for someone who cannot self-isolate, you need to restrict your movements for 17 days. This could be a child, older person or someone with a disability. 	
Face coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Face coverings are mandatory in retail outlets, banks, credit unions and post offices, in taxis, in bus and rail stations, on public transport and for workers in customer facing roles in cafés, bars and restaurants. ▪ They can be removed for consumption of food or drinks as appropriate. (10 December 2021) 	
COVID Pass	<p>An EU Digital COVID Certificate (COVID-19 pass) (vaccine or recovery certificate) is required for indoor hospitality and events. (10 December 2021)</p> <p>On 13 December 2021, the Minister for Health in Ireland accepted new recommendations in relation to Ireland's COVID-19 vaccination programme. It is recommended that the interval between the primary vaccine series and booster dose should be reduced to three months. A booster (fourth dose) of an mRNA vaccine is also recommended, no sooner than three months after their third dose, for those who are immunocompromised and for whom a third dose had been previously recommended as part of an extended vaccine schedule. It is also recommended that those individuals who have received one dose of a two-dose</p>	

	primary vaccine schedule and who subsequently have a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, should complete their primary vaccination course four weeks after diagnosis or onset of symptoms. Vaccine booster doses should continue to be offered in the priority order previously recommended.	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	In noting the public health advice, the government acknowledged that in assessing how to apply flexibility, households will likely have regard to the re-formation of family households over the Christmas period and those who belong to household support bubbles. In particular, it is recognised there are specific days and dates (25, 26 and 31 December) in the calendar which are important social and cultural occasions where families will likely choose to come together in larger household numbers (10 December 2021).	
Italy	Date extracted: 13 December 2021 Last updated: 13 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	<p>On 26 Nov 2021, Friuli Venezia Giulia Region has been categorised as a yellow area. The Autonomous Province of Bolzano and Calabria have also been categorised as a yellow areas. All the other Regions and Autonomous Provinces remain in the white zone.</p> <p>Yellow zone: Any region above the threshold of 10% ICU, 15% general ward COVID patient occupancy, and with a new weekly incident rate of 50 cases per 100,000 inhabitants</p>
Social or mass gatherings	Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test required to attend civil and religious ceremonies Proof of vaccination or recovery required to attend other types of gatherings (5 December 2021)	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test required to access university (5 December 2021)	
Business activities	Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test required to access workplaces for public workers and private individuals. (5 December 2021) Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test required during weekends and holiday period to access shopping malls (5 December 2021)	
Amateur sport and recreation	Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test required to access indoor gyms, indoor team sports activities and indoor swimming pools including changing rooms. Rehabilitation and therapeutic activities are excluded from this requirement. (5 December 2021)	
Professional sport	Proof of vaccination or recovery required to access sporting events and competitions in stadiums and arenas (60% indoor capacity and 75% outdoor capacity) (5 December 2021)	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	Inter-regional rail transport require proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test. Within regional transport and local transport does not require any proof. (5 December 2021)	
International travel	Ban on entry into Italy from 8 African countries due to the new variant: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe (26 November 2021) Entry requirements into Italy varies by country. Countries are rated either A,B,C, D or E with different requirements applied for different ratings. For example, anyone who has stayed or passed through one of the countries on List D in the 14 days prior to entering Italy without self-isolation (5 days) must comply with the following regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ take a negative molecular or antigen swab test in the 72 hours prior to entering Italy; in the case of arrivals from the UK and Northern Ireland and British Isles, the swab test must be taken in the 48 hours prior to entering Italy ▪ fill out the Passenger Locator Form prior to entering Italy ▪ present the COVID-19 Green Certificate, or equivalent certificate, certifying the completion of the vaccination cycle 	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Proof of vaccination or recovery required when attending inside in theatrical halls, concert halls, cinematographic, locals entertainment live music, dance halls and discos, restaurants & bars, parties and nightclubs (with capacity at 100%) (5 December 2021)</p> <p>Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test required for indoor access to exhibitions, museums and other places of culture (5 December 2021)</p> <p>Proof of vaccination or recovery required when eating or drinking in a hotel as a resident when the catering facilities are not exclusively for residents only (5 December 2021)</p> <p>In Yellow zone (see triggers to the right): Maximum of four non-cohabiting people per table.</p>	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	Masks are mandatory indoors and in crowded outdoor spaces; in bigger cities, mask mandates apply outdoors, regardless of the level of crowding.	
COVID Pass	From (15 December 2021), for doses following the first dose, the validity of the COVID-19 green certification for vaccination will expire if more than 9 months have passed since your last dose. A new COVID-19 Green Certification will be issued with 48 hours of receiving your booster dose and will be valid for 9 months from the date of administration.	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	From 6 December to 15 January, holiday measures have been introduced whereby a recent negative test can no longer be used as a valid form of proof to access a wide range of cultural, leisure, entertainment settings and professional sporting arenas.	
Netherlands		Trigger for changes
	<p>Date extracted: 15 December 2021 Last updated: 14 December 2021</p>	
Movement of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Everyone should stay at home as much as possible. ▪ Everyone aged 18 and over must stay 1.5 metres away from others. ▪ Do a self-test before visiting others or receiving visitors. ▪ Receive no more than 4 visitors a day in your home, not counting children under 13. ▪ Limit visits to one a day. ▪ Take extra care in situations where people aged ≥ 70 come into contact with children aged ≤ 12. 	On 26 November 2021 the government announced stricter measures to curb the number of infections and stop the health and care sector being further overburdened. These new restrictions apply as of 05.00 on 28 November 2021.
Social or mass gatherings	<p>Evening closures</p> <p>The following locations must remain closed between 17.00 and 05.00:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indoor and outdoor sports venues. ▪ Non-essential shops such as clothing shops. ▪ Non-essential locations, such as event venues, locations where contact-based professions are carried out, zoos, amusement parks, spas, saunas and tanning salons. ▪ Food and drink venues such as restaurants and bars. ▪ Locations for artistic and cultural activities, such as cinemas, theatres and concert halls. 	The government is prolonging the measures introduced on 28 November, until at least 14 January 2022 .
Primary schools	<p>Schools currently remain open</p> <p>However, extra rules and arrangements included are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ fixed routes in schools ▪ a face mask requirement in hallways for pupils in primary years 6 to 8 ▪ children aged 12 and under with cold symptoms – such as a runny nose – must stay at home and get tested by the municipal health service even if their symptoms are mild. 	

	<p>Education and childcare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Day care centres for children aged 0 to 4 are open. ▪ Primary schools are open. ▪ All staff and pupils in primary years 6, 7 and 8 are advised to do a self-test twice a week. This also applies to staff and pupils who are vaccinated or have had coronavirus. Primary schools will receive more information about this soon. ▪ Pupils and staff with symptoms, including mild cold symptoms, must stay at home and get tested by the municipal health service. ▪ Staff must wear a face mask when moving around the school, for example, in hallways. Face masks may be taken off in the classroom. Children in primary years 6, 7 and 8 are strongly advised to wear a face mask outside their classroom ▪ Out-of-school care is open. <p><u>School closure announcement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Following a press conference held on 14 December 2021, it was announced that primary schools, schools for special (primary) education, and out-of-school care facilities will be closed in the week before Christmas. ▪ Out-of-school care facilities will be open during the regular Christmas break. ▪ Primary schools will reopen again on 10 January 2022. ▪ The situation will be reviewed on 14 January, or possibly at an earlier date if the Outbreak Management Team gains important new insights into the Omicron variant. ▪ Schools will remain open for emergency care for vulnerable children and children of key workers. ▪ Schools are allowed to provide distance learning until the Christmas holidays, but it is not necessary. 	
<p>Second-level education</p>	<p>Schools will remain open However, extra rules and arrangements included are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ fixed routes in schools ▪ regular self-testing. ▪ Pupils and staff should do a self-test at home twice a week. Secondary schools will receive more information about this soon. ▪ All pupils and staff must wear a face mask indoors, except in classrooms. ▪ Secondary vocational schools are open. 	
<p>Higher and adult education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher professional education institutions and universities are open. ▪ Accredited (further) education may take place in the evenings. ▪ The maximum group size is 75 people per room. In theatres and auditoriums up to 1,250 people are allowed at once (14 December 2021). 	
<p>Business activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Essential shops, such as supermarkets and chemists, can stay open until 20.00. ▪ Essential service providers, such as notaries, lawyers, mortgage advisors and medical health professionals, can be open for their normal opening hours. ▪ The rules for working from home have been tightened: 'Work from home. If this is impossible: stay 1.5 metres apart at work.' 	

	<p>Public locations can open under the following conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Everyone must stay 1.5 metres apart. This means fewer people can be admitted (no more than the maximum number of seats available with 1.5-metre distancing or, at locations where there is a continuous flow of visitors, 1 visitor per 5 square metres). ▪ Assigned seats are mandatory at food and drink venues, events and art and culture venues. This does not apply at locations where there is a continuous flow of visitors 	
Amateur sport and recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amateur sports matches and training are not permitted between 17.00 and 05.00. ▪ Organised outdoor sports activities for up to 4 people (excluding instructors) may take place outdoors after 17.00. Everyone must stay 1.5 metres apart. ▪ Everyone aged 18 and over must show a coronavirus entry pass to enter public indoor spaces, such as clubhouses, changing rooms and toilets. ▪ No spectators or audiences. 	
Professional sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional sports matches and training are permitted, even after 17.00. ▪ No spectators or audiences. 	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	<p>Travel abroad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Dutch government issues travel advice per country. If you have holiday plans, travel smart. Travelling is still a risk, and will remain a risk. <p>Travelling from a safe country/region within the EU/Schengen area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only Sardinia is designated as safe until 9 December 2021 9:00 AM. After this time Sardinia will become a high-risk area from 9 December 2021 9:00 AM onwards. As such mandatory DCC will be required from 9 December 2021 9:00 AM onwards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No EU travel ban ○ Proof of vaccination or negative test result required ○ No self-quarantine required ○ Health declaration ○ Take a lateral flow or PCR test (even if you have no symptoms and/or have been vaccinated) on day 2 and day 5. <p>Checklist when travelling to the Netherlands from a safe country/region from outside the EU/Schengen area (list of safe countries here)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No EU travel ban ▪ Proof of vaccination or negative test result required ▪ No self-quarantine required ▪ Health declaration ▪ Take a lateral flow or PCR test (even if you have no symptoms and/or have been vaccinated) on day 2 and day 5. <p>Ban on flights from southern Africa From 12.00 noon on 26 November 2021 a ban is in place on passenger flights to the Netherlands, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba from the following countries:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Botswana ▪ Eswatini ▪ Lesotho ▪ Malawi ▪ Mozambique ▪ Namibia ▪ South Africa ▪ Zimbabwe <p>The ban will be in place until 23.59 on 15 December 2021.</p> <p>Exemptions to the flight ban The following exemptions apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dutch nationals are permitted to fly to the Netherlands. ▪ Foreign nationals who are resident in the Netherlands (registered in the Personal Records Database) are permitted to fly to the Netherlands. ▪ EU residents and residents of Schengen area countries are permitted to fly to the Netherlands if they are transiting to their country of residence. ▪ Family members who are travelling to the Netherlands for a visit in the event of illness, death or a visit to a grandchild and who meet the requirements of the exemptions for the entry ban. ▪ Healthcare workers are exempted from the ban if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ they are travelling to the Netherlands to help with efforts to combat coronavirus or ○ their journey is in the interests of public health in the Netherlands. ▪ Cargo transport is also exempted from the ban. ▪ Travellers from the countries for which the flight ban has been imposed were already subject to the EU entry ban for people travelling from outside the EU. <p>Additional requirements for exempted travellers The countries to which the flight ban applies have also been designated very high-risk countries where there is a virus variant of concern. Additional requirements therefore apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exempted travellers must show a negative PCR test result before departing for the Netherlands. ▪ They are required to quarantine on arrival in the Netherlands. ▪ These requirements also apply to travellers who have been fully vaccinated or who have proof of recovery (EU Digital COVID Certificate). 	
Domestic travel	<p>Travel within the Netherlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stay at home as much as possible. 	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Between 17.00 and 05.00 locations must be closed and events are not permitted. ▪ Professional artistic and cultural activities are permitted, even after 17.00. No spectators or audiences. 	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>Basic rules for everyone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly. ▪ Stay 1.5 metres apart. ▪ If you have symptoms, stay at home and get tested as soon as possible. ▪ Ensure a good flow of fresh air indoors. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a member of your household tests positive for coronavirus, they must self-isolate. All other members of the household must self-quarantine for 10 days or 5 days if PCR test is negative, even if they have been vaccinated or have had coronavirus before. 	
Face coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face masks while moving around and 1.5-metre distancing are required at all locations where people have assigned seats, such as restaurants, bars, cinemas and theatres. This means fewer people can be admitted to these locations. Face masks must be worn in all indoor public spaces, including supermarkets, train stations and restaurants. 	
COVID Pass	<p>Digital COVID Certificate (DCC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone aged 13 and over must show a coronavirus entry pass at certain locations, for example, to go to a bar or restaurant, an event, the cinema or theatre, or to a sports match. If you are visiting the Netherlands and would like to attend an activity, you can use your EU DCC, that is, proof of vaccination or proof of recovery of COVID-19. If you don't have a DCC, you will need a negative test result to attend. <p>2G coronavirus entry pass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the moment, a 3G admission policy (proof of vaccination, proof of recovery or negative test result) applies in certain sectors. Under the government's proposed 2G policy it will be possible to require visitors at certain locations to show a coronavirus entry pass based on proof of vaccination or recovery only. These locations may include high-risk settings in the cultural, hospitality and events sectors as well as non-essential locations such as amusement parks and zoos. <p>Coronavirus entry passes at places of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government wants to make it possible to require people to show a coronavirus entry pass at their place of work. Under the Coronavirus Entry Passes (Temporary Expansion) Bill employees will be required to show a coronavirus entry pass in sectors where customers are also required to do show one (such as the hospitality, cultural and non-essential retail sectors) and at places of work where the risk of infection is high. Which places of work will be designated 'high risk' and when the requirement will enter into force will be determined later by way of ministerial orders. <p>Coronavirus entry passes for non-essential shops and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government has proposed making it possible to require people to show a coronavirus entry pass in order to access to non-essential shops and non-essential services in public spaces. These plans will be debated in the Senate soon. <p>Coronavirus entry passes in secondary vocational and higher education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If existing measures prove insufficient to prevent the spread of the virus, there is a risk that education will have to move online again. The government believes education should be offered in-person if at all possible. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the number of infections continues to rise, it may be necessary to make coronavirus entry passes mandatory in secondary vocational education and higher education in order for educational institutions to stay open. A draft bill to this effect has been submitted to parliament. <p>Earlier start to vaccine booster campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The COVID-19 vaccine booster campaign began on 19 November 2021 for people aged 80 and over who can come to a vaccination centre themselves, residents of care facilities aged 18 and over, and healthcare workers who have direct contact with patients. 	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Norway	Date extracted: 14 December 2021 Last updated: 13 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	Keep a distance from others, preferably 1 metre where possible. Avoid embracing and shaking hands. You should not have more than 10 guests at home in addition to your own household (8 December 2021). (Updated 3 December 2021)	A number of measures are being introduced now to delay the spread of the new Omicron variant when it comes to the country.
Social or mass gatherings	<p>How many can attend private gatherings and how many can attend an event?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At indoor events with fixed, allocated seats for everyone in the audience, 600 people are allowed. Those present must be divided into groups of up to 200 people and there must always be at least 2m distance between the groups. The groups can be replaced during the event if it takes place in an infection control-sound manner and there is no contact between them. At indoor events, without fixed, allocated seats for everyone in the audience, 50 people are allowed e.g. member meetings, courses/conferences, indoor sports and cultural events A maximum of 20 people at a private gathering in a public place, in borrowed or rented premises (8 December 2021). <p>What are events and private gatherings? The following are defined as events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sporting events, including competitions, cups, tournaments and matches, but not organised training cultural events, including concerts, exhibitions, opera, ballet, theatre and cinema, but not organised rehearsals, rehearsals and rehearsals seminars, conferences, courses, membership meetings and other professional gatherings, but not meetings or gatherings as part of ordinary work or teaching at school or university philosophical gatherings and ceremonies, including ceremonies at weddings, funerals, baptisms and confirmations gatherings of persons carried out under the auspices of an external actor on behalf of companies and organisations private gatherings; gatherings for family, friends and acquaintances or social gatherings in connection with work or school, including events after ceremonies. 	<p>The government is reintroducing the 1-metre social distancing requirement and further limiting the number of events, shops and malls. There will also be a national bar stop at midnight. These additional measures will take effect from 8 December 2021.</p> <p>A report published in Norway signaled that as a result of the occurrence of the Omicron variant in Norway there is a need for extensive use of the quarantine with new quarantine rules for other close contacts.</p>

	Private gatherings for members of the same household only are not considered events and therefore do not have to follow these rules. No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	Recommendation for workplaces to ensure that employees work from home for all or part of the week, when this is possible without having a negative impact on important and necessary services - for example, so that a total of 50% of the workforce is at the workplace (new). National bar stop at midnight (8 December 2021).	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	The Government introduced a national order for the use of face masks in public transport and taxis if distance cannot be maintained (13 December 2021). Previously face mask guidance on public transport was only aimed at individuals who are unvaccinated or individuals with COVID-19.	
International travel	Updated 6 December 2021 More strict entry restrictions introduced The Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises against non-essential travel to Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. This advice will be evaluated on an ongoing basis in consultation with the health authorities. Several measures are introduced for travellers from relevant countries with effect from midnight on 27 Nov 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction of a ban on direct flights from these countries. ▪ All people who arrive in Norway after having visited the countries in question are under an obligation to get tested before arrival, upon arrival, and 7 days after arrival. They must also complete 10 days of travel quarantine, even if they can present documentation that they are fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 6 months. ▪ The travel quarantine must be completed at a quarantine hotel. If a person receives a negative result from a PCR test taken no sooner than 3 days after arrival, the rest of the travel quarantine may be completed in their own home or other suitable accommodation where it is possible to avoid close contact with others and stay in a private bedroom with a separate bathroom and kitchen or food service. They may end travel quarantine early if they present a negative result from a PCR test taken no sooner than 7 days after arrival. ▪ People who have visited the countries in question after 16 November 2021, and who arrived in Norway before 26 November 2021, must get tested for SARS-CoV-2 as soon as possible using a PCR test. These people must take a test, even if they got tested before 26 November 2021. It is recommended that they go into travel quarantine for 10 days from their arrival date. ▪ Children under the age of 18 who arrive alone, and diplomats, may complete travel quarantine in their own home or other suitable accommodation where it is possible to avoid close contact with others and stay in a private bedroom with a separate bathroom and kitchen or food service. They are nonetheless under an obligation to get tested. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In order to ensure that travellers from these areas comply with the duty to take a test and to quarantine, the police will implement targeted control of travellers who arrive from these countries. <p>Duty to test upon/after arrival in Norway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People arriving in Norway must be tested for SARS-CoV-2 at their border crossing point in Norway, regardless of their vaccination status. ▪ The test must be a rapid antigen test and the traveller must wait for a result at the test centre. ▪ If there is no test centre at the border crossing point, the test centre is closed, or the authorities have directed the person further, the test must be taken at a test centre or by self-test within 24 hours of arrival. ▪ If the test result is positive, it must be confirmed with a PCR test as soon as possible, and no later than within 24 hours. ▪ Travellers over 12 years who arrive in Norway must use face masks when it is impossible to avoid close contact with other people, until they receive a negative test result. <p>Entry quarantine upon arrival in Norway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travellers over the age of 18 who arrive in Norway from a country/area with quarantine duty must, as a general rule, go into entry quarantine for 10 days after arrival. ▪ Entry quarantine can be shortened by a negative PCR test taken at least 3 days after arrival. Travellers who are fully vaccinated, or have had COVID-19 during the last 6 months and can present a COVID-19 certificate with a QR code that can be verified by the Norwegian authorities, are exempt from the requirement for entry quarantine. ▪ Travellers under the age of 18 are not required to go into entry quarantine. ▪ Travellers from countries/regions in the EEA/Schengen/UK with a sufficiently low infection rate (green and orange countries/regions) do not need to go into entry quarantine unless they have stayed in, or transited through, a country/region with quarantine duty during the past 10 days. ▪ Travellers arriving from a green/ orange country/region who have travelled via an area with quarantine duty without using public transport, without staying overnight and without having close contact with anyone other than their travel companions, do not need to go into quarantine upon arrival in Norway. 	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>The following rules and recommendations that apply from (9 December 2021). They will be implemented for a period of 4 weeks, but will be reconsidered after 2 weeks.</p> <p>The following rules and recommendations that apply from (9 December 2021). They will be implemented for a period of 4four weeks, but will be reconsidered after 2two weeks.</p> <p>It is recommended that organised sports, cultural and leisure activities be carried out outdoors as much as possible.</p> <p>For children and young people < 20 years of age:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ there is no number limit for outdoor or indoor organised training or practice <p>For adults ≥ 20 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ indoor, training /exercises should be carried out in groups of up to 20 people ▪ where possible, a 2m distance should be kept between people during high-intensity training 	

<p>Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Norwegian Government is introducing new national measures (in effect from 3 December 2021 00:00 a.m.) to delay the spread of the Omicron variant. People are recommended to keep a distance and to avoid shaking hands and hugging each other – webpages are being updated. ▪ Adults are asked to consider whether they can slightly reduce the number of their close contacts (new). ▪ There is a national recommendation to wear a face covering when you are in contact with the health and care service. <p>Several national measures were introduced to limit and delay the spread of the Omicron variant in Norway. These were introduced on 29 Nov 2021, they were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The isolation period has been extended to 7 days for people who receive a positive test result when there is reason to believe they have been infected with the Omicron variant. ▪ Transmission quarantine is required for 10 days for close contacts who are household members or corresponding close relations of people who there is reason to believe have been infected with the Omicron variant. They are required to take a PCR test as soon as possible and on day 7. They may leave quarantine if they receive a negative test result on day 7. ▪ A duty to get tested was introduced for other close contacts if infection with the Omicron variant is suspected. They must be tested as soon as possible using a PCR test and between days 3 and 7 after the close contact. If possible, they should avoid close contact with other people until the first test returns a negative result. ▪ All of the measures apply regardless of a person's vaccination status. ▪ The duties will cease to apply if there is confirmation later that the person with COVID-19 does not have the Omicron variant. 	
<p>Face coverings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a national recommendation to use face masks on public transport, in taxis, in shops and in shopping centres where it is not possible to keep your distance. It is also recommended to wear a face mask where there are a lot of people and it is difficult to keep your distance, for example when you are going to pick up your jacket after an event at the same time as many others or on your way out of a football stadium. ▪ National injunction to wear a face mask where you cannot maintain a distance of 1 metre (8 December 2021). 	
<p>COVID Pass</p>	<p>Entry to Norway (updated 3 December 2021)</p> <p>Those who are fully vaccinated or have had COVID-19 during the last 6 months, with a verifiable corona certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requirement for entry registration. ▪ Requirements for post-arrival testing. You will be tested for SARS-CoV-2 at the border crossing point in Norway. In cases where there is no test station at the border, the test station is not open or the authorities have instructed that testing should not be carried out at the border crossing point, you have a duty to test yourself at another test station or to take a self-test within 24 hours of arrival. In the case of a positive antigen rapid test or self-test, you must take a PCR test as soon as possible and no later than within 24 hours. Persons over the age of 12 must use face masks in cases where it is not possible to avoid close contact with other persons until there is a negative test result. 	

	<p>Those who are over 18 years old, are fully vaccinated or have undergone COVID-19 during the last 6 months, without a verifiable corona certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Requirement for entry registration.▪ Requirements for completed test for SARS-CoV-2 before departure to Norway. You must present a certificate showing negative test for SARS-CoV-2. Approved test method is PCR or rapid antigen test. The test must be taken during the last 24 hours before arrival in Norway.▪ Requirements for post-arrival testing. You will be tested for SARS-CoV-2 at the border crossing point in Norway. In cases where there is no test station at the border, the test station is not open or the authorities have instructed that tests should not be carried out at the border crossing point, you have a duty to test yourself at another test station or to take a self-test within 24 hours of arrival. In the case of a positive rapid antigen test or self-test, you must take a PCR test as soon as possible and no later than within 24 hours. Persons over the age of 12 must use face masks in cases where it is not possible to avoid close contact with other persons until there is a negative test result.▪ Requirements for entry quarantine if you come from an area with a quarantine obligation. You can test yourself out of the entry quarantine in the event of a negative test result by PCR test taken no earlier than 3 days after arrival. <p>Those who are over 18 years old, are not fully vaccinated and have not had COVID-19 during the last 6 months, without a verifiable corona certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Requirement for entry registration.▪ Requirement to complete a corona test before leaving for Norway. You must present a certificate showing negative test for SARS-CoV-2. Approved test method is PCR or rapid antigen test. The test must be taken during the last 24 hours before arrival in Norway.▪ Requirements for post-arrival testing. You will be tested for SARS-CoV-2 at the border crossing point in Norway. In cases where there is no test station at the border, the test station is not open or the authorities have instructed that tests should not be carried out at the border crossing point, you have a duty to test yourself at another test station or to take a self-test within 24 hours of arrival. In the case of a positive rapid antigen test or self-test, you must take a PCR test as soon as possible and no later than within 24 hours. Persons over the age of 12 must use face masks in cases where it is not possible to avoid close contact with other persons until there is a negative test result. <p>Those who are 16-18 years old, are not fully vaccinated and have not had COVID-19 during the last 6 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Requirement for entry registration.▪ You do not need to take a test before departure.▪ Requirements for post-arrival testing. You will be tested for SARS-CoV-2 at the border crossing point in Norway. In cases where there is no test station at the border, the test station is not open or the authorities have instructed that tests should not be carried out at the border crossing point, you have a duty to test yourself at another test station or to take a self-test within 24 hours of arrival. In the case of a positive rapid antigen test or self-test, you must take a PCR test as soon as possible and no later than within 24 hours. Persons over the age of 12 must use face masks in cases where it is not possible to avoid close contact with other persons until there is a negative test result.▪ You should NOT be in the entry quarantine. It is still recommended to test 3 days after arrival.	
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	<p>Under 16 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No requirement for entry registration. ▪ You do not need to take a test before departure. ▪ Requirements for post-arrival testing. You will be tested for SARS-CoV-2 at the border crossing point in Norway. In cases where there is no test station at the border, the test station is not open or the authorities have instructed that tests should not be carried out at the border crossing point, you have a duty to test yourself at another test station or to take a self-test within 24 hours of arrival. In the case of a positive rapid antigen test or self-test, you must take a PCR test as soon as possible and no later than within 24 hours. Children under the age of 16 should not be tested where it is disproportionately demanding to have the test taken by the child. Persons over the age of 12 must use face masks in cases where it is not possible to avoid close contact with other persons until there is a negative test result. ▪ You should NOT be in the entry quarantine. It is still recommended to test 3 days after arrival. ▪ These rules apply regardless of whether you are a Norwegian citizen or a foreigner arriving in Norway. Which area or country you come from is relevant to the question of entry quarantine. 	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	You can have up to 20 guests once during the Christmas and New Year holidays, but there should be a 1 metre distance between the guests. Everyone must think through how many close contacts they have seen in total (8 December 2021).	
Portugal	Date extracted: 7 December 2021 Last updated: 1 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	For the week of 2-9 January 2022, which will contain existing contacts during the festive season, specific rules will be adopted : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mandatory telework, whenever functions allow. ▪ Classes restart on 10 January 2022. ▪ Closing of clubs and bars. 	Notwithstanding the fact that Portugal is one of the countries with the highest vaccination rate in the world and that the numbers of hospitalisations and deaths precisely reflect the effect of vaccination, the country must prepare for a phase of growth in the pandemic in the coming weeks. The arrival of winter, the wave that is spreading with intensity in several European countries and the approach of a festive season led the Government to act to prevent the number of Covid-19 infections, which has been growing in recent weeks, from increasing substantially. (1 December 2021).
Social or mass gatherings	The presentation of the digital certificate (or proof of vaccination or a negative laboratory test result) will be mandatory for those aged 12 years and older when accessing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small events (less than 5,000 people outdoors or with less than 1,000 people indoors), whether indoors, outdoors or outside fixed venues. ▪ Family or corporate events. ▪ Testing is required to access large events (from 5,000 people outdoors or 1,000 people indoors). Those attending large events must provide a negative test or recovery certificate; this is waived for workers in spaces or establishments as well as any suppliers or service providers. ▪ Children under 12 years are exempt from testing. 	
Primary schools	Between 2-9 January 2022, the following are suspended in person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The educational and teaching activities of public, private and cooperative teaching establishments and of the solidarity sector, of pre-school education and primary education. ▪ Early childhood support activities at day care centres, family day care centres and child minders, social support activities carried out in an activities and training centre for inclusion, and a leisure activities centre. 	
Second-level education	Between 2-9 January 2022, the following are suspended in person:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The educational and teaching activities of public, private and cooperative teaching establishments and of the solidarity sector, of secondary education. 	
Higher and adult education	<p>Between 2-9 January 2022, the following are suspended in person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and non-teaching face-to-face activities of higher education institutions, without prejudice to the evaluation periods in progress. 	
Business activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teleworking will be mandatory between the 2-9 January 2022, throughout the mainland and whenever the functions in question allow it. Those attending bars, clubs and dance halls must provide a negative test or recovery certificate; this is waived for workers in spaces or establishments as well as any suppliers or service providers. Children under 12 years are exempt from testing. Bars, clubs and dance venues are open, except between the 2-9 January 2022. 	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	Family events are allowed, including weddings and baptisms, and the EU Digital Certificate must be verified.	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	<p>At borders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory negative test for all flights arriving in Portugal; Heavily increased sanctions for airlines. <p>Airlines and ships can only allow passengers to board with a destination or stopover in mainland Portugal by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of the EU COVID Digital Certificate. Presentation of negative PCR test carried out within 72 hours prior to the time of departure. Presentation of negative rapid antigen test carried out within 48 hours prior to boarding. All passengers must complete the Passenger Locator Form. <p>Passengers on flights departing Madeira and the Azores to mainland Portugal do not need to present a test.</p> <p>Airline arrivals will be subject to thermal screening. Those with a temperature of 38°C and above will have their temperature retested and if this is also 38°C and above they will have to take a rapid antigen test in the airport.</p> <p>Citizens from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe are required to comply with a 14-day quarantine after entering mainland Portugal, at home or in a place indicated by the health authorities.</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>Mandatory negative test requirement (even for vaccinated people) in accessing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home visits; Visits to patients admitted to health facilities; Large events without marked seats (or in improvised venues) and sports venues; Discos and bars. 	

Face coverings	The use of a mask is mandatory to access or stay in the following places: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spaces, equipment and commercial and service provision establishments, regardless of the respective area ▪ Public buildings or buildings for public use where services are provided or acts involving the public are carried out ▪ Education, teaching and day care establishments, except in outdoor recreational spaces ▪ Concert halls, cinematographic film exhibition halls, congress halls, venues for events of a corporate nature, improvised venues for events, namely cultural, or similar ▪ Enclosures for events of any nature and sporting celebrations, namely in stadiums; ▪ health facilities and services ▪ Residential or reception structures or home support services for vulnerable populations, elderly people or people with disabilities, as well as integrated long-term care units from the National Integrated Long-term Care Network and other residential structures and responses dedicated to children and young people ▪ Locations where this is determined in the norms of the General Directorate of Health. 	
COVID Pass	The presentation of the digital certificate (or proof of vaccination or a negative laboratory test result) will be mandatory when accessing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restaurants; ▪ Tourist establishments and local accommodation; ▪ Events with marked places; ▪ Gyms. 	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Spain	Date extracted: 10 December 2021 Last updated: 13 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	Close contacts aged 5 to 11 of a positive case do not have to quarantine if they are vaccinated but are recommended to go for a PCR test on day 1 and on day 7. They are advised to avoid contact with at-risk groups, not attend large events, wear a face mask when socialising, limit their contacts to those groups with whom they normally interact with at school and monitor symptoms. This does not apply to people who are immunocompromised or a close contact of a positive case caused by the omicron, beta or gamma variant of the coronavirus. This rule has been in force this school year for students in secondary schools and reflects the changes in the authorisation of a vaccine in this age group (9 December 2021).	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021.	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

International travel	<p>The Embassy of Spain in the UK would like to inform that from 00:00 hours on Wednesday 1 December 2021, travellers from the UK traveling to Spain for nonessential purposes need to be fully vaccinated. This change does NOT apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ those under 12 years old ▪ Spanish or EU citizens and their family members. <p>Previously 7 countries were currently classified as high-risk: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. On Friday (10 December 2021) 2 more southern African countries, Malawi and Zambia were added to this classification. The order will take effect from 13 December 2021 until 26 December 2021. Travellers from these countries will need to present a negative COVID-19 test – e.g. a PCR test taken within 72 hours or Rapid Antigen Detection Test within 48 hours – regardless of whether they are fully vaccinated or have recovered from the disease. Travellers from these 9 countries will also be subject to a mandatory 10-day quarantine, according to a separate order published Monday by the Spanish Health Ministry.</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated national advice since 26 Nov 2021. COVID-19 measures are being managed largely by the administration of the autonomous regions.	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	Fully vaccinated contacts will be quarantined if case is suspected or confirmed to be Omicron, Beta or Gamma variants. Or if contact is immunocompromised. (1 December 2021)	
Face coverings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
COVID Pass	From (13 December 2021), children aged between 5 and 11 who live in Spain will be offered a vaccine.	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Sweden	Date extracted: 10 December 2021 Last updated: 7 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	To reduce the risk of spreading covid-19 disease, the Swedish Public Health Agency decides to recommend anyone and everyone to keep their distance from other people in public environments, especially indoors.	The Swedish Public Health Agency introduced new advice and recommendations to limit the spread of COVID-19 in society and to reduce the risk of healthcare being overburdened. From 8 December 2021 , everyone is recommended to keep their distance in public environments. The recommendations apply until 31 January 2022.
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	<p>The Swedish Public Health Agency further decides to recommend employers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make it easier for employees to get vaccinated and inform about the importance of staying home when you get symptoms. ▪ Make it possible for employees to keep their distance from each other, for example at meetings, in coffee rooms and changing rooms. Avoid large indoor gatherings with many participants. ▪ Make it possible for employees to work from home to a certain extent when the work allows it. <p>The person who runs a restaurant is responsible for ensuring that the premises are designed so that congestion is avoided. According to the Swedish Public Health Agency's general advice, this may mean that the person who runs the restaurant can, for example:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ limit the number of visitors staying at the same place at the restaurant, ▪ refurbish or otherwise create space, ▪ mark distance on the floor or otherwise mark what distance visitors should keep to each other ▪ use alternative solutions for queues such as number plate systems. 	
Amateur sport and recreation	Sports activities can be carried out if the organiser takes infection control measures in accordance with the Swedish Public Health Agency's regulations and general guidelines.	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	The Swedish Public Health Agency recommends that, if possible, all adults should, avoid congestion in public transport by choosing to travel at times other than in rush hour traffic or by using other modes of transport, such as walking, cycling or driving. Use face masks in public transport if congestion cannot be avoided. Those responsible for running public transport should do so at full frequency.	
International travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
COVID Pass	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	If all adults are vaccinated and everyone is healthy, there is no reason to advise against celebrating Christmas with relatives and friends. But be prepared to adjust quickly if you have symptoms of COVID-19.	
England	Date extracted: 15 December 2021 Last updated: 14 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	From 13 December 2021 office workers who can work from home should do so.	<p>The government accepted updated advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) following the emergence of the Omicron variant.</p> <p>New measures have been put in place as a precaution, because cases of a variant of concern have been found in the UK.</p> <p>There are changes to the rules on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • face coverings • self-isolation • international travel • The changes apply from 4am on Tuesday 30 November.
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	Face coverings should be worn in communal areas of universities, colleges and schools by staff, visitors and pupils or students in year 7 and above.	
Higher and adult education	Face coverings should be worn in communal areas of universities, colleges and schools by staff, visitors and pupils or students in year 7 and above.	
Business activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	Since (30 November 2021) , masks are required by law on public transport, including taxis.	
International travel	From 4am on Tuesday (07 December 2021) anyone aged 12 and over must show a negative PCR or lateral flow test result before travelling to England from abroad. You must take the test in the 2 days before you travel to England. You must also take a PCR test within 2 days of arriving and self-isolate until you get a negative test result, even if you're fully vaccinated.	

	<p>International guidance for red list countries: Before you travel to England you must (applied to anyone 12 years and older):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ take a COVID-19 test – you must take the test in the 2 days before you travel to England ▪ book a quarantine hotel package, including 2 COVID-19 tests ▪ complete a passenger locator form <p>When you arrive in England you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quarantine in a managed hotel, and take 2 COVID-19 tests. This applies to anyone 12 years and older. ▪ Children aged 4 or under do not have to take any travel tests but must enter managed quarantine. <p>Updated 14 December 2021 There are currently no countries or territories on the red list.</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>From 14 December 2021 fully vaccinated contacts of someone with COVID-19 should take rapid lateral flow tests every day for 7 days. If you test positive or develop symptoms, you need to self-isolate for 10 days.</p> <p>On 30 November 2021, guidance has been updated to reflect changes to self-isolation requirements for contacts of people who have been identified as a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. Contacts of individuals with a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant, must self-isolate, regardless of their vaccination status. They must complete their full isolation period even if they receive a negative test result during this period.</p>	
Face coverings	<p>Omicron variant: summary of changes</p> <p>New measures have been put in place as a precaution, because cases of a variant of concern have been found in the UK. The changes applied from 4am on Tuesday 30 November.</p> <p>The public, and staff in public facing areas, are also required to wear face coverings in these settings (this has been mandatory since 30 November 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ shops and supermarkets (places which offer goods or services for retail sale or hire) ▪ auction houses ▪ post offices, banks, building societies, high street solicitors and accountants, credit unions, short-term loan providers, savings clubs and money service businesses ▪ estate and letting agents ▪ premises providing personal care and beauty treatments (hair salons, barbers, nail salons, massage centres, tattoo and piercing parlours) ▪ pharmacies ▪ premises providing veterinary services ▪ retail galleries ▪ retail travel agents ▪ takeaways without space for consumption of food or drink on premises 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ shopping centres (malls and indoor markets) ▪ public transport (aeroplanes, trains, trams, buses, coaches and ferries), taxis and private hire vehicles ▪ any car or small van during a professionally delivered driving lesson, a practical driving test, or during one of the practical tests for giving driving instruction, and in all HGV lessons and tests ▪ transport hubs (airports, rail and tram stations and terminals, maritime ports and terminals, bus and coach stations and terminals) <p>From 10 December 2021 the public, and staff in public facing areas, are required to wear face coverings in these additional settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ community centres (including village halls), youth centres, members clubs and social clubs ▪ libraries and public reading rooms ▪ polling stations and premises used for the counting of votes ▪ places of worship ▪ crematoria and burial ground chapels ▪ visitor attractions and entertainment venues (museums, galleries, cinemas, indoor theatres, concert halls, cultural and heritage sites, indoor areas at aquariums, zoos and visitor farms, bingo halls, snooker and pool halls, amusement arcades, adventure activity centres, indoor sports stadiums, funfairs, indoor theme parks, casinos, skating rinks, bowling alleys, indoor play areas including soft-play areas) ▪ public areas in hotels and hostels ▪ indoor areas of sports stadiums 	
<p>COVID Pass</p>	<p>Booster guidance From 15 December 2021 People aged ≥ 18 will be able to pre-book a booster dose appointment 2 months after their 2nd dose.</p> <p>COVID Pass required for nightclubs, some venues and large events to show you're fully vaccinated, have had a negative test result in the last 48 hours, or you have an exemption.</p> <p>From 13 December 2021 People aged ≥ 30 can pre-book a booster dose appointment 2 months after their 2nd dose.</p> <p>On 3 December 2021 a recommendation was made to expand the booster vaccination eligibility to include all adults aged 18 to 39 years. Booster vaccination should now be offered in order of descending age groups, with priority given to the vaccination of older adults and those in a COVID-19 at-risk group. Booster vaccination should not be given within 3 months of completion of the primary course.</p> <p>It was announced on 12 December 2021 that everyone eligible aged ≥ 18 in England will have the chance to get their booster before the New Year.</p> <p>COVID pass The government announced on 9 December 2021 that England will move to Plan B in response to the risks of the Omicron variant. From 15 December, certain venues and events will be required by law to check that all</p>	

	visitors aged 18 years or over are fully vaccinated, have proof of a negative test in the last 48 hours, or have an exemption.	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Northern Ireland	Date extracted: 15 December 2021 Last updated: 14 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Social or mass gatherings	<p>Updated 29 November 2021</p> <p>Outdoor Gatherings at Private Dwellings There are no restrictions on the number of persons that can gather outdoors at private dwelling e.g. in a garden. Social distancing however is still recommended</p> <p>Indoor Gatherings at Private Dwellings The maximum number of persons that can gather indoors at a private dwelling is 30 including children aged ≤ 12. Social distancing is recommended where possible between households. Large house parties and raves indoors are not permitted. "Large house party" means an indoor gathering of more than 30 persons at a private dwelling. "Rave" means a private indoor gathering of more than 30 persons (whether or not at a private dwelling) at which amplified music is played during the night with or without intermission which is likely to cause serious distress to inhabitants of the locality by reason of its loudness, duration and the time at which it is played.</p> <p>Marriage and civil partnership ceremonies in private dwellings Indoor gatherings in a private dwelling are permitted for the purpose of a marriage or a civil partnership up to a maximum of 30 persons. This number includes officiant and children aged ≤ 12.</p> <p>Funerals in Private Dwellings The maximum number of persons that can attend in a private dwelling is 30. This number includes officiant and children aged ≤ 12.</p> <p>Indoor and Outdoor Gatherings (This does not apply to gatherings at private dwellings) Indoor Gatherings There is no limit on the number of people that can gather indoors. The maximum number of people that can gather indoors will be determined by a risk assessment that must be carried out by the person responsible for organising or operating the gathering. The responsible person must take all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus. If 15 people or less are to be present then a risk assessment is not required.</p> <p>Outdoor Gatherings The maximum number of people who may gather outdoors is also determined by a risk assessment carried out by the person responsible for the gathering. The responsible person must take all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus.</p>	

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	A risk assessment is not required if 30 people or less are attending the outdoor gathering.	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	Updated 29 November 2021 You should work from home if that is possible. You are allowed to travel for work purposes, including to provide voluntary or charitable services, where you cannot work from home.	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	Updated 29 November 2021 Face coverings are mandatory while entering and leaving a place of worship when attending an act of worship. It is recommended they continue to be worn at all times, particularly when moving around the building or while singing. Face coverings continue to be mandatory at all times within places of worship where the indoor gathering is not an act of worship.	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	Updated 28 November 2021 Red list countries (subject to additional measures) Only British or Irish nationals, or those with residency rights in the UK, are permitted to travel to Northern Ireland from a red list country. Countries currently on the red list are: Angola Botswana Eswatini Lesotho Malawi Mozambique Namibia Nigeria South Africa Zambia Zimbabwe Requirements for travelling to NI from a red list country If you arrived before 4.00 am on 28 November from a country other than Nigeria and before 4.00 am on Monday 6 December from Nigeria or have travelled through a red list country in the previous 10 days you must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ complete a UK Passenger Locator Form in the 48 hours before arrival in Northern Ireland provide proof of a negative pre-departure COVID-19 test taken in the 48 hours before you travel to Northern Ireland ▪ self-isolate at the place you say you are staying on your UK Passenger Locator Form ▪ other residents staying at the location you're staying also need to self-isolate for 10 days ▪ take a day 2 and day 8 PCR test 	

	<p>Travelling to Northern Ireland Pre-departure testing From 4.00 am on 7 December 2021 all those aged ≥ 12 years must take a pre-departure PCR or LFD COVID-19 test, taken in the 2 days before your service to Northern Ireland departs. If your journey is a multi-leg journey, you must take the test in the 2 days before the start of the first leg. If you are aged ≥ 12, you (or your parent/ guardian/ responsible adult if aged 12 to 17) will need to present valid proof of your negative test before you board to travel to Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Updated 14 December 2021 From 4.00 am on Wednesday 15 December 2021 there are no countries recorded on the red list</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	<p>Updated 29 November 2021 Face covering are mandatory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ on public transport including school transport services (excludes junior pupils not yet receiving secondary education), in taxis, private buses, coaches and on aircraft, in train and bus stations and in airports ▪ in enclosed public areas of premises to which the public have or are permitted access. Premises are “enclosed” if they would be considered enclosed or substantially enclosed for the purposes of regulation 2 of the Smoke-free (Premises, Vehicle Operators and Penalty Notices) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 ▪ in cafes, restaurants, public houses and bars unless seated at a table ▪ when providing or receiving a close contact service as defined in the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 unless it is not possible due to the nature of the service. 	
COVID Pass	<p>Booster guidance (12 December 2021) If you are aged ≥ 40 and it’s been at least 3 months since your 2nd dose, you can now get your booster at a Health Trust hub or a participating community pharmacy.</p> <p>Health Trust vaccination hubs are now open for walk-in boosters for anyone aged ≥ 30 who is at least 3 months from their 2nd vaccine dose. The online booking platform will be updated soon to allow for bookings also.</p> <p>All adult age groups will be worked through in a phased way, just as in the original vaccination programme earlier this year.</p> <p>People under 40 who are more vulnerable to COVID-19 are already being prioritised, alongside older age groups, and are being invited to receive their booster dose by their GP.</p> <p>Updated 29 November 2021 COVID Status Certification</p>	

	<p>Events that must comply with these regulations are as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an event that consists, or is expected to consist of more than 10,000 people, including attendees, staff, performers and persons responsible for the event, at any one time ▪ an event which will take place wholly indoors and consists, or is expected to consist, of 500 or more people, where not all attendees will be seated. This includes attendees, staff, performers and persons responsible for the event at any one time. ▪ an event which will take place wholly outdoors and consists, or is expected to consist, of 4,000 or more people, where not all attendees will be seated. This includes attendees, staff, performers and persons responsible for the event, at any one time. <p>“Relevant premises” which must comply with these regulations, are as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ premises which sell or provide intoxicating liquor for consumption on the premises and premises to which the public have access, including private members clubs, and where consumption is permitted. This excludes premises at a port or airport, the cross border inter-city Belfast-Dublin rail service, a place of worship during a service the premises of education establishments other than those parts where intoxicating liquor may be consumed on the premises; and premises, or parts thereof, being used solely for the purposes of blood donation at the time when they are being so used ▪ theatres ▪ concert halls ▪ cinemas ▪ indoor premises when used for the purpose of a performance, recording or rehearsal, other than private dwellings ▪ premises used for the purpose of a conference or exhibition ▪ premises hosting a relevant event as described above (other than exemptions) 	
<p>Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period</p>	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	
<p>Scotland (mainland) Date extracted: 15 December 2021 Last updated: 14 December 2021</p>		<p>Trigger for changes</p>
<p>Movement of people</p>	<p>New measures announced on 14 December 2021 advised that social interaction at home or in indoor public places should be reduced to a maximum of 3 households at any time, with everyone encouraged to take a lateral flow test before meeting.</p>	
<p>Social or mass gatherings</p>	<p>Updated 10 December 2021 Advice that people should think about deferring work Christmas parties. Take a lateral flow test if going to meet other people, if asking someone round to your home, if you’re meeting someone for lunch or a drink or if you are going out for Christmas shopping.</p> <p>Updated 14 December 2021 Reduce social interaction at home or in indoor public places to a maximum of 3 households at any time, with everyone encouraged to take a lateral flow test before meeting.</p> <p>Guidance for visiting care homes</p>	

	<p>No more than 2 households to visit a resident at a time. In hospitals there should be no more than 2 visitors at any time.</p> <p>In all settings, people should take a lateral flow test before meeting, to support people to continue to connect with their loved ones.</p>	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	<p>Updated 10 December 2021 Work from home if you can.</p> <p>Updated 14 December 2021 For those in sectors where working from home is not possible, regular testing with lateral flow tests should be undertaken.</p>	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	<p>On (30 November 2021) a testing requirement was introduced and extended to those aged ≥ 12 years on 7 December 2021. Requirements on arrival in Scotland differ depending on the individual's vaccination status and whether or not they have been in a country on Scotland's red list in the 10 days before arriving in Scotland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For non-red list countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Everybody aged 12 or over must take a COVID-19 PCR or lateral flow test 2 days before boarding a flight to Scotland from abroad ○ Everyone aged 18 and over and fully vaccinated must isolate at home or in the place you are staying for 10 days (self-isolation). Isolation ends for those over 18 if Day 2 PCR test is negative or is positive isolate for the full 10 days ○ Everyone aged 18 and over and not fully vaccinated or cannot provide proof of full vaccination must isolate at home or in the place you are staying for the full 10 days (self-isolation) and complete a Day 2 PCR test (on or before day 2) and Day 8 PCR test (on or after Day 8). ○ Children aged under 18 do not need to isolate. However, children aged 11 to 17 must take a day 2 PCR test (on or before day 2). ■ For red list countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only UK residents or British or Irish Nationals can enter Scotland if arriving from a country on Scotland's red list. ○ Red list countries: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe ○ Everyone aged 12 or over is required to take a COVID-19 PCR or lateral flow test 2 days before boarding a flight to Scotland from a red list country. ○ Everyone regardless of age or vaccination status must pre-book in advanced of traveling and isolate on arrival in one of a list of identified quarantine hotels for 10 days (11 nights), with a limited number of exceptions ○ Everyone must complete a Day 2 PCR test (on or before day 2) and Day 8 PCR test (on or after Day 8) before exiting quarantine. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The travel rules on arrival in Scotland only apply if have been outside the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or Channel Islands in the 10 days before arriving in Scotland. If changing flights on the way to Scotland, the COVID-19 test must be taken in the 2 days before boarding the first flight. <p>Updated 14 December 2021 11 countries (Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) are to be removed from the international travel red list as Omicron cases increase globally.</p> <p>Pre-departure tests and PCR testing measures on or before day 2 on arrival in Scotland will remain in place.</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>Updated 10 December 2021 From 11 Dec 2021 all household contacts of any confirmed COVID case should isolate for 10 days regardless of their vaccination status even if they initially get a negative PCR test. Non household contacts should continue to isolate pending a PCR result. If that is negative they can leave isolation at that point as long as they are double vaccinated.</p> <p>If you're identified as a close contact of a person who may have the omicron variant, you will be informed of this by phone, SMS or letter. You will be advised to self-isolate for 10 days irrespective of vaccination status, PCR test result and age.</p> <p>An announcement was made on 10 December 2021 encouraging individuals to take regular lateral flow tests, if you don't have symptoms – especially before mixing with other people</p>	
Face coverings	<p>Updated 14 December 2021 Masks are recommended to be worn in outdoor crowded areas such as Christmas markets or festive celebrations.</p>	
COVID Pass	<p><i>Booster guidance</i> Updated 14 December 2021 Online portal for 18-29 year-olds opening on Wednesday 15 December and the waiting period following vaccination reduced from 15 minutes to five minutes. COVID-19 booster jabs will be prioritised over the remainder of the flu vaccination programme to speed up vaccination times and enable more appointments.</p>	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	<p>Updated 14 December 2021 Masks are recommended to be worn in outdoor crowded areas such as Christmas markets or festive celebrations.</p>	
Wales	<p>Date extracted: 15 December 2021 Last updated: 14 December 2021</p>	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	Updated 10 December 2021
Social or mass gatherings	<p>Updated 10 December 2021 Lateral flow tests are available, free of charge to everyone in Wales. If you are over the age of 11 you are encouraged to take tests twice a week (every 3 or 4 days) if you do not have COVID-19 symptoms.</p>	Reviews of restrictions in Wales will be moving from every 3 weeks to weekly because of the speed at which things are changing.

	<p>You are also encouraged to take a test: if you are going to be in higher risk situations including spending time in crowded or enclosed spaces before you visit people who are at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 you are travelling to other areas of Wales or the UK</p>	<p>Reviews are set to be held weekly because of concerns over the impact of the Omicron variant on COVID rates.</p>
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	<p>Updated 29 November 2021 Face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in all indoor areas of all settings, including classrooms, where physical distance cannot be maintained. Face coverings also should be worn by secondary aged learners in all indoor areas, including classrooms, where physical distance cannot be maintained.</p>	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	<p>Nightclubs and similar venues The requirement to check individuals' COVID passes will be required in any venue that meets 3 main considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ is authorised to serve or supply alcohol ▪ is open late at night between the hours of midnight and 5am ▪ where music is provided for dancing, (this includes silent discos). <p>The venue must meet all 3 considerations to be captured by the requirement to operate a COVID pass. However, the venue is captured by the requirement to operate the pass at all times (not just between the hours of midnight and 5am) if music is provided for dancing.</p> <p>Updated 10 December 2021 Wherever you can, you should work from home.</p>	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	<p>On 5 December 2021 international advice was updated</p> <p>Common Travel Area There are no restrictions in place for travel into or out of Wales as long as you are travelling to or from a country within the UK or wider Common Travel Area (Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands).</p> <p>International Travel (outside of the Common Travel Area)</p> <p>Arriving from a red list country If you are arriving in the UK from a red list country (or if you have passed through a red list country within 10 days of your arrival in the UK), you must follow the rules as explained in the guidance. From 12:00 on 26 November, the following countries are on the red list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Botswana ▪ Eswatini ▪ Lesotho ▪ Namibia ▪ South Africa ▪ Zimbabwe 	

	<p>From 04:00 on 28 November 4 additional countries have also been added to the red list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Angola▪ Malawi▪ Mozambique▪ Zambia <p>From 04:00 on 6 December the following has been added to the red list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Nigeria <p>If you have arrived from or been in a country on the red list within the last 10 days you may be contacted by our Arriving Travellers Team (ATT).</p> <p>The red list is updated on a regular basis and so you are advised to check before making travel arrangements.</p> <p>Updated 6 December 2021 - Rules for travellers arriving from a red list country When travelling to the UK from a red list country (or if you have passed through a red list country within 10 days of your arrival in the UK), you cannot travel directly to Wales and must enter through a designated port in England or Scotland.</p> <p>Travellers arriving from a red list country must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ complete a passenger locator form▪ have proof of a negative coronavirus test, taken within the 48 hours before departure to the UK▪ enter managed quarantine for 10 days▪ take a PCR coronavirus test during your 10 day quarantine (not required for children under 5)▪ on (or before) day 2 and on or (after day) 8▪ Post arrival tests and managed quarantine must be booked before your departure, through the CTM portal. Book your tests and hotel quarantine on the CTM portal. <p>Should your address or contact details change whilst you are in managed quarantine then you must update this as and when required by submitting a new passenger locator form.</p> <p>There are some exemptions from certain travelling requirements for specific categories of people.</p> <p>Updated 14 December 2021 From 4am on Tuesday 15 December the following countries will be removed from the red list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Botswana▪ Eswatini▪ Lesotho▪ Namibia▪ South Africa	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Zimbabwe ▪ Angola ▪ Malawi ▪ Mozambique ▪ Zambia ▪ Nigeria 	
Domestic travel	There are no restrictions in place for travel into or out of Wales as long as you are travelling to or from a country within the UK or wider Common Travel Area (Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands).	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>Updated 3 December 2021 Omicron variant If you are a close contact of someone who is confirmed or suspected to have the Omicron variant, you must self-isolate from the day you were last in contact with the person who tested positive and for the next 10 days, regardless of your vaccination status or age. Contact tracers will let you know if your contact is a confirmed or suspected case of the Omicron variant. You should also take a PCR test on day 2 and day 8. It is important that you take the tests even if you feel well as you may have COVID-19 even if you do not have symptoms. Even if these tests are negative, you must complete the isolation period. This is because if you have been infected, it can take time for symptoms to develop or to become infectious to others. If the variant is suspected, you must isolate until it has been confirmed that the person who has tested positive does not have an Omicron variant. Once that happens Test, Trace, Protect service will contact you and advise on what to do next. This may mean you can leave self-isolation but it will depend on your age, vaccination status and nature of the contact.</p> <p>Updated 8 December 2021 Guidance for health and social care workers When a health and social care worker has been identified as a close contact of a possible or probable Omicron case If a staff member is identified as contact of possible or probable Omicron case, the staff member should immediately self-isolate for 10 days regardless of their vaccination status. All staff members should notify their manager if they have been identified as a contact of a possible or probable case of Omicron. Staff members who have been identified as a contact of Omicron are strongly encouraged to book a PCR test as soon as possible and again on day 8 of their isolation period. If at any time a member of staff who is contact of a possible/probable case of Omicron is contacted by Test, Trace and Protect and informed it has subsequently been proven the index case is negative for Omicron the staff member can pick up the test to return scheme as outlined below.</p> <p>Updated 26 November 2021 Guidance for staff in special educational provision following potential contact with COVID-19 In order for a staff member who is working with individuals who have higher clinical risks to attend work when they have been identified as a contact of a positive case of COVID-19, certain requirements must be met as summarised below:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The staff member was fully vaccinated in the UK at least 14 days prior to returning to work and is symptom free. If the staff member is not fully vaccinated, they should follow the guidance on self-isolation for unvaccinated individuals. ▪ The staff member has informed the setting as soon as they have been identified as a contact via TTP or the COVID-19 app, or a member of their household has symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19. ▪ The staff member has taken a PCR test and has received a negative result prior to returning to work. ▪ Following a negative PCR result, the staff member should use LFD tests on a daily basis for 10 days. The results for these LFD tests should be reported on the on-line portal and the setting should also be informed of the results. ▪ If the staff member has tested positive via a PCR during the last 90 days, subject to a risk assessment, they may forego the PCR element of the testing scheme to return and instead only use the LFDs for 10 days/as directed. ▪ Consideration should be given to the learner(s) with whom the staff member has regular contact. Please consult the advice for further information. 	
<p>Face coverings</p>	<p>Updated 10 December 2021 Everyone should wear face coverings in pubs and restaurants, when they aren't eating or drinking and in most other indoor public places, in line with the law, including in cinemas and theatres.</p>	
<p>COVID Pass</p>	<p>Updated 12 December 2021 Booster vaccines People aged 40 to 49 will be invited to have their booster vaccine.</p> <p>Updated 3 December 2021 People over the age of 18 in Wales need to show their COVID-19 status to attend the following venues or events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ nightclubs and similar venues (see definition below) ▪ cinemas, theatres and concert halls indoor venues with more than 500 people in the audience where some or all of the audience are not normally seated ▪ any outdoor or indoor venues with over 4,000 in the audience, where some or all of the audience are not normally seated ▪ any event, which has more than 10,000 people in attendance. <p>An event is considered to be unseated when some attendees are seated and some are standing.</p> <p>COVID status can be demonstrated in either of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ via the digital NHS COVID pass - people who are fully vaccinated in Wales can already download a certificate proving their status. The NHS COVID Pass lets individuals demonstrate their coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination records in a secure way ▪ a paper based certificate of vaccination – this does not include vaccination cards ▪ confirmation of a negative test result by email or text provided by gov.uk ▪ confirmation of a positive test within the last 6 months which has been followed by the appropriate period of isolation (i.e., 10 days) - this can be evidenced in the COVID pass or by text or email. 	

Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Switzerland	Date extracted: 13 December 2021 Last updated: 10 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	Since 6 December 2021 the following rules apply Recommendation to work from home: Working from home is urgently recommended in all areas where it is possible to work from home without disproportionate effort.	On 3 December 2021 Switzerland, introduced measures that would apply from 6 December 2021. These measures reflect the sharp rise in the number of COVID-19 patients admitted to hospital and the emergence of the new Omicron variant. The new measures will remain in place until 24 January 2022. The emergence of the Omicron variant requires an additional pandemic response. The WHO classified Omicron as a variant of concern on 26 November 2021. It is believed to be highly transmissible, and it is possible that people who are immune to the Delta variant could also become infected. It is also unclear how well the vaccination protects against severe cases of the disease and how dangerous the new variant is.
Social or mass gatherings	<p>Private gatherings and parties</p> <p>The number of people allowed to attend events among friends and family (for example gatherings and parties) that are not held in publicly accessible establishments and businesses is limited. The numbers include children.</p> <p>Rule indoors without certificate: A maximum of 10 people is allowed. Rule indoors with certificate recommendation: A maximum of 30 people is allowed. Rule outdoors: A maximum of 50 people is allowed.</p> <p>There is no general limit on the number of people, but a COVID certificate for people aged 16 or over may now either be recommended or mandatory depending on the number attending</p> <p>Recommended It is recommended for private gatherings (e.g. family meals) if there are more than 10 people aged 16 or over.</p> <p>Mandatory Indoor events Previously there was a certificate exemption for fixed groups of < 30 people. The certificate requirement now applies to all indoor spaces at all public events, as well as for all amateur sporting and cultural activities.</p> <p>Outdoor events Previously a certificate requirement applied to outdoor events with over 1,000 people. A certificate requirement will now apply to outdoor events with over 300 people.</p>	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Amateur sport and recreation	<p>Since 6 December 2021 the following rules apply</p> <p>Indoor events: A valid COVID certificate is now mandatory for any sporting or cultural activity that takes place indoors. There are no longer exceptions for gatherings of up to 30 people.</p> <p>Outdoor events: Previously a certificate requirement applied to outdoor events with over 1,000 people. A certificate requirement will now apply to outdoor events with over 300 people.</p>	
Professional sport	Indoor events:	

	<p>A valid COVID certificate is now mandatory for any sporting or cultural activity that takes place indoors. There are no longer exceptions for gatherings of up to 30 people.</p> <p>Outdoor events: Previously a certificate requirement applied to outdoor events with over 1,000 people. A certificate requirement will now apply to outdoor events with over 300 people.</p>	
Religious activities	In churches and other places of worship, masks must be worn. If there are more than 50 people, a valid COVID certificate is required.	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	<p>Entry into Switzerland: With effect from 4 December 2021, there will be no countries on the quarantine list.</p> <p>Entry into Switzerland: Quarantine rule lifted, stricter testing requirement At its meeting, the Federal Council also amended the rules on entry. With effect from Saturday, 4 December, there will be no countries on the quarantine list.</p> <p>In order to continue to prevent the new Omicron variant from entering the country as far as possible, a stricter testing regime will now apply for all arrivals into Switzerland. This testing requirement also applies to those who have been vaccinated or have recovered from the disease. In addition to taking a PCR test before travelling, a second test (PCR test or rapid antigen test) must be carried out between the fourth and seventh day after arrival. This test ensures that infected persons who have contracted the virus shortly before or during travel are detected.</p> <p>Non-vaccinated third-country nationals wishing to enter the Schengen area from countries or regions at risk will be refused entry to Switzerland for short-term stays without gainful employment of up to 90 days within a period of 180 days. This is being updated on an ongoing basis, taking into account the recommendations for the Schengen states issued by the European Commission.</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Indoor events: A valid COVID certificate is now mandatory for any sporting or cultural activity that takes place indoors. There are no longer exceptions for gatherings of up to 30 people.</p> <p>In indoor spaces, eating or drinking standing up is not permitted. People must be seated to eat or drink. Whenever they get up from their table in a restaurant or nightclub, they must wear a mask. These restrictions do not apply in restaurants or nightclubs that restrict access to people aged 16 or over with a certificate that proves that they are fully vaccinated or recovered.</p> <p>Outdoor events: Previously a certificate requirement applied to outdoor events with over 1,000 people. A certificate requirement will now apply to outdoor events with over 300 people.</p> <p>At outdoor Christmas markets, the protective measures are defined by organisers in collaboration with the authorities. Depending on the Christmas market, access may be limited to people who hold a certificate, or, where necessary, there may be a mask-wearing requirement.</p>	

Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	<p>The requirement to wear a mask now applies in all situations where a certificate requirement applies - except at private gatherings. Masks must be worn in publicly accessible indoor spaces, for example in shops or in enclosed areas of public vehicles. In indoor spaces, eating or drinking standing up is not permitted. People must be seated to eat or drink. Whenever they get up from their table in a restaurant or nightclub, they must wear a mask.</p> <p>There is now a general mask-wearing requirement for all employees in indoor spaces where there is more than one person, regardless of whether or not they hold a certificate. Exceptions apply for situations in which a mask cannot be worn for safety reasons or due to the type of activity, and for people who are exempt from mask-wearing e.g. on the basis of a medical certificate.</p> <p>Exemptions These restrictions do not apply in restaurants or nightclubs that restrict access to people aged 16 or over with a certificate that proves that they are fully vaccinated or recovered.</p> <p>Ice skating requirements If the ice rink is outdoor, people do not have to wear masks (this applies to both spectators and skaters).</p>	
COVID Pass	<p>Private establishments, such as restaurants, bars and nightclubs, as well as cultural, recreational or sporting facilities and establishments open to the public must restrict access to people aged 16 or over who hold a certificate that proves that they are either fully vaccinated or recovered. Access to these establishments or events cannot be obtained solely on the basis of a negative test. This requirement also applies to event organisers.</p> <p>Ice skating requirements If the ice rink is outdoor, certificates are not required (this applies to both spectators and skaters).</p> <p>Vaccination programme: Only the special Comirnaty® formulation for children, as authorised by Swissmedic on 10 December 2021, can be used to vaccinate children aged between 5 and 11. The Comirnaty vaccines for children will thus be available in Switzerland from the beginning of January 2022.</p>	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
South Africa	Date extracted: 13 December 2021 Last updated: 09 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

COVID-19 - Rolling review of International Public Health Guidance in relation to the Omicron variant (B.1.1.529)
(Submitted to Department of Health: 15 December 2021)

Health Information and Quality Authority

Social or mass gatherings	On 9 December 2021 it was advised to avoid superspreader events such as festivals and parties to prevent the spread of the virus.	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	International flights to and from the Republic, as well as domestic flights within the Republic are permitted under the following conditions: A traveler must provide a valid certificate with a negative COVID-19 test outcome, recognised by the WHO, or equivalent local accredited authority, obtained not more than 72 hours before the date of travel. South African Authorities reserve the right to verify the authenticity of the presented certificate.	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021 Wearing of a face mask is mandatory for every person (excluding children under the age of 6 years) when in a public place. If a person is not wearing a mask, they will not be allowed to- (a) use, operate, perform any service on any form of public transport; (b) enter or be in a building, place or premises, including government buildings, places or premises, used by the public to obtain goods or services; or (c) be in any public open space..	
COVID Pass	09 December 2021 South African Health Products Authority announced the approval of 3 rd dose of COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine in individuals aged ≥ 18 years.	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
WHO	Date extracted: 7 December 2021 Last updated: 7 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	Given mutations that may confer immune escape potential and possibly transmissibility advantage, the likelihood of potential further spread of Omicron at the global level is high. Depending on these characteristics, there could be future surges of COVID-19, which could have
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	severe consequences, depending on a number of factors including where surges may take place. The overall global risk related to the new VOC Omicron is assessed as very high.
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	On 28 November 2021 guidance was published stating that contact tracing of COVID-19 cases to interrupt chains of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 is strongly advised. Ensure early warning systems are in place to inform efficient adjustment of public health and social measures.	
Face coverings	The use of masks, physical distancing, ventilation of indoor space, crowd avoidance and hand hygiene remain key to reducing transmission of SARS-CoV-2 even with the emergence of the Omicron variant.	
COVID Pass	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
ECDC	Date extracted: 15 December 2021 Last updated: 15 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Movement of people	It is recommended to reduce contacts between groups of individuals in social or work settings. Authorities should consider advising reduced inter-household mixing (15 December 2021).	
Social or mass gatherings	Recommended to avoid large public or private gatherings (15 December 2021).	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	At this early stage, avoiding travel to and from the known affected areas is strongly advised (26 November 2021). Guidance published on 26 November 2021 recommended measures for incoming travellers from the known affected areas may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increasing awareness about the new variant by providing necessary information to incoming travellers and healthcare workers and prompting early testing and identification of cases with possible epidemiological link with the known affected countries; requirement of proof of negative test pre-departure or upon arrival, and quarantine for a minimum of 5 to 7 days with a negative test before release; quarantine for 14 days without a test, if testing capacity is not sufficient. The ECDC (15 December 2021) recommend that as a more precautionary approach, and if resources allow, contact tracing of all passengers and cabin crew members that have travelled on a flight with a confirmed or probable case could be considered.	

Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>At this early stage increased testing (with sequencing of confirmed cases), and contact tracing of COVID-19 cases with an epidemiological link to the affected areas is strongly advised (26 November 2021).</p> <p>Setting limits for the number of participants in social and public events during end-of-year celebrations will support physical distancing efforts. Due to the current epidemiologic context, in combination with the uncertainties involved with the rapidly evolving situation concerning Omicron, timely and urgently reinforced implementation of NPIs in the EU/EEA is strongly advised</p> <p>For probable or confirmed cases of Omicron infection, contact tracing should be prioritised, regardless of vaccination status, in a timely manner and as completely as possible (15 December 2021).</p> <p>For probable or confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron infection, the enhanced contact tracing measures as set out in the ECDC contact tracing guidance should be considered.</p> <p>Measures outlined in this report include the investigation of the source of infection of a newly identified case – known as ‘backward contact tracing’, tracing back contacts further than 2 days before symptom onset or positive result, testing of all high and low-risk exposure contacts, starting to trace the contacts of the household members of a case while awaiting their testing results, and releasing high-risk exposure contacts only after a negative RT-PCR test taken on day 14. Measures also include asking the household members of high-risk contact persons (‘secondary contacts’) to quarantine until the primary contact has received a negative test result from their initial test and otherwise observing strict physical distance measures after that.</p>		
Face coverings	Rapid reintroduction and strengthening of NPIs is necessary to reduce the ongoing Delta VOC transmission, slow down the spread of the Omicron VOC and keep the COVID-19-related burden manageable. These measures include encouraging the use of face masks (15 December 2021).		
COVID Pass	<p>Booster guidance</p> <p>Guidance published on (26 November 2021) recommended that due to the ongoing active circulation of the Delta variant, EU/EEA countries are urged to give utmost priority towards vaccination of individuals initially targeted by COVID-19 vaccination programmes that remain unvaccinated or not yet fully vaccinated. Countries should consider a booster dose for those ≥ 40 years of age, first targeting the most vulnerable and the elderly and could then consider a booster dose for all adults ≥18 years.</p> <p>It is recommended to administer a booster dose as early as 3 months from completion of the primary vaccination. It is also acknowledged that shortening the administration interval to 3 months may require adaptation of national vaccine deployment plans (15 December 2021).</p>		
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	Setting limits for the number of participants in social and public events during end-of-year celebrations will support physical distancing efforts. Due to the current epidemiologic context, in combination with the uncertainties involved with the rapidly evolving situation concerning Omicron, timely and urgently reinforced implementation of NPIs in the EU/EEA is strongly advised.		
US CDC	<p>Date extracted: 7 December 2021</p> <p>Last updated: 6 December 2021</p>		Trigger for changes
Movement of people	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		Despite the increased attention of Omicron, <u>Delta</u> continues to be the main
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		

*COVID-19 - Rolling review of International Public Health Guidance in relation to the Omicron variant (B.1.1.529)
(Submitted to Department of Health: 15 December 2021)*

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Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	<p>variant circulating in the US (updated 07 December 2021).</p> <p>As we learn more about the Omicron variant, this new one-day testing policy will help to protect travellers and the health and safety of American communities from COVID-19. These Orders put in place a stringent and consistent global international travel policy that is guided by public health.</p>
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Amateur sport and recreation	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Professional sport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Religious activities	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Public transport	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
International travel	<p>All air passengers 2 years or older with a flight departing to the US from a foreign country at or after 12:01am EST (5:01am GMT) on 6 December 2021, are required show a negative COVID-19 viral test result taken no more than 1 day before travel, or documentation of having recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days, before they board their flight.</p> <p>CDC continues to recommend that all travellers get a COVID-19 viral test 3-5 days after arrival, and that unvaccinated travellers should quarantine for 7 days after travel.</p>	
Domestic travel	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Face coverings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
COVID Pass	The CDC has expanded COVID-19 booster recommendations to 16- and 17-year-olds (10 December 2021).	
Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year holiday period	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

Published by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA).

For further information please contact:

Health Information and Quality Authority

George's Court

George's Lane

Smithfield

Dublin 7

D07 E98Y

+353 (0)1 8147400

info@hiqa.ie

www.hiqa.ie

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