



**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.
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- **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
V.4.0	5 January 2022	Only the following measures were reviewed for this version: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ social or mass gatherings▪ schools and any other measures for children such as out-of-school activities▪ business activities▪ culture, leisure entertainment▪ changes in infection, prevention and control measures▪ face coverings▪ COVID Pass.

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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. Only the following seven measures were systematically reviewed for changes in this version and these are summarised in the key points:

- social or mass gatherings
- schools and any other measures for children such as out-of-school activities
- business activities
- culture, leisure entertainment
- changes in infection, prevention and control measures
- face coverings
- COVID Pass.

This report is accurate to 4 January 2022.

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. For example, in the Netherlands, events are not permitted, Spain has a maximum capacity of up to 50% for events in indoor venues, while in England events are permitted but large events require proof of COVID-19 immunity for attendees. In France, events up to 2,000 people indoors and 5,000 people outdoors are permitted.
- In the Netherlands, the maximum number of people aged 13 and over who can meet outdoors is two people. There can be more than two people in a group if everyone in the group lives at the same address.
- Additionally, a COVID-Pass is now required to attend events in England, 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.
- In Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands, the Christmas holiday period has been extended for primary schools. In Denmark, pupils from 1st grade onwards and staff in primary and lower secondary school are strongly encouraged to get tested on a weekly basis, unless they are fully vaccinated or previously infected with COVID-19 within the last six months.
- In Portugal, face-to-face classes have been suspended from 2-9 January 2022.
- In Norway, levels of public health measures in school are classified in a traffic light model from a relatively normal organisation of the school day (green level) to extensive measures that require smaller groups and more distance between students and staff (red level).
- 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.
- In Norway, lower second-level schools are operating at a yellow level and upper second-level schools are operating at a red level.
- In England, all second-level schools have been asked to provide one on-site tests for pupils ahead of their return to the classroom this term. Students and staff have been advised to continue to test twice per week thereafter.

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 and the Netherlands from 2-9 January 2022.
- In England and Scotland, students have been advised to perform lateral flow tests before they return to campus and to ensure that they avail of vaccination (including booster doses). In England, students and staff are advised to continue testing every two weeks thereafter.

Business activities

- In general, all countries advise working from home where possible.
- A number of countries have restricted opening hours for certain business.
- In Northern Ireland and Wales, two metre social distancing is required in office settings.
- France and Norway also require regular ventilation of rooms with natural or a mechanical ventilation system, which has been recommended by the ECDC and the WHO.
- 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.

Culture, leisure and entertainment

- In general there are restrictions on the capacity allowed at indoor and outdoor cultural, leisure and entertainment events.
- In Ireland, all restaurants, bars and cafes, excluding take away or delivery services, must close at 20:00. Strict social distancing and a COVID Pass is required in all bars and restaurants, including hotels.
- In the Netherlands, all hospitality venues are closed, except for delivery and takeaway. In Portugal, a planned closure of bars, clubs and dance venues from 2 to 9 January 2022 was brought forward to 25 December. In Norway, there is a ban on alcohol in public venues and in Finland, serving of alcohol must stop at 17:00.
- The opening hours in the catering industry are from 05:00 (in Belgium, Czechia and Denmark) to 22:00 (in Czechia) and 23:00 (in Belgium and Denmark); alcohol must not be served after 22:00 in Denmark.
- In Czechia the maximum attendance at leisure activities for children and adults has reduced to 100 participants.

- Nightclubs are closed in Ireland, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany and Wales.

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 most countries, advice regarding close contact status depends on whether an individual is vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 and whether they have symptoms or not.
 - For example, in Ireland, close contacts who are fully vaccinated, with no booster (or have received their booster < 7 days before the close contact) and are showing no symptoms, should restrict their movements for 10 days from last contact with the case and take five antigen tests with two days between each test. Those who have had their booster vaccination > 7 days before the close contact, and are showing no symptoms, should restrict their movements for five days from last contact with the case and take three antigen tests with two days between each test.
 - In Denmark, vaccinated or previously infected (within 6 months) close contacts should get tested but they do not need to self-isolate. If they are symptomatic they must restrict movements and get tested. Those who are not vaccinated or have not been previously infected (within 12 months) must restrict movements and testing is recommended.
 - In Italy, precautionary restriction of movements does not apply to close contacts if they have completed their primary vaccination course or have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 120 days.
 - In Spain, the duration of restriction of movements has reduced from 10 days to 7 days.
 - In Scotland, those who are fully vaccinated (including booster doses) do not need to restrict movements and must take lateral flow tests for seven days.
- Similarly, advice regarding isolation of cases depends on whether an individual is vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 and whether they have symptoms or not.
 - In France, fully vaccinated persons who test positive are required to isolate for 7 days, and persons not fully vaccinated for 10 days, after the date of the symptom onset or the date of the positive test sample. No test is required to end isolation.

- In Spain, the duration of self-isolation has reduced from 10 days to 7 days.
- In England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, the duration of self-isolation is 10 days, though it is possible to end self-isolation after seven days, following two negative lateral flow tests taken 24 hours apart on days six and seven.
- 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. For healthcare workers, the WHO recommend wearing a respirator or medical mask along with other personal protective equipment before entering a room where there is a patient with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- In general, face coverings are recommended in all indoor and crowded outdoor spaces.
- In Ireland, face coverings are 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 addition, face coverings are recommended if one has to break self-isolation in exceptional circumstances, at large and unmanageable gatherings, if considered high-risk or unvaccinated or if visiting someone who is at high risk or unvaccinated. Medical grade masks are recommended for vulnerable and people at high risk in indoor or crowded outdoor places, people with a confirmed diagnosis or symptoms of COVID-19 and close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- In Austria, it is mandated that FFP 2 masks are to be used if physical contact with people cannot be ruled out. Pregnant women and children from the age of

6 to 14 can wear a face mask or a close-fitting mechanical protective device instead of FFP2. Children under six are exempt from the mask requirement.

- In Italy, FFP2 type masks are required at events open to the public that take place and on all forms of transport.
- In the Netherlands (for children aged over 12 years) and in England, Northern Ireland and Wales (for children aged 11 and older), wearing a face mask is mandatory in public settings and on public transport.
- 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 required for indoor hospitality and events, gyms and leisure centres and hotel bars and restaurants.
- Belgium, Denmark, England, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Switzerland and Wales have all extended the settings in which COVID passes are required.
- 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) 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. 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.

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 4 January 2022.

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.

For this version, data were systematically reviewed for changes and extracted under the following headings:

- Social or mass gatherings
- Schools and any other measures for children such as out-of-school activities
- Business activities
- Culture, leisure entertainment
- Changes in infection, prevention and control measures
- Face coverings
- COVID Pass

Previous versions included changes in measures that were extracted under the following headings:

- Movement of people
- Amateur sport and recreation
- Religious activities
- Public transport
- International travel
- Domestic travel
- Vaccination programme

- Special arrangements for the Christmas or end of year period.

Results

Social or mass gatherings

In Ireland, no indoor events, including entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events, will take place after 20:00. In relation to events happening earlier in the day, attendance should be limited to 50% of venue capacity or 1,000 attendees, whichever is the lower. This includes cinemas. This does not affect religious, educational or normal workplace business activity and business events (for example conferences, trade fairs). Wedding receptions can take place with a capacity limit of 100 guests and continue until midnight. Attendance at outdoor events, including entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events, should be limited to 50% of venue capacity or 5,000 attendees, whichever is the lower. 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 six 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 ([31 December 2021](#)).

As per recommendations on [4 January 2022](#) there are no limits on gatherings indoors or outdoors in Denmark. However, the government recommended limiting social contacts during Christmas period.

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](#)).

From 3 January 2022, for 3 weeks, standing concerts are prohibited in France. Events up to 2,000 people indoors and 5,000 people outdoors are permitted ([3 January 2022](#)).

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. Since [28 December 2021](#), a maximum of ten people who are fully vaccinated or recovered are allowed to meet at private gatherings. 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](#)). Capacities of a maximum of 50% for outdoor events and 35% for indoor events are allowed ([29 December 2021](#)).

In the Netherlands, the maximum number of people aged 13 and over who can meet outdoors is 2 people. There can be more than 2 people in a group if everyone in the group lives at the same address. Events are not permitted, except for funerals (no more than 100 people), weekly markets selling groceries, and professional sports matches and competitions without spectators ([19 December 2021](#)).

In Norway, a maximum of 20 people can attend indoor public events without designated seating and 50 people with designated seating. At outdoor public events, up to 100 people without designated seating can attend, and up to 3 cohorts of 200 people each with designated seating can attend. Organisers must keep a list of where each attendee sits at public events when everyone in the audience has designated seating ([14 December 2021](#)).

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](#)).

Since [29 December 2021](#), Spain has reduced the maximum permitted capacity of up to 75% (previously 100%) for events in open venues and a maximum capacity of up to 50% (previously 80%) for events in closed venues.

In Sweden, from [23 December 2021](#), the following applies: everyone should avoid crowded environments and work from home as long as the work allows. For fairs, trading places and places for culture and leisure activities, requirements are set at 10 m² per person. Only seated guests are allowed at restaurants and a distance of one meter between different parties is required. At public gatherings and public events, only seated guests are allowed if there are more than 20 people, regardless of vaccination certificate. Without a vaccination certificate, there are also requirements for distance between the groups, a maximum size of 8 people within

the group and a maximum number of 500 guests or participants. At events of more than 500 guests or participants, vaccination certificates and distance between the parties and a maximum size of 8 people per party are required.

In England, from [15 December 2021](#), certain venues and events are required by law to check that all visitors aged 18 years or over are fully vaccinated (as of 24 December 2021, this does not require a booster dose), have proof of a negative test in the last 48 hours, or that they have an exemption. Venues include nightclubs, and other late night dance venues. Events include any event with more than 10,000 attendees. Lower attendee limits (500 attendees indoor and 4,000 outdoor) for passes apply where attendees are likely to stand or move around for all or part of the event.

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. It is recommended that no more than three households should meet together in a private home. The limits to indoor or outdoor gatherings that are not at private dwellings is determined by a risk assessment. No risk assessment is required for indoor settings for 15 people or fewer or for outdoor settings for 30 people or fewer. Since [26 December 2021](#), indoor standing events are not permitted.

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](#)). From [26 December](#) for three weeks, limits of 100 standing at indoor events, 200 seated at indoor events and 500 at outdoor events (seated and standing) will be put in place. This will include sporting events and "large scale" Hogmanay celebrations - including Edinburgh's street party - but not events like weddings. Physical distancing of 1 metre will be required at events that go ahead within these limits. Indoor hospitality will be moved to table service only, with social distancing implemented. No more than three households will be allowed to gather. Indoor hospitality and leisure venues to ensure 1 metre distance, not within, but between groups of people who are attending together ([21 December 2021](#)).

As of [26 December 2021](#) in Wales, organised events and gatherings must not take place for more than 30 people indoors and 50 people outdoors. Licensed premises must ensure there is physical distancing between individual households or groups of

up to six people from a maximum of six households (not including children under 11 from any of those households or carers of anyone present) at their premises and must provide table service only.

In Switzerland, new restrictions were introduced from [20 December 2021](#) until 24 January 2022. For private indoor gatherings if anyone aged 16 years or older is in attendance and is not vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19, no more than 10 people are allowed to meet; children are included in that number. The upper limit for indoor gatherings is 30 if everyone from the age of 16 is vaccinated or has recovered from COVID-19. In indoor settings the '2G' rule will now come into effect (that is, admission only for vaccinated or recovered persons). This concerns restaurants, cultural, sporting and leisure venues and events. The '3G' rule (that is, admission only for vaccinated or recovered persons, or on presentation of a negative test result) still applies for outdoors events with over 300 people. In settings where it is not possible to wear a mask or apply a seating requirement, admission will be limited to vaccinated or recovered persons, who must also present a negative test result (2G+). This rule applies to bars and discos, but also to amateur sporting and cultural activities where masks cannot be worn, such as brass band practice. It does not apply to people under the age of 16. People who within the last four months have been fully vaccinated, received a booster or recovered from COVID-19 do not have to take a further test. Businesses and events subject to the '2G' rule may voluntarily choose to adopt the '2G+' rule and thus forgo the mask and seating requirements ([17 December 2021](#)).

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

On [30 December 2021](#) South Africa advised that gatherings should be restricted to no more than 1,000 people indoors and no more than 2,000 people outdoors. Where the venue is too small to accommodate these numbers with appropriate social distancing, then no more than 50% of the capacity of the venue may be used. All other restrictions remain in place.

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](#)).

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 Denmark, face masks or visors are required in day care and primary schools for parents, visitors, students, and staff when they move around in the institution and stay in common areas. This requirement does not apply for teaching or exams. Children should be dropped off and picked up from outside schools if possible. Indoor day care should be organised so that children are in assigned groups and each group is as far from each other as possible ([18 December 2021](#)). Recommendations as per [4 January 2022](#) note that pupils from 1st grade onwards and staff in primary and lower secondary school are strongly encouraged to get tested on a weekly basis, unless they are fully vaccinated or previously infected with COVID-19 within the last 6 months. Twice weekly tests are recommended in municipalities and parishes with high infection rates.

While the start of the school year is maintained on 3 January 2022, France 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. However, mass screening in the event of a positive case in a class is maintained and the classes are closed when there are more than 3 positive cases ([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. As of [4 January 2021](#), primary schools, schools for special education and out-of-school care centres will reopen on 10 January 2022. Exceptions exist for practical training, exams, and vulnerable pupils and students. Emergency childcare will be provided for the children of key workers and for vulnerable children. Day care for children aged under 4 will remain open.

In Norway, levels of public health measures in school are classified in a traffic light model from a relatively normal organisation of the school day (green level) to extensive measures that entail smaller groups and more distance between students and staff (red level). All kindergartens and primary schools moved to yellow level by 16 December 2021 and prepared to quickly move to red level. There can be a maximum of 20 participants at indoor activities, unless all of the participants come from the same class at kindergarten or school. Matches or tournaments that gather children from different places are not recommended. Outdoor events where 1 metre can be maintained can go ahead ([14 December 2021](#)). All employees in kindergartens and all pupils and employees in primary, secondary schools and high schools should be tested within 24 hours before going to work or school the first day after the Christmas holidays ([30 December 2021](#)). If the municipality does not have enough self-tests to test all pupils and employees in schools and kindergartens before the start of school in 2022, tests be prioritized in the following order:

1. Pupils and staff in primary school.
2. Pupils and staff in upper secondary school.
3. Kindergarten employees.
4. Students and staff in high school.

From 1 Jan 2022, employees in schools and kindergardens who have been in close contact with an infected person can go to work, but must be tested on days 3 and 7 after close contact. This exemption does not apply to household close contacts. Those exempted must remain in leisure time quarantine.

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](#)).

The Government of Spain and the autonomous communities and cities have given a commitment to the return of in person classes on the 10 January when the school year resumes ([4 January 2022](#)).

In England, recommendations were updated on [2 January 2022](#). Face coverings should be worn by staff, adults, and those aged over 11 (including visitors) when moving around in corridors and communal areas.

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. Parents, visitors, students, and staff are required to wear face masks or visors in second-level schools ([18 December 2021](#)).

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

In the Netherlands, as of [4 January 2021](#), secondary schools and schools for special education will reopen on 10 January 2022. Schools for secondary vocational education will be closed until 9 January 2022 and will offer remote learning from 10 January 2022.

In Norway, levels of public health measures in school are classified in a traffic light model from a relatively normal organisation of the school day (green level) to extensive measures that entail smaller groups and more distance between students and staff (red level). Lower secondary schools (age 13 to 16), must operate at a yellow level. Upper secondary schools must operate at red level ([14 December 2021](#)). A maximum of 20 participants at indoor activities are permitted, unless all of the participants come from the same cohort. Matches or tournaments that gather children from different places are not recommended while outdoor events where 1 metre can be maintained can go ahead. Children and adolescents who have completed lower secondary school should also keep a 1-metre distance in their leisure time. Upper second level schools must operate at a red level ([14 December 2021](#)). All pupils and staff should be tested for COVID-19 using self-tests within 24 hours before going to school on the first day after the Christmas holidays ([30 December 2021](#)). If the municipality does not have enough self-tests to test all pupils and employees in schools and kindergartens before the start of school in 2022, they must instead test in the following order: pupils and staff in primary school, pupils and staff in upper secondary school, kindergarten employees, students and staff in high school ([29 December 2021](#)). From 1 January 2022, employees in schools who have been in close contact with an infected person can go to work, but

must be tested on days 3 and 7 after close contact. This exemption does not apply to household close contacts. Those exempted must remain in leisure time quarantine.

In the Netherlands, educational institutions are closed until at least 9 January 2022 with some exceptions. On 3 January the government will decide in what form education will resume from 10 January ([18 December 2021](#)).

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

The Government of Spain and the autonomous communities and cities have given a commitment to the return of in person classes on the 10 January when the school year resumes ([4 January 2022](#)).

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. From [4 January 2022](#), it is recommend that in those schools where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn in classrooms. As of [3 January 2022](#), all secondary schools have been asked to provide one on-site test for pupils ahead of their return to the classroom this term. Students and staff have been advised to continue to test twice per week thereafter.

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.

In Switzerland, in addition to routine testing, masks will be encouraged in lower second-level schools and mandatory in upper second-level schools ([17 December 2021](#)).

Higher and adult education

In Czechia, rooms and venues where conferences and lectures are held are closed ([17 December 2021](#)).

In Denmark, parents, visitors, students, and staff are required to wear face masks or visors in higher and adult education ([18 December 2021](#)). A coronavirus passport/COVID certificate is required at educational institutions such as universities, youth education and language schools ([4 January 2022](#) unclear if updated).

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, as of [4 January 2021](#), higher education institutions will be closed until 9 January 2022, they will offer remote learning from 10 January 2022. Accredited (further) education may take place in the evenings.

In Norway, levels of public health measures in school are classified in a traffic light model from a relatively normal organisation of the school day (green level) to extensive measures that entail smaller groups and more distance between students and staff (red level). Current restrictions state that adult education must operate at red level. Universities, university colleges, and vocational schools must prepare to offer digital teaching ([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. As of [3 January 2022](#), students have been asked to test before returning to campus. Students and staff have been advised to continue to test twice per week thereafter.

In Scotland on [17 December 2021](#), a letter from the Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training, was issued to advise limitations on in person teaching and strengthening of mitigation measures where possible. Advice was issued that activities that could be undertaken online, would be undertaken online. Students were advised to perform lateral flow tests before they

return to campus and to ensure that they avail of vaccination (including booster doses).

In Sweden, from [23 December 2021](#), infection control measures are recommended for adult education, so that congestion and large gatherings are avoided. For universities and colleges, distance education can be used as a tool to limit numbers on the premises.

Business activities

In Ireland, 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) applies at the place of work. An FFP2 mask is compulsory in all closed rooms.

In Belgium and France, remote working, where possible, is obligatory, with a maximum of one day per week in the office (Belgium) and a minimum of three days per week out of the office and four days when possible ([France](#)). Team building and parties in the workplace are prohibited in Belgium ([3 December 2021](#)) and France ([3 January 2022](#)). From [3 January 2022](#) in France, it is required to regularly ventilate the rooms with natural or a mechanical ventilation system and to facilitate the measurement of carbon dioxide in the air in busy areas and during busy periods.

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](#)). 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](#)). Rooms and venues where conferences and lectures are held are closed ([17 December 2021](#)).

In [Denmark](#), 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. 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 ([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 the following measures are in place:

- All hospitality venues are closed, except for delivery and takeaway.
- All non-essential shops are closed, except for click and collect and returns.
- Essential shops, such as supermarkets and chemists, can open until 20.00. Face masks must be worn. The maximum number of shoppers is one per 5 square metres.
- Certain locations, such as petrol stations, pharmacies, libraries, driving schools, notaries' offices and lawyers' offices can open for their normal hours.
- All locations where non-medical contact-based professions are carried out, such as hairdressers and beauty salons, are closed.
- Cinemas, museums, theatres and concert venues are closed.
- Work from home. If this is impossible, stay 1.5 metres apart at work ([19 December 2021](#)).

In Norway, updated guidance on [14 December 2021](#) stated that employers are required to ensure that employees work from home if this is feasible provided it does not have a negative impact on services that are important and necessary for the business, including activities to protect children and vulnerable groups. As of 16 December 2021, there is ban on alcohol in public venues. Recommendations on ventilation requirements for workplaces were published on [21 December 2021](#).

In Portugal, guidance published on [1 December 2021](#), stated that teleworking will be mandatory between the 2 and 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. From 27 December 2021, two metre social distancing is required in office settings. As offices vary significantly in terms of size, layout and capacity, alternative measures such as screens should be put in place where two metre social distancing cannot be achieved.

In Wales, the [advice](#) is to work from home if you can. From [27 December 2021](#) there will be a 2 metre rule on social distancing in offices and extra measures to protect staff, such as physical barriers and one-way systems.

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](#)).

Culture, leisure and entertainment

In Ireland, all restaurants, bars and cafes, excluding take away or delivery services, must close at 20:00. This also applies to hotel restaurants and bars, except for overnight residents. Strict social distancing is required in all bars and restaurants, including hotels. The following measures are currently in place:

- COVID Pass required
- table service only (no counter service)
- 1 metre between tables
- maximum 6 adults per table (maximum 15 persons when including children aged 12 and younger)
- no multiple table bookings and no intermingling
- masks when not seated at table

Nightclubs are closed. ([31 December 2021](#)).

In Austria, access to restaurants 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 ([12 December 2021](#)).

In Belgium, the opening hours in the catering industry are limited to 05.00 to 23.00. 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](#)). 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, 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](#)). 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](#)).

Denmark requires restaurants, bars and cafés to close from 23:00 to 05:00 (update to 4 January 2022). Face masks must be worn at restaurants, bars and cafes when guests are not sitting down. Alcohol must not be served or sold between 22:00 and 05:00. Cultural venues are closed except libraries, museums and music schools, where face masks or shields must be worn. Discos and nightclubs are closed. Consumption of alcohol on buses is forbidden.

In Finland, since [28 December 2022](#), serving of alcoholic beverages in all food and beverage service businesses must end at 17:00. Food and beverage service businesses that primarily serve alcoholic beverages are required to close at 18:00. Restaurants that mainly serve food may, however, remain open until 20:00, provided that the customers are required to present the COVID-19 passport.

In France, nightclubs are closed until 24 January 2021. Dancing is also prohibited in restaurants or bars ([3 January 2021](#)).

In Germany, since [3 December 2021](#) only vaccinated or recovered individuals can visit restaurants, cinemas, theatres and other leisure facilities. Since [28 December 2022](#) clubs and discos are closed.

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](#)).

In the Netherlands, all hospitality venues are closed, except for delivery and takeaway. Cinemas, museums, theatres and concert venues are also closed ([19 December 2021](#)).

In Norway, revised restrictions were implemented on [14 December 2021](#). Alcohol is banned in public venues from 16 December 2021. Venues that serve food must not organise activities that naturally entail a shorter distance between guests than 1 metre (for example dancing). Venues that serve food or alcohol may not serve more than 20 guests at private indoor events or more than 50 outdoors. Amusement parks, soft play centres, amusement arcades, etc. must be closed. Indoor swimming pools, water parks, spa facilities, hotel pools, and fitness centres may open for limited activities.

In Portugal, a negative test is required to access corporate events, cultural shows and sports venues ([22 December 2021](#)). A planned closure of bars, clubs and dance venues from 2 to 9 January 2022 was brought forward to 25 December. A reduction in capacity of all commercial spaces to 1 person per 5 metre squared was also introduced ([22 December](#)).

In Sweden, for cultural and leisure activities indoors, such as museums, art galleries and gyms, each person must have at least 10 square meters at their disposal. There is an exception for activities aimed at children and young people born in 2002 and later ([28 December 2021](#)).

In Northern Ireland, since 26 December 2021, dancing is not permitted in hospitality settings. Since [27 December 2021](#), a maximum of six people can be seated together in hospitality settings. More than six will be permitted if they all belong to a single household, as long as it is no more than 10. Children aged 12 and under are not counted in the total. This requirement does not apply to weddings and civil partnerships. Table service is also required and apart from entering and leaving the premises, the only movement allowed indoors is to access toilet or baby changing facilities, to select food from a buffet or to pay.

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 05:00). From [27 December 2021](#) nightclubs are closed.

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.

In South Africa, alcohol establishments that have licences to operate beyond 23:00 will revert back to full licence conditions ([30 December 2021](#)).

Changes in infection, prevention and control guidance

In [Ireland](#), close contacts who are fully vaccinated, with no booster (or have received their booster less than seven days before the close contact) and are showing no symptoms, should restrict their movements for 10 days from last contact with the case and take five antigen tests with two days between each test. Those who have had their booster vaccination more than seven days before the close contact, and are showing no symptoms, should restrict their movements for five days from last contact with the case and take three antigen tests with two days between each test. Individuals should book a COVID-19 PCR test online if they:

- are over 39 and have symptoms of COVID-19
- are booking for a child who is under 4 who has symptoms of COVID-19
- had a positive antigen test in the past 24 hours
- are a healthcare worker.

Those aged 4 to 39 with symptoms of COVID-19, should not book a PCR test, but instead they should book antigen tests online.

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. 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, vaccinated or previously infected (within 6 months) close contacts should get tested but they do not need to self-isolate. If they are symptomatic, they must self-isolate and get tested. Those who are not vaccinated or have not been previously infected (within 12 months) must self-isolate and testing is recommended ([4 January 2021](#)).

In Finland, [10 December 2021](#) 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.

From [3 January 2022](#) in France, fully vaccinated persons who test positive are required to isolate for seven days, and persons not fully vaccinated for 10 days, after the date of the symptom onset or the date of the positive test sample. No test is required to end isolation. However, after five days (fully vaccinated) or seven days (not fully vaccinated), they can be released from isolation if they have a negative antigen or RT-PCR test result; and no clinical signs of infection for 48 hours. For close contacts, fully vaccinated persons are no longer required to restrict movements but must strictly follow general social distancing guidance, avoid at-risk individuals and work from home when possible. Testing (Antigen or PCR) is required when notified of being a close contact and also two self-tests on day two and day four after the last contact with the positive person, with all positive Antigen or self-tests confirmed by PCR. Those not fully vaccinated must restrict their movements for the full seven days. To end restriction of movements, those not fully vaccinated must have a negative antigen or RT-PCR result taken on day seven ([3 January 2022](#)). In

school settings in particular but could also apply in general settings, positive cases under 12 years of age must isolate for five days if the antigen test or PCR carried out on the fifth day is negative and in the absence of symptoms for 48 hours; seven days isolation is required otherwise. Close contacts are not required to restrict movements if an antigen or PCR test result taken on the same day is negative. Self-tests are still required on day two and day four (certificate on the honour of the parents) ([3 January 2022](#)).

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](#), precautionary restriction of movements does not apply to those who have had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case if they have completed their primary vaccination course or have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 120 days. However, they should wear FFP2 masks and if symptomatic, should take an antigen test or PCR test on the fifth day following exposure ([29 December 2021](#)).

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 restrictions were 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 restrict movements for 10 days (or five days if PCR test is negative), even if they have been vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19.

In Norway, several national measures were introduced to limit and delay the spread of the Omicron variant. The requirements were further amended on [15 December 2021](#) so that the same rules for isolation and quarantine applied regardless of the virus variant. Restriction of movement rules now differ depending on a person's history of recent infection, booster vaccine status and age. Rapid antigen or PCR tests are now recommended for COVID-19 testing. Non-household close contacts over 18 can end restriction of movements after three days in the case of a negative test for school/work and seven days for leisure. Managers in socially critical companies can make exceptions during working hours for employees who are strictly necessary and who have tested negative with antigen rapid test the same day the work is completed. Updated advice was also published for employees and users of healthcare services ([22 December 2021](#)) where rapid antigen tests may be used instead of PCR in certain scenarios. Where there is limited capacity of self-tests, the Norwegian Directorate of Health recommends the following priorities:

1. employees in the health and care sector and employees in other critical societal functions
2. people with symptoms of COVID-19 (including outbreaks)
3. all employees in kindergartens and all pupils and employees in primary, secondary and secondary schools should be tested within 24 hours before going to work or school the first day after the Christmas holidays.

In Portugal since [1 December 2021](#) there is a mandatory negative test requirement (including 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. Since [22 December 2021](#), this was extended to weddings and baptisms, tourist establishments and local accommodation, corporate events, cultural shows and sports venues. Free tests in pharmacies increased from four to six per person (time frame not stated).

Spain updated isolation and quarantine policy reducing the period from 10 days to 7 days ([29 December 2021](#)). Close contacts who are vaccinated are not required to isolate ([21 December 2021](#)).

On [30 December 2021](#), guidance was updated in England to reflect changes in self-isolation requirements for those with a positive COVID-19 test result. These individuals are required to self-isolate for 10 days, though it is possible to end self-isolation after seven days, following two negative lateral flow tests taken 24 hours apart on days six and seven. Household contacts who are aged 18 years six months or over and not fully vaccinated are legally required to stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days. Those who are fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and six months living in the same household as someone with COVID-19, are not legally required to self-isolate. However, they are strongly advised to take a lateral flow test every day for seven days, and to self-isolate if any of these test results is positive.

As of [31 December 2021](#) in Northern Ireland, people with a positive PCR test should isolate for 10 days from the date the PCR test was taken or the date symptoms started, whichever is sooner. However, they may be able to end the self-isolation period before the end of the 10 days provided they have two negative lateral flow tests taken 24 hours apart. These can be taken from day six of the isolation period. The second test should be taken the following day at least 24 hours later. If both these test results are negative, and the person does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result. The earliest anyone can end isolation is on day seven (providing the tests on day six and seven are both negative). Adults who are aged 18 and over and are either unvaccinated, have had one dose only, or if it is less than 14 days since the second dose, should self-isolate immediately for 10 days following last contact with the positive person if

they become a close contact. They do not need to book a PCR test unless they develop symptoms. Fully vaccinated adults who become close contacts are advised to isolate and take a lateral flow test as soon as possible. If this is negative, they can stop isolating but should continue to take daily lateral flow tests until the tenth day after the last date of contact with the positive case. If any lateral flow test is positive they should isolate immediately and book a PCR test.

In Scotland, those who have symptoms, should self-isolate immediately and book a PCR test. If they test positive, they should self-isolate for 10 days from the date the symptoms started. For those with a positive PCR test result but no symptoms, they should self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test. If they develop symptoms, they should re-start self-isolation from the day the symptoms started. People do not need to re-start self-isolation if someone they live with tests positive during the 10 day self-isolation. For those with a positive lateral flow test but no symptoms, they and their household should self-isolate immediately. They should self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the positive lateral flow test. From [6 January 2022](#), they are no longer required to take a PCR test to confirm the result. From [6 January 2022](#), it will be possible to end self-isolation earlier than 10 days if a person has negative lateral flow tests on days six and seven of their isolation period. From [6 January 2022](#), close contacts of positive cases (including household contacts - who are either under the age of 18 years, four months, or who are older than that and fully vaccinated (first, second and booster or third doses)), the requirement to restrict movements is no longer in place and is now a requirement to take a lateral flow test every day for seven days. If one of these tests is positive, restriction of movements will then be required. Anyone identified as a close contact who is over 18 years and four months and not fully vaccinated will still be asked to restrict movements for 10 days and to take a PCR test.

In South Africa, on the [24 December 2021](#) significant changes were made to IPC guidance. However, following feedback from the media, stakeholders and the public, these recommendations have been postponed ([see here](#)) in order to take additional input into consideration. The new guidance recommends that all contact tracing be discontinued except in congregated settings, cluster outbreak situations or self-contained settings. All contacts of confirmed cases may continue their normal duties, and there is no longer a requirement to restrict movements, albeit with heightened monitoring (daily temperature testing, symptom screening) for any early sign of infection. If contacts develop symptoms they should be tested and managed according to the severity of the symptoms, but should not be tested, prior to developing symptoms. Isolation rules are applicable to both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals and to both low- and high-risk individuals. Individuals may return to work after eight days, if clinical status allows, but only those well enough to work should do so. No further testing is required following the isolation period.

As of [31 December 2021](#) in Wales, people who have tested positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate for seven days. On days six and seven they should take rapid lateral flow tests 24 hours apart. If the results are positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get two negative tests, or after day 10, whichever is sooner. If they are negative they can stop self-isolating and resume normal activities. For those aged 18 and over, and not fully vaccinated who become close contacts, they must self-isolate from the day they were last in contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 and for the next 10 days. Fully vaccinated adults or those aged between 5 and 17 do not need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact but are strongly advised to take a lateral flow test every day for seven days or until 10 days since the last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier. Further updated recommendations will be made regarding healthcare workers isolation and quarantine requirements when further evidence is gathered on Omicron.

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.

On [27 December 2021](#), the US CDC updated advice on isolation and quarantine recommendations for the public. The recommended time for isolation of those with COVID-19 has been shortened to five days and, if they are asymptomatic or their

symptoms have resolved by this time, they should wear a mask for a further five days. For those exposed to COVID-19, and who are unvaccinated or more than 6 months from their second mRNA vaccine or two months from the J and J vaccine, five days quarantine as well as an additional five days of mask wearing is recommended. Those who have received a booster do not need to quarantine but should wear a mask for 10 days following exposure. If symptoms occur they should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19. These changes to isolation and quarantine recommendations are based on emerging evidence that the majority of transmission occurs early in the course of illness (1-2 day prior to and 2-3 days prior to emergence of symptoms).

Face coverings

In Ireland, face coverings are 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 ([31 December 2021](#)). In addition, face masks are recommended if one has to break self-isolation in exceptional circumstances, at large and unmanageable gatherings, if considered high-risk or unvaccinated or visiting someone at high risk or unvaccinated. The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) ([1 December 2021](#)) recommend that medical grade masks are used by vulnerable and people at high risk in indoor or crowded outdoor places, people with a confirmed diagnosis or symptoms of COVID-19 and close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19.

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). Pregnant women and children from the age of 6 to 14 can wear a face mask or a close-fitting mechanical protective device instead of FFP2. Children under six are exempt from the mask requirement ([3 January 2022](#)).

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

In Denmark, face masks are required in all public spaces such as on public transport, at cultural and sporting events, in shops, businesses, restaurants, cafes and bars when not seated, when visiting primary schools or day care, when attending second-level school or higher education, when attending or visiting health and social care settings and in common areas of public places. Face masks are recommended if one has to break self-isolation in exceptional circumstances ([20 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 are mandatory in France in all establishments open to the public and will be extended to certain city centres ([3 January 2022](#)).

In Italy, masks are mandatory indoors and in crowded outdoor spaces; in bigger cities, mask mandates are in place for all outdoor spaces, regardless of the level of crowding ([5 December 2021](#)). FFP2 type masks are required at events open to the

public that take place outdoors and indoors in theatres, concert halls, cinemas, entertainment and live music venues (and other similar venues) and for events and sports competitions that take place indoors or outdoors, and on all means of transport ([23 December 2021](#)).

In the [Netherlands](#), wearing a face mask is required by law (by those aged over 12 years) on public transport, such as trains, trams, buses and ferries; at stations, on platforms and at bus and tram stops; at airports and on planes; on other passenger transport, such as taxis or coaches; in public indoor spaces such as shops and libraries; at indoor events (where a coronavirus entry pass is mandatory, the face mask can be removed when seated); in primary schools: adults only, when moving around the building; in secondary schools: when moving around the building; in institutions for secondary vocational education and higher education: when moving around the building; at the hairdresser's, beauty salon, massage providers and other contact-based professions. Face masks can be taken off when seated, except on public transport and in planes.

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. On [14 December 2021](#), requirements were expanded to include indoor events, libraries, and museums.

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 was 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. From [4 January 2022](#), face coverings are to be used in classroom settings for pupils and adults in Year 7 and above.

In Northern Ireland, since [27 December 2021](#), it is a legal requirement for all businesses, such as retail, hospitality, transport providers and close contact services to take reasonable measures to promote compliance with face coverings regulations. This may include effective signage, audio messaging, spot checks or providing face coverings when necessary. There is a grace period before enforcement begins on 7 January 2022. 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.

It is mandatory in Wales as of [26 December 2021](#) to wear a face covering in all indoor premises that are open to the public and on public transport (including taxis), other than public transport which is open to the air. Where food or drink is consumed in part of a premises, like a department store cafe, face coverings must be worn on the premises except when seated to eat or drink. This advice applies unless a person is exempt or are seated at a table, in hospitality settings, such as pubs, at a wedding and in the auditorium of a theatre, cinema or concert hall and the viewing areas of an indoor arena or stadium.

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 recommend that healthcare workers wear a respirator or medical mask along with other personal protective equipment before entering a room where there is a patient with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 ([22 December 2021](#)). The WHO also 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 ([23 December 2021](#)).

COVID Pass

In Ireland, an EU Digital COVID Certificate (COVID pass) that indicates an individual has been vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 is required for indoor hospitality and events, cinemas and theatres, gyms and leisure centres (excluding access to swimming pools or standalone swimming pool facilities), hotel bars and restaurants. There are exemptions for those for whom a hotel setting is their permanent residence, for example, those in emergency accommodation or other state-supported accommodation arrangements ([31 December 2021](#)).

In Austria, the duration of validity of vaccination certificates reduced from 360 to 270 days on 6 December 2021. Second vaccination must not be more than 270 days ago. After receiving a third dose, the validity of the vaccination certificate is again 270 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). A Corona Passport, COVID Certificate or similar to document vaccination, previously infection or recent negative test must be presented to enter restaurants, nightlife, cultural venues and intercity buses and trains ([24 December 2021](#)).

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. The use of the COVID-19 passport in specific domestic settings will be in force until 20 January 2022 ([24 December 2022](#)).

In France, adults (staff, parents, accompanying persons or interveners) and pupils going to a school or an educational establishment do not have to present a health pass. This applies to both school time and extracurricular time ([3 January 2022](#)). 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 [23 December 2021](#), extension of the reinforced Green Pass obligation to applies theme and amusement parks and indoors for: swimming pools, gyms and team sports, museums and exhibitions, wellness centres, spa centres (except for essential levels of assistance and rehabilitation or therapeutic activities), cultural centres, social and recreational centres (excluding educational centres for children), and game rooms, betting rooms, bingo halls and casinos. From [10 January 2022](#) until the end of the state of emergency, the use of the reinforced Green Pass is extended to the following activities: hotels and accommodation facilities; parties resulting from civil or religious ceremonies; festivals and fairs; convention centres; outdoor catering services; ski lifts with tourist-commercial purposes even if located in ski areas; swimming pools, swimming centres, team sports and wellness centres, even outdoors; cultural centre, social and recreational centre for outdoor activities.

Italy announced on [15 December 2021](#), that 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. From [1 February 2022](#) the duration of the vaccination green pass is reduced from 9 to 6 months.

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. As of [19 December 2021](#), most activities where a corona entry pass is required will be temporarily closed.

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](#)). From [22 December 2021](#), a negative test is required for access to tourist establishments and local accommodation, weddings and baptisms, corporate events, cultural shows, sports venues, home visits, visits to patients in admitted health facilities, large events without marked seats and sports venues.

Spain has announced that from 1 February 2022, vaccination certificates issued more than 14 days after the date of administration of the last dose of the full vaccination schedule will be accepted as valid, provided that no more than 270 days have elapsed since the date of administration of the last dose ([29 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](#)).

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

Austria	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 3 January 2022	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	Due to the still imminent danger of a collapse of medical care in Austria (30 November 2021) Regulations from 12 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	<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 ▪ Business premises should only be open between 05:00 to 22:00 ▪ Exceptions to the 2-G obligation are basic service facilities (customers must wear an FFP2 mask) e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ public pharmacies ○ 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 (3 January 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General ban on night gastronomy ▪ General ban on the immediate vicinity of the dispensing point ▪ General ban on bar operations ▪ Unvaccinated people can also pick up food and drinks. ▪ An FFP2 mask is mandatory in closed rooms. ▪ Restrictions are exempted for employees work for hospitals, retirement and nursing homes, residential facilities for the disabled, schools and elementary educational facilities. <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. <p>Meetings for professional purposes (e.g. rehearsals, professional artistic performance) (3 January 2021):</p>	<p>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>On 20 December 2021, the nationwide lockdown came to an end.</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,</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People who had a positive test result but no symptoms for at least 48 hours and has tested negative are allowed to attend the meeting. ▪ Other suitable measures shall be conducted if a mask cannot be worn due to the activity. <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>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>
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/outdoor without assigned seats (3 January 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. ▪ Maximum 25 people between 05:00 and 22:00 ▪ Maximum 10 people between 22:00 and 05:00 <p>Access is only permitted with valid 2-G proof. There is an FFP2 mask requirement, also at the seat. Maximum limit: 25 people</p> <p>Leisure and culture gatherings - Indoor/Outdoor with assigned seats (3 January 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention concept ▪ Access is permitted for maximum 500 people with valid 2-G proof ▪ Access is permitted for maximum 1,000 people with valid 2-G proof and PCR test within 72 hours ▪ Access is permitted for maximum 2,000 people with booster vaccination and PCR test within 72 hours <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 	
Changes in IPC guidance	<p>A distance of 2 metres should be kept from people outside the household. (1 December 2021)</p>	

(includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<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. ○ 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: max 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"> ▪ 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. ▪ Operators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only let residents with a 2.5 G certificates in for new admission ○ Offer the residents an antigen test or PCR test at least every 3 days if they have left the home within this period ○ Operators have to appoint a COVID-19 officer and create a COVID-19 prevention protocol. 	
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. (12 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. Second vaccination must not be more than 270 days ago. After receiving a third dose, the validity of the vaccination certificate is again 270 days. For Janssen vaccinated persons, from 3 Jan 2022 a 2nd dose is required for the Green Passport to be valid. (1 December 2021)</p>	
Belgium	<p>Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 23 December 2021</p>	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	

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)	The Consultation Committee notes that the number of infections has increased further. New hospital admissions and hospital burden have also increased. 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. 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) The Consultation Committee will re-evaluate the epidemiological situation in the week of 20 December 2021. No reference made to Omicron, other than international travel.	
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 05:00 to 23:00. 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)		
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)		
Czechia	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 29 December 2021		Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		State of emergency in the Czech Republic from 12:00 am on 26
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021		

Higher and adult education	Rooms and venues where conferences and lectures are held are closed (17 December 2021).	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.
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) Rooms and venues where conferences and lectures are held are closed (17 December 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. (29 December 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)	
Denmark	Date extracted: 04 January 2022 Last updated: 04 January 2022	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	As of 4 January 2022 there are no limits on gatherings indoors or outdoors but the government recommends limiting social contacts during Christmas period.	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
Primary schools	School holidays will now run from 15 Dec to 5 Jan, instead of 17 Dec to 3 Jan. (8 December 2021) Face masks or visors are required in day care and primary schools for parents, visitors, students, and staff when they move around in the institution and stay in common areas. This requirement does not apply for teaching or exams. Children should be dropped off and picked up from outside schools if possible. Indoor day care should be organised so that children are in assigned groups and each group is as far from each other as possible. Parents and visitors are required to wear face masks in day care and primary schools (18 December 2021).	
Second-level education	School holidays will now run from 15 Dec to 5 Jan, instead of 17 Dec to 3 Jan. (8 December 2021) 4 January 2022 (unclear if/when updated) Pupils from 1st grade onwards and staff in primary and lower secondary school are strongly encouraged to get tested on a weekly basis, unless they are fully vaccinated or previously infected with COVID-19 within the last 6 months. Two weekly tests are recommended in municipalities and parishes with high infection rates.	
Higher and adult education	Parents, visitors, students, and staff are required to wear face masks or visors in higher and adult education (18 December 2021). Corona passport/COVID certificate is required at educational institutions such as universities, youth education and language schools. 4 January 2022 (unclear if updated)	

Business activities	<p>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. Bars and restaurants should close at 23:00 to 05:00 from Friday 10 December 2021, and the sale of alcohol will be forbidden between 22:00 to 05:00. 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.</p>	<p>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>
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Restaurants, bars and cafés must close from 11:00 to 05:00. Face masks must be worn at restaurants, bars and cafes when guests are not sitting down. Alcohol must not be served or sold between 22:00 and 05:00 (4 January 2022) Cultural venues are closed except libraries, museums and music schools, where face masks or shields must be worn. Discos and nightclubs are closed. Bars must close at 23:00. Consumption of alcohol on buses is forbidden.</p>	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>Updated 4 January 2021. If infected (test positive), a person must go into self-isolation and contact the contact tracing hotline. Self-isolation can terminate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Once symptom-free for 48 hours ▪ After 10 days self-isolation if free from fever for the past 48 hours (without the use of, for example, paracetamol), ▪ If feeling significantly better, and only have mild residual symptoms, such as loss of taste and/or smell, a slight cough, headache, fatigue, etc. ▪ If asymptomatic, 7 days after testing. <p>Vaccinated or previously infected (within 6 months) close contacts do not need to self-isolate if not symptomatic, only if symptomatic. Testing is recommended whether experiencing symptoms or not. If not vaccinated or previously infected (within 12 months [note discrepancy with 6 months]) self-isolation and testing is recommended.</p>	<p>Omicron cited as reason for changing travel restrictions and isolation and testing requirements for close contacts.</p>
Face coverings	<p>Updated 20 December 2021 Face masks are required on public transport, cultural and sporting events, shops and businesses, restaurants, cafés and bars when not seated, when visiting primary schools or day-care, when attending youth or higher education, when attending healthcare centres or visiting or working in social care or nursing homes (residents and children under 12 do not have to wear face-masks), at churches and religious ceremonies when not sitting, at municipal citizen services centres, in common areas of hotels and hostels, in gyms when not engaging in sports activities, at driving schools and during driving tests, on flights and in airports. In addition face masks are recommended if one has to break self-isolation in exceptional circumstances, at large and unmanageable gatherings, if considered high-risk or unvaccinated or visiting someone at high risk or unvaccinated. (Exemptions apply)</p>	
COVID Pass	<p>The vaccination program was extended on 29 November 2021 to include children aged 5-11 years. Due to the Omicron variant, Denmark has changed booster regime to 4.5 months after the 2nd dose for everyone aged ≥40 (13 December 2021). 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> <p>A Corona Passport, COVID Certificate or similar to document vaccination, previous infection or recent negative test must be presented to enter restaurants, nightlife, cultural venues and intercity buses and trains. (4 January 2022)</p>	
<p>Finland Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 28 December 2021</p>		<p>Trigger for changes</p>

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).	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)
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)	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	Since 28 December 2022 , serving of alcoholic beverages in all food and beverage service businesses must end at 17:00. Food and beverage service businesses that primarily serve alcoholic beverages are required to close at 18:00. Restaurants that mainly serve food may, however, remain open until 20:00, provided that the customers are required to present the COVID-19 passport.	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>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.</p> <p>According to the strategy, it is justified to conduct a COVID-19 test especially in the following cases:</p> <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 Finnish 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	<p>The use of the COVID-19 passport in specific domestic settings will be in force until 20 January 2022 (24 December 2022). 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.</p> <p>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). On 17 December 2021, a list of risk factors were published to help identify at-risk children age 5 to 11.</p>	
France	Date extracted: 5 January Last updated: 3 January 2022	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	For 3 weeks from 3 January 2022, standing concerts prohibited. Events up to 2,000 people indoors and 5,000 people outdoors are permitted (3 January 2022).	<p>To deal with the epidemic circulation and the fifth wave, new measures come into force. (6 December 2021)</p> <p>Omicron cited as reason for introduction of new category of country classification "scarlet red" (6 December 2021)</p>
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)	
Second-level education	Access to schools and educational establishments including universities is not subject to the obligation to present the "health pass" (3 January 2022)	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	From January 3, recourse to teleworking will be made compulsory for all employees for whom it is possible, at a minimum of 3 days per week and 4 days when possible (3 January 2022). Businesses are recommended to ensure adequate natural ventilation (doors and / or windows open permanently or failing that 10 minutes every hour) or mechanical (mechanical ventilation system in accordance with regulations), and to facilitate the measurement of carbon dioxide in the air at significant places of frequentation and at periods of high frequentation (3 January 2022). Postponement of in person assemblies (6 December 2021)	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	Nightclubs are closed until 24 January 2021. Dancing is also prohibited in restaurants or bars (3 January 2021).	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p><u>Positive cases:</u> Fully vaccinated persons are required to isolate for 7 days, and persons not fully vaccinated are required to isolate for 10 days, after the date of the onset of signs or the date of the positive test sample. No test required on day 7 to end isolation. However, after 5 days (fully vaccinated) or 7 days (not fully vaccinated), the positive person can be released from isolation under two conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ negative antigen or RT-PCR test result; and ▪ no clinical signs of infection for 48 hours. <p><u>Close contacts:</u> Fully vaccinated persons no longer required to quarantine but must strictly follow general social distancing guidance, avoid at-risk individuals and work from home when possible. Testing (Ag or PCR) is required when notified of being a close contact and</p>	

	<p>also two self-test on day 2 and day 4 after the last contact with the positive person. With all positive Ag or self-tests confirmed by PCR.</p> <p>Persons not fully vaccinated must quarantine for the full 7 days. To get out of quarantine, these people must perform an antigen test or RT-PCR and have a negative result taken on day 7 (3 January 2022).</p> <p>Access to schools and educational establishments including universities is not subject to the obligation to present the "health pass" (3 January 2022)</p> <p>Positive cases < 12 years of age must isolate for 5 days if the antigen or PCR test carried out on day 5 is negative and in the absence of symptoms for 48 hours; 7 days isolation otherwise.</p> <p>Close contacts < 12 years of age are not required to isolate if an antigen or PCR test result taken on the same day is negative. Self-tests are still required on day 2 and day 4 (certificate on the honor of the parents) (3 January 2022).</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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)</p>	
<p>Face coverings</p>	<p>Wearing a mask is mandatory indoors in all establishments open to the public and will be extended to certain city centres (3 January 2022)</p>	
<p>COVID Pass</p>	<p>A bill will be submitted to Parliament to transform the "health pass" into a "vaccine pass" as of 15 January. It also aims to tighten the control and sanction conditions against false "passes" (3 January 2022).</p> <p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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.</p> <p>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> <p>In France, vaccination is open for children aged 5-11 years living in contact with immunocompromised people and those with serious illnesses (22 December 2021).</p>	

Germany	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 28 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	Only persons of one's own household and a maximum of 2 persons of another household may attend private meetings with unvaccinated persons. A maximum of 10 people who are fully vaccinated or recovered are allowed to meet at private gatherings (28 December 2022). 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)	
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)	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)
Culture/leisure/entertainment	Restaurants, cinemas, theatres and other leisure facilities may only be visited by vaccinated and recovered persons. Clubs and discos are closed. (28 December 2022) The negative test result of a RADT is valid for a maximum of 24 hours (30 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	As of 21 December 2022 , a shorter interval of at least 3 months from second injection is recommended for all people with immediate effect. The Standing Commission on Vaccination (STIKO) emphasises that older or previously ill people should be given preference in the booster vaccinations because of the higher risk of a severe course of COVID-19. The STIKO further emphasises that both mRNA vaccines are completely equivalent in terms of their effectiveness. In public consultation: 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).	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. Alarm level II: If the hospitalisation rate is above 6 per 100,000,

		<p>only those who have 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> <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>
Ireland	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 31 December 2021	Trigger for changes

Social or mass gatherings	<p>Updated 31 December 2021</p> <p>Indoor events No indoor events, including entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events, will take place after 20:00. In relation to events happening earlier in the day, attendance should be limited to 50% of venue capacity or 1,000 attendees, whichever is the lower. This includes cinemas. This does not affect religious, educational or normal workplace business activity and business events (for example: conferences, trade fairs). Contact tracing data may be requested (for example: name, contact number). Wedding receptions can take place with a capacity limit of 100 guests and continue after 20:00, midnight closing time still applies.</p> <p>Outdoor events Attendance at outdoor events, including entertainment, cultural, community and sporting events, should be limited to 50% of venue capacity or 5,000 attendees, whichever is the lower.</p> <p>Group activities 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.</p>	
Primary schools	<p>Parents and children's activities (10 December 2021) 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>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. 	

<p>Culture/leisure/entertainment</p>	<p>Updated 31 December 2021 All restaurants, bars and cafes, excluding take away or delivery services, close at 20:00. This also applies to hotel restaurants and bars, except for overnight residents. Strict social distancing is required in all bars and restaurants, including hotels (reverting to pre-22 October measures):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ COVID Pass required ▪ table service only (no counter service) ▪ 1 metre between tables ▪ maximum 6 adults per table (maximum 15 persons when including children aged 12 and younger) ▪ no multiple table bookings and no intermingling ▪ masks when not seated at table <p>Nightclubs are closed. Contact tracing data may be requested (for example: name, contact number).</p>	
<p>Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)</p>	<p>If you are a close contact of COVID-19 (3 January 2022)</p> <p>Received first round of COVID-19 vaccination but no booster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to do 5 antigen tests with 2 days between each test. ▪ If any antigen test is positive, or if you start to develop symptoms, you need to self-isolate and get a PCR test. ▪ You need to restrict your movements for 10 days. Do this from when you were last in contact with the person who tested positive. If you do not know when this was, do this from when you get the close contact text message from the HSE. <p>Received booster less than 7 days before the close contact text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to do 5 antigen tests with 2 days between each test. ▪ If any antigen test is positive, you need to self-isolate and get a PCR test. ▪ You need to restrict your movements for 10 days. Do this from when you were last in contact with the person who tested positive. If you do not know when this was, do this from when you get the close contact text message from the HSE. ▪ If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you need to self-isolate and continue to do your antigen tests. <p>Received booster more than 7 days before the close contact text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to do 3 antigen tests with 2 days between each test. ▪ If any antigen test is positive, you need to self-isolate and get a PCR test. ▪ You need to restrict your movements for 5 days. Do this from when you were last in contact with the person who tested positive. If you do not know when this was, do this from when you get the close contact text message from the HSE. ▪ If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you need to self-isolate and continue to do your antigen tests. <p>Received first round of COVID-19 vaccination and had a positive PCR test in the past 3 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to do 3 antigen tests with 2 days between each test. ▪ If any antigen test is positive, you need to self-isolate and get a PCR test. ▪ You need to restrict your movements for 5 days. Do this from when you were last in contact with the person who tested positive. If you do not know when this was, do this from when you get the close contact text message from the HSE. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you need to self-isolate and continue to do your antigen tests. <p>If you had a positive PCR test more than 3 months ago, follow the other advice that matches your situation - this advice does not apply to you.</p> <p>I have symptoms of COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow this advice even if you had your first round of COVID-19 vaccines, a booster, or had a positive PCR test in the last 3 months. ▪ You will need to get tested for COVID-19. ▪ You need to self-isolate and should start self-isolating as soon as you notice symptoms of COVID-19. <p>I have not had my first round of COVID-19 vaccination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You need to do 5 antigen tests with 2 days between each test. ▪ If any antigen test is positive, or if you start to develop symptoms, you need to self-isolate and get a PCR test. ▪ You need to restrict your movements for 10 days. Do this from when you were last in contact with the person who tested positive. If you do not know when this was, do this from when you get the close contact text message from the HSE. ▪ If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you need to self-isolate (stay in your room) and continue to do your antigen tests. <p>I know I am a close contact but I have not been contacted by the HSE yet</p> <p>If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ self-isolate ▪ get tested - find out what type of test you should do. <p>If you do not have symptoms, restrict your movements. You will get a text message with a link to a website where you can provide your details. When you have done that, you will get a text message with information about your tests.</p>	
Face coverings	<p>Updated 31 December 2021</p> <p>Face coverings must be worn in the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ shops, including pharmacies ▪ supermarkets ▪ shopping centres ▪ banks, credit unions and post offices ▪ libraries ▪ cinemas and cinema complexes ▪ theatres ▪ concert halls ▪ bingo halls ▪ museums ▪ nail salons ▪ hair salons and barbers ▪ tattoo and piercing parlours ▪ travel agents and tour operators ▪ laundries and dry cleaners 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ betting shops and bookmakers ▪ on public transport ▪ staff in customer facing roles in bars, restaurants and cafés ▪ in taxis (drivers and passengers) ▪ bus stations and rail stations. <p>Wearing of face coverings is also recommended in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ by people visiting the homes of those who are > 70 years of age or who are medically vulnerable ▪ by people who are being visited in their homes by those who are > 70 years of age or who are medically vulnerable ▪ if you are travelling in a vehicle with someone you don't live with ▪ crowded workplaces ▪ places of worship ▪ busy or crowded outdoor spaces where there is significant congregation ▪ in circumstances where 2 metres distance can't be maintained. <p>They can be removed for consumption of food or drinks as appropriate.</p> <p>The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET) (Latest update 1 Dec 2021) recommend that medical grade masks are used by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ vulnerable people in indoor or crowded outdoor places ▪ over 70s in indoor or crowded outdoor places ▪ people with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis ▪ people who have symptoms of COVID-19 ▪ close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19. 	
<p>COVID Pass</p>	<p>Updated 31 December 2021</p> <p>An EU Digital COVID Certificate (COVID pass) (vaccine or recovery certificate) is required for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ indoor hospitality and events ▪ cinemas and theatres ▪ gyms and leisure centres (excluding access to swimming pools or standalone swimming pool facilities) ▪ hotel bars and restaurants (that is, removing exemption for residents) <p>There are exemptions for those for whom a hotel setting is their permanent residence (e.g. those in emergency accommodation or other state-supported accommodation arrangements).</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 3 months. A booster (fourth dose) of an mRNA vaccine is also recommended, no sooner than 3 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 4 weeks after diagnosis or onset of symptoms. Vaccine booster doses should continue to be offered in the priority order previously recommended.</p>	
<p>Italy</p>	<p>Date extracted: 4 January 2022</p>	<p>Trigger for changes</p>

Last updated: 29 December 2021		
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). Capacities will be allowed a maximum of 50% for outdoor events and 35% for indoor events (29 December 2021).	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. 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
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)	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	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) Proof of vaccination, recovery or recent negative test required for indoor access to exhibitions, museums and other places of culture (5 December 2021) 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) In Yellow zone (see triggers to the right): Maximum of four non-cohabiting people per table.	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	Precautionary quarantine does not apply to those who have had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case if they have completed their primary vaccination course or from recovery and the administration of the booster dose in the 120 days. However, they should wear FFP2 masks and if symptomatic, should take an antigen test or PCR test on day 5 following exposure (29 December 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. FFP2 type masks are required on all means of transport, at events open to the public that take place outdoors and indoors in theaters, concert halls, cinemas, entertainment and live music venues (and other similar venues) and for events and sports competitions that take place indoors or outdoors. In all these cases it is forbidden to consume food and drinks indoors (23 December 2021).	

<p>COVID Pass</p>	<p>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 within 48 hours of receiving your booster dose and will be valid for 9 months from the date of administration.</p> <p>From 1 February 2022 the duration of the vaccination green pass is reduced from 9 to 6 months. The minimum period for the administration of the third dose will be reduced from 5 to 4 months from the completion of the primary vaccination cycle. From 23 December extension of the reinforced Green Pass obligation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ indoors for swimming pools, gyms and team sports; ▪ museums and exhibitions; ▪ indoors for wellness centres; ▪ spa centres (except for essential levels of assistance and rehabilitation or therapeutic activities); ▪ theme and amusement parks; ▪ indoors for cultural centres, social and recreational centres (excluding educational centres for children); ▪ game rooms, betting rooms, bingo halls and casinos. <p>From 10 January 2022 until the end of the state of emergency, the use of the reinforced Green Pass is extended to the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ hotels and accommodation facilities; ▪ feasts resulting from civil or religious ceremonies; ▪ festivals and fairs; ▪ convention centres; ▪ outdoor catering services; ▪ ski lifts with tourist-commercial purposes even if located in ski areas; ▪ swimming pools, swimming centres, team sports and wellness centres, even outdoors; ▪ cultural centre, social and recreational centre for outdoor activities. 	
<p>Netherlands Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 18 December 2021</p>		<p>Trigger for changes</p>
<p>Social or mass gatherings</p>	<p><u>Measures and urgent advice applicable from 19 December 2021</u> The maximum group size outdoors for people aged ≥ 13 is 2 people. There can be more than 2 people in a group if everyone in the group lives at the same address.</p> <p>Events are not permitted, except for funerals (no more than 100 people), weekly markets selling groceries, and professional sports matches and competitions (no spectators).</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Primary schools</p>	<p>Schools currently remain open 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 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. 	<p>The government is prolonging the measures introduced on 28</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. ▪ 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>18 December 2021 Educational institutions and out-of-school care are closed until at least 9 January 2022. Exceptions exist for practical training, exams, and vulnerable pupils and students. Emergency childcare will be provided for the children of key workers and for vulnerable children. Day care for children aged under 4 will remain open.</p> <p>As of 4 January 2021, primary schools, schools for special education and out-of-school care centres will reopen on 10 January 2022.</p>	November, until at least 14 January 2022 .
Second-level education	Educational institutions and out-of-school care are closed until at least 9 January 2022. There are some exceptions. As of 4 January 2021 , secondary schools and schools for special education will reopen on 10 January 2022. Schools for secondary vocational education will be closed until 9 January 2022. They will offer remote learning from 10 January 2022.	
Higher and adult education	Educational institutions and out-of-school care are closed until at least 9 January 2022. There are some exceptions. As of 4 January 2021 , higher education institutions will be closed until Sunday 9 January 2022. They will offer remote learning from 10 January 2022. Accredited (further) education may take place in the evenings.	
Business activities	<p>19 December 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All hospitality venues are closed, except for delivery and takeaway. ▪ All non-essential shops are closed, except for click and collect and returns. ▪ Essential shops, such as supermarkets and chemists, can open until 20:00. Face masks must be worn. The maximum number of shoppers is 1 per 5 square metres. ▪ Certain locations, such as petrol stations, pharmacies, libraries, driving schools, notaries' offices and lawyers' offices can open for their normal hours. ▪ All locations where non-medical contact-based professions are carried out, such as hairdressers and beauty salons, are closed. ▪ Cinemas, museums, theatres and concert venues are closed. ▪ Work from home. If this is impossible, stay 1.5 metres apart at work. 	
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. ▪ 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	<p>Settings in which face masks are mandatory</p> <p>Wearing a face mask is required by law (by those >12 years) in the following settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ on public transport, such as trains, trams, buses and ferries; ▪ at stations, on platforms and at bus and tram stops; ▪ at airports and on planes; ▪ on other passenger transport, such as taxis or coaches; ▪ in public indoor spaces such as shops and libraries; ▪ at indoor events – at indoor events where a coronavirus entry pass is mandatory, you can take off the face mask when seated. ▪ in primary schools: adults only, when moving around the building; ▪ in secondary schools: when moving around the building; ▪ in institutions for secondary vocational education (MBO) and higher education (HBO and universities): when moving around the building; ▪ at the hairdresser’s, beauty salon, massage providers and other contact-based professions. <p>Face masks can be taken off when seated, except on public transport and in planes.</p>	
COVID Pass	<p>Most activities where a corona entry pass is required will be temporarily closed from 19 December 2021.</p> <p>To be able to travel to other countries in the European Union/Schengen area (and an epidemiologically safe country outside the European Union or Schengen area), you need a COVID certificate (DCC). This can be based on a negative test result, proof of vaccination or proof of recovery from COVID-19.</p> <p>Digital COVID Certificate (DCC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Everyone aged ≥ 13 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. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. ▪ 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 who can come to a vaccination centre themselves, residents of care facilities aged ≥18, and healthcare workers who have direct contact with patients. 	
Norway	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 30 December 2021	Trigger for changes

<p>Social or mass gatherings</p>	<p>How many can attend private gatherings and how many can attend an event? In Norway, a maximum of 20 people can attend indoor public events without designated seating and 50 people with designated seating. At outdoor public events, up to 100 people without designated seating can attend, and up to 3 cohorts of 200 people each with designated seating can attend. Organisers must keep a list of where each attendee sits at public events when everyone in the audience is has designated seating. There is also a requirement to wear a face covering at indoor events (14 December 2021).</p> <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>Private gatherings for members of the same household only are not considered events and therefore do not have to follow these rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of measures are being introduced now to delay the spread of the new Omicron variant when it comes to the country. • 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>Primary schools</p>	<p>All kindergartens and primary must move to yellow level from 16 December 2021 at the latest and must be prepared to quickly move to red level.</p> <p>Levels of public health measures in school are classified in a traffic light model from a relatively normal organisation of the school day (green level) to extensive measures that entail smaller groups and more distance between students and staff (red level). (Definitions for upper secondary here)</p> <p>Yellow level:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sick individuals may not attend school 2. Good hygiene and increased cleaning 3. Social distancing measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoidance of physical contact between individuals (shaking hands and hugging) • entire classes and groups can receive instruction together • students should have assigned seats in each classroom or designated partners/groups • social distancing between staff (of at least 1 metre) in all situations • staff can switch classes, but should maintain a distance to students if possible • social distancing between students/staff outside the classroom/teaching situation • prevention of crowds and large gatherings. <p>Red level:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sick individuals may not attend school 2. Good hygiene and increased cleaning 3. Social distancing measures: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stricter national measures to limit the spread of Omicron were announced on 14 December 2021. • A report published in Norway signalled 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ avoidance of physical contact between individuals (shaking hands and hugging) ▪ division of students into smaller groups – goal: reduce the number of contacts by half ▪ students should have assigned seats in each classroom or designated partners/groups ▪ social distancing between staff (of at least 1 metre) in all situations ▪ staff can switch classes ▪ social distancing between students/staff (at least 1e metre) in all situations ▪ prevention of crowds and large gatherings ▪ consideration of alternating attendance times/alternative rooms ▪ partial online instruction. <p>There can be a maximum of 20 participants at indoor activities, unless all of the participants come from the same class at kindergarten or school. Matches or tournaments that gather children from different places are not recommended. Outdoor events where 1 metre can be maintained can go ahead (14 December 2021).</p> <p>Advice for schools and kindergartens was last updated on 30 December 2021. From 1 Jan 2022, employees in schools and kindergartens who have been in close contact with an infected person can go to work, but must be tested on days 3 and 7 after close contact. This exemption does not apply to household close contacts. Those exempted must remain in leisure time quarantine.</p> <p>All employees in kindergartens and all pupils and employees in primary, secondary schools and high schools should be tested within 24 hours before going to work or school the first day after the Christmas holidays. Those that have had COVID-19 within the previous 3 months and those who have received a booster for more than a week ago should not be tested. If the municipality does not have enough self-tests to test all pupils and employees in schools and kindergartens before the start of school in 2022, the Norwegian Directorate of Health and NIPH recommend that tests be prioritized in the following order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pupils and staff in primary school. 2. Pupils and staff in upper secondary school. 3. Kindergarten employees. 4. Students and staff in high school. <p>If major outbreaks occur in certain age groups, the municipal doctor may prioritise differently after a specific assessment of the situation.</p>	
Second-level education	<p>Levels of public health measures in school are classified in a traffic light model from a relatively normal organisation of the school day (green level) to extensive measures that entail smaller groups and more distance between students and staff (red level). (See definitions provided under primary education). Upper secondary schools must operate at red level (14 December 2021).</p> <p>Lower secondary schools (age 13 to 16), must operate at a yellow level. A maximum of 20 participants at indoor activities are permitted, unless all of the participants come from the same cohort. Matches or tournaments that gather children from different places are not recommended while outdoor events where 1 metre can be maintained can go ahead. Children and</p>	

	<p>adolescents who have completed lower secondary school should also keep a 1-metre distance in their leisure time (14 December 2021).</p> <p>Exemptions and testing requirements outlined in the primary level education sector outlined above also apply to second level.</p>	
Higher and adult education	<p>Levels of public health measures in school are classified in a traffic light model from a relatively normal organisation of the school day (green level) to extensive measures that entail smaller groups and more distance between students and staff (red level). (See definitions provided under primary education).</p> <p>Adult education must operate at red level. Universities, university colleges, and vocational schools must prepare to offer digital teaching (14 December 2021).</p>	
Business activities	<p>Employers are required to ensure that employees work from home if this is feasible and does not have a negative impact on services that are important and necessary for the business, including activities to protect children and vulnerable groups (14 December 2021).</p> <p>Ban on alcohol in public venues except for minibars or room service (16 December 2021).</p> <p>Information on ventilation recommendations for workplaces added (21 December 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For people in light activity, a minimum air supply of 7 litres/second/person is recommended, and a maximum air speed of 0.2 metres/second. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) from exhalation should not exceed 1000 ppm (parts per million). CO₂ levels below 800 ppm are recommended for rooms with continuous speech (teaching), singing (choir exercises) and high physical activity (gyms), where the risk of infection is increased. ▪ Relative humidity below 20% should be avoided. However, the use of active humidification is not recommended. Air purification based on HEPA filters is assumed to be able to contribute to further reduced risk of infection, but does not replace the minimum requirements for ventilation. 	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>The following rules and recommendations that applied from 9 December 2021 and were reconsidered after 2 weeks. The following changes were made on 14 December 2021.</p> <p>For adults :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Venues that serve food or alcohol must not organise activities that naturally entail a shorter distance between guests than 1 metre. A typical example of this is dancing. ▪ Venues that serve food or alcohol must not organise activities that naturally entail a shorter distance between guests than 1 metre. A typical example of this is dancing. ▪ Venues that serve food or alcohol may not serve more than 20 guests at private indoor events or more than 50 outdoors. The rules for private events do not apply to venues that serve food or alcohol. The venue must operate in accordance with the infection control rules. ▪ Amusement parks, soft play centres, amusement arcades, etc. must be closed. Indoor swimming pools, water parks, spa facilities, hotel pools, and fitness centres may open for limited activities. 	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Norwegian Government introduced new national measures (in effect from 3 December 2021 00:00) 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. ▪ There is a national recommendation to wear a face covering when you are in contact with the health and care service. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ On 29 November 2021, several national measures were introduced to limit and delay the spread of the Omicron variant in Norway. From 15 Dec 21, the COVID regulations changed so that the same rules for isolation and quarantine applied regardless of the virus variant. Measures for Omicron variant now differ depending on a person's immunity status. (Latest update 29 December 2021).■ The isolation period is 6 days after onset of symptoms AND 24 hours fever free without the use of antipyretic drugs. If symptoms occur after the test time, 6 days must be counted from the onset of symptoms. If asymptomatic the 6 day isolation period is counted from the time of the positive test.■ 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 COVID-19. They are required to take a PCR test or a rapid antigen test as soon as possible and on day 7. They may leave quarantine if they receive a negative test result on day 7.■ For those living with one or more people who are isolated, it can be difficult to keep enough distance. Since most of the infection occurs in the days around symptom onset, contact can be considered as being from day 4 (for the last patient in the household) as the last exposure, and count 10 days from there. For those who live with one or more people who are isolated, a test to end the quarantine can be taken at the earliest 11 days (4 + 7) after the onset of the disease in the last patient in the household.■ Other close contacts over the age of 18 are obliged to quarantine for 10 days, but can in the case of a negative test taken no earlier than 3 days after the close contact leave the quarantine during school / working hours (but maintain the leisure quarantine), and in the case of a negative test no earlier than 7 days after the close contact of quarantine.■ The quarantine duty does not apply to household members and equivalent close contacts who:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Have had COVID-19 in the last 3 months before exposure○ Have had a booster dose at least 7 days before exposure if they test daily with a rapid antigen test or every other day with PCR for 7 days after exposure.■ This quarantine does not apply to other close contacts who:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Have had COVID-19 in the last 3 months before exposure○ Has received a refresher dose (booster dose after full vaccination) at least 1 week ago○ Is under 18 years of age or a student in high school■ Everyone who is defined as other close contacts is recommended to monitor whether they experience symptoms for 10 days after exposure, and have a low threshold for testing with mild symptoms. This also applies to those who are exempt from quarantine.■ Children below school age are only recommended to test if they have symptoms.■ Children from school age and up to 18 years are recommended to be tested (self-test, PCR or rapid antigen test test) day 3 and day 7 after exposure. Children and adults who take part in regular testing do not need to be tested on day 3 and 7. They are also recommended to avoid leisure activities and social gatherings during the test period, but low-threshold activities for children are recommended to be kept open with the possibility of using this during the test period.■ The Covid-19 regulation, gives managers in socially critical companies the opportunity to make exceptions from the quarantine obligation during working hours for employees who are strictly necessary to be able to maintain sound operations, and who have tested negative for SARS-CoV-2 with antigen-rapid test the same day the work is completed.	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is a requirement that employees who live in the same household or are similarly close to a person in isolation must be fully vaccinated and use face masks in order to be exempt from the quarantine of infection. ○ Employees in kindergartens and schools (incl. Adult education) who are not members of the household or similarly close to the infected person, are exempt from infection quarantine during working hours from the first day, subject to negative antigen rapid tests on days 3 and 7 after close contact. ○ In leisure time, the quarantine obligation applies. ○ The employer or client is obliged to plan the operation of the business so that the use of the exceptions in this provision is avoided as far as possible. the following should be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reallocating personnel ▪ Reducing activity ○ An assessment should be made of which employees should first be exempted from quarantine based on who is most likely to be infected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The entry quarantine (Meaning unclear from Google translate) ▪ other versus household close contact ▪ Employees who, after an overall assessment of exposure, are considered to have been the least exposed to infection ▪ Vaccination status. ○ Employees obligations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a mask in close contact with others ▪ Strive to keep distance ▪ Keep quarantine outside working hours. ▪ Follow advice on use of public transport when absolute necessary. ▪ Quarantine and get tested in case of respiratory infection. ▪ List of companies is found here Different advice applies to testing for SARS-CoV-2 by employees and patients/users of healthcare services. (Last Updated 22 December 2021). Changes since 15 December include use of rapid antigen test or PCR in testing recommendations. <p>Where there is limited capacity of self-tests, the Norwegian Directorate of Health recommends the following priorities: 22 December 2021</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employees in the health and care sector and employees in other critical societal functions. 2. People with symptoms of covid-19 (including outbreaks). 3. All employees in kindergartens and all pupils and employees in primary, secondary and secondary schools should be tested within 24 hours before going to work or school the first day after the Christmas holidays. 	
<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. ▪ National injunction to wear a face mask where you cannot maintain a distance of 1 metre (8 December 2021). ▪ The requirement to wear a face covering also applies to indoor events, libraries, and museums (14 December 2021). The requirement to wear a face covering does not apply when sitting at a table in a venue that serves food or when eating or drinking while seated. (14 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. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. <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. 	
Portugal	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 22 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	<p>The presentation of the digital certificate (or proof of vaccination or a negative laboratory test result) will be mandatory for those aged ≥ 12 years when accessing:</p> <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. ▪ Mandatory negative test is required for access to weddings and baptisms, corporate events, sports venues (unless exempted by the DGS) and cultural shows. ▪ Children under 12 years are exempt from testing. 	<p>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</p>
Primary schools	<p>Between 2-9 January 2022, the following are suspended in person:</p> <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	<p>Between 2-9 January 2022, the following are suspended in person:</p> <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. 	<p>prevent the number of Covid-19 infections, which has been growing in recent weeks, from increasing substantially. (1 December 2021).</p> <p>Given the growth of Omicron, and knowing in advance that the Christmas and New Year seasons are, by their nature, moments of socialising and social interaction, the Government decided to reinforce measures to combat the pandemic, in a preventive manner, to mitigate the risks potentially associated with this time (22 December 2021).</p>
Business activities	<p>From 25 December 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mandatory teleworking ▪ closing of clubs and bars ▪ Closures of day care centres and ATL (voluntary services available to preschool and elementary school children). ▪ From 22 December 2021 – reduction in capacity in all commercial places to 1 person per 5 m² 	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Mandatory negative test for access to corporate events, cultural shows, and sports venues (unless decided by Directorate-General of Health of Portugal (DGS)).</p>	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>Free tests in pharmacies increased from 4 to 6 per person (time frame not stated).</p> <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 ▪ Weddings and baptisms ▪ Tourist establishments and local accommodation ▪ Corporate events ▪ Cultural shows ▪ Sports venues. 	
Face coverings	<p>The use of a mask is mandatory to access or stay in the following places:</p> <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	<p>The presentation of the digital certificate (or proof of vaccination or a negative laboratory test result) will be mandatory when accessing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restaurants ▪ Gyms. <p>Mandatory negative test required for access to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tourist establishment and local accommodation ▪ Weddings and baptisms ▪ Corporate events ▪ Cultural shows ▪ Sports venues (unless decided by DGS - Directorate-General of Health of Portugal.) ▪ Home visits ▪ Visits to patients in admitted health facilities ▪ Large events without marked seats ▪ Sports venues. 	
Spain	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 4 January 2022	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	A maximum capacity of up to 75% is allowed (previously 100%) for events in open venues and a maximum capacity of up to 50% (previously 80%) for events in closed venues, respecting the non-pharmacological protective measures against COVID-19 (29 December 2021).	
Primary schools	The Government of Spain and the autonomous communities and cities have given a commitment to the return of in person classes on the 10 Jan when the school year is resumed (4 January 2022).	
Second-level education	The Government of Spain and the autonomous communities and cities have given a commitment to the return of in person classes on the 10 Jan when the school year is resumed (4 January 2022).	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	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)	Isolation period for positive cases has been reduced to 7 days compared to the previous requirement of 10 days. Close contacts requiring quarantine (not fully vaccinated only) is also reduced to 7 days (29 December 2021). Close contacts who are vaccinated are not required to isolate (21 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. People aged 40 to 59 are now approved for booster vaccination, starting with the oldest cohorts. Also approved are people under 60 years of age who received AstraZeneca as a primary vaccination, starting 3 months after the last dose (16 December 2021). From 1 February 2022, vaccination certificates issued more than 14 days after the date of administration of the last dose of the full vaccination schedule will be accepted as valid, provided that no more than 270 days have elapsed since the date of administration of the last dose (29 December 2021).	
Sweden	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 28 December 2021	Trigger for changes

Social or mass gatherings	<p>From 23 December, the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Everyone should avoid crowded environments. ▪ Everyone should work from home as far as the work allows. ▪ For fairs, trading places and places for culture and leisure activities, requirements are set at 10 m² per person. ▪ Only seated guests are allowed at restaurants and a distance of 1 meter between different parties is required. ▪ If there are more than 20 people at public gatherings and public events, only seated guests are allowed, regardless of vaccination certificate. ▪ Without a vaccination certificate, there are also requirements for distance between the companies, a maximum size of 8 people within the company and a maximum number of 500 guests or participants. ▪ At events of more than 500 guests or participants, vaccination certificates and distance between the parties and a maximum size of 8 people per party are required. ▪ The Swedish Public Health Agency also wants the government to make a decision on the following there being a maximum of 50 people when renting premises for private gatherings. 	<p>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.</p>
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	From 23 December 2021 , infection control measures are recommended for adult education, so that congestion and large gatherings are avoided. Local education is the main rule, but for universities and colleges, distance education can be used as a tool to thin out the teaching premises.	
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, ▪ refurnish 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. 	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	For cultural and leisure activities indoors, such as museums, art galleries and gyms, each person must have at least 10 m ² at their disposal. There is an exception for activities aimed at children and young people born in 2002 and later (28 December 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	

England	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 4 January 2022	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	<p>From 15 December, certain venues and events will be required by law to check that all visitors aged ≥18 years are fully vaccinated, have proof of a negative test in the last 48 hours, or have an exemption.</p> <p>The use of the NHS COVID Pass is required as a condition of entry into the following places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nightclubs, dancehalls and discos; • other late night dance venues. These are any other venues that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ open between 1am and 5am ○ serve alcohol during this time ○ have a dancefloor (or designated space for dancing) ○ provide music, whether live or recorded, for dancing. • indoor events with 500 or more unseated attendees, where those attendees are likely to stand or move around for all or part of the event, such as music venues with standing audiences or large receptions; • outdoor events with 4,000 or more unseated attendees, where those attendees are likely to stand or move around for all or part of the event, such as outdoor festivals; and • any events with 10,000 or more attendees indoor or outdoor, such as large sports and music events <p>There are some settings that will be exempt from requirements to use the NHS COVID Pass including communal worship, wedding ceremonies, funerals and other commemorative events, protests, and mass participation sporting events.</p>	The government has announced that England has moved to Plan B in response to the risks of the Omicron variant.
Primary schools	Recommendations updated on 2 January 2022 , face coverings should be worn by staff, adults, and those aged over 11 (including visitors) when moving around in corridors and communal areas.	
Second-level education	<p>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.</p> <p>From 4 January 2022, it is recommend that in those schools where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn in classrooms.</p> <p>As of 3 January 2022, all secondary schools have been asked to provide one on-site test for pupils ahead of their return to the classroom this term. Students and staff have been advised to continue to test twice per week thereafter.</p>	
Higher and adult education	<p>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.</p> <p>As of 3 January 2022, students have been asked to test before returning to campus. Students and staff have been advised to continue to test twice per week thereafter.</p>	
Business activities	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 22 December 2021, those with a positive COVID-19 test result are required to self-isolate for 10 days, possible to end self-isolation after 7 days, following 2 negative lateral flow tests taken 24 hours apart on days 6 and 7.</p> <p>Those aged 18 years 6 months or over and not fully vaccinated, and living in the same household as someone with COVID-19, are legally required to stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days.</p> <p>Those who are fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months living in the same household as someone with COVID-19, are not legally required to self-isolate. However, they are strongly advised to take a lateral flow test every day for 7 days, and to self-isolate if any of these test results is positive.</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▪ 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>From 4 January 2022, face coverings are to be used in classroom settings for pupils and adults in Year 7 and above.</p>	
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<p>COVID Pass</p>	<p>Booster guidance From 20 December 2021 Children aged 12 to 15 can get their second vaccine dose if it's been more than 12 weeks since their first vaccine dose.</p> <p>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 visitors aged 18 years or over are fully vaccinated, have proof of a negative test in the last 48 hours, or have an exemption.</p>	
<p>Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 31 December 2021</p>	<p>Trigger for changes</p>

Social or mass gatherings	<p>Updated 27 December 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 It is recommended that no more than three households should meet together in a private home. 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. Since 26 December 2021, indoor standing events are not permitted.</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. A risk assessment is not required if 30 people or less are attending the outdoor gathering.</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 27 December 2021</p> <p>People should work from home if that is possible. Two metre social distancing is required in office settings. As offices vary significantly in terms of size, layout and capacity, alternative measures such as screens should be put in place where two metre social distancing cannot be achieved.</p>	

Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>Since 26 December 2021, dancing is not permitted in hospitality settings and nightclubs are not permitted to open. Since 27 December 2021, a maximum of six people can be seated together in hospitality settings. More than six will be permitted if they all belong to a single household, as long as it is not more than 10. Children aged 12 and under are not counted in the total.</p> <p>This requirement does not apply to weddings and civil partnerships.</p> <p>Table service is also required and apart from entering and leaving the premises, the only movement allowed indoors is to access toilet or baby changing facilities, to select food from a buffet or to pay.</p>	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>As of 31 December 2021, people with a positive COVID-19 PCR test should isolate for 10 days from the date the PCR test was taken or the date symptoms started, whichever is sooner. However, they may be able to end the self-isolation period before the end of the 10 full days provided they have two negative lateral flow tests taken 24 hours apart. These can be taken from day six of the isolation period. The second should be taken the following day at least 24 hours later. If both these test results are negative, and the person does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result. The earliest anyone can end isolation is on day 7 (providing the tests on day six and seven are both negative).</p> <p>Adults who are aged 18 and over and are either unvaccinated, have had one dose only, or if it is less than 14 days since the second dose, should self-isolate immediately for 10 days following last contact with the positive person if they become a close contact. They do not need to book a PCR test unless they develop symptoms. Fully vaccinated adults who become close contacts are advised to isolate and take a lateral flow test as soon as possible. If this is negative, they can stop isolating but should continue to take daily lateral flow tests until the day 10 after the last date of contact with the positive case. If any lateral flow test is positive they should isolate immediately and book a PCR test.</p>	
Face coverings	<p>Since 27 December 2021, it is a legal requirement for all businesses, such as retail, hospitality, transport providers and close contact services to take reasonable measures to promote compliance with face coverings regulations. This may include, but is not limited to, effective signage, audio messaging, spot checks or providing face coverings when necessary.</p> <p>There is a grace period before enforcement begins on 7 January 2022.</p> <p>From 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 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) 	
Scotland (mainland)	Date extracted: 5 January 2022 Last updated: 5 January 2022	Trigger for changes

Social or mass gatherings	<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 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> <p>From 26 December for 3 weeks, limits on public events in Scotland will be put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100 standing at indoor events ▪ 200 seated at indoor events ▪ 500 at outdoor seated and standing events <p>This will include sporting events and "large scale" Hogmanay celebrations - including Edinburgh's street party - but not events like weddings. Physical distancing of 1 metre will be required at events that go ahead within these limits. Indoor hospitality will be moved to table service only, with social distancing implemented. No more than 3 households will be allowed to gather. Indoor hospitality and leisure venues to ensure 1 metre distance, not within, but between groups of people who are attending together (21 December 2021). These restrictions will remain in place until at least 17 January 2022 (5 January 2022).</p>	
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Higher and adult education	On 17 December 2021 , a letter from the Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training, was issued to advise limitations on in person teaching and strengthening of mitigation measures where possible. Advice was issued that activities that could be undertaken online. Students were advised to perform lateral flow tests before they return to campus and to ensure that they avail of vaccination (including booster doses).	
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>	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>For those who have symptoms, they should self-isolate immediately and book a PCR test. If they test positive, they should self-isolate for 10 days from the date the symptoms started. For those with a positive PCR test result but no symptoms, they should self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test. If they develop symptoms, they should re-start self-isolation from the day the symptoms started. People do not need to re-start self-isolation if someone they live with tests positive during the 10 day self-isolation.</p> <p>For those with a positive lateral flow test but no symptoms, they and their household should self-isolate immediately. They should self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the positive lateral flow test. From 6 January 2022, they are no longer required to take a PCR test to confirm the result.</p>	

	<p>From 6 January 2022, it will be possible to end self-isolation earlier than 10 days if a person has negative lateral flow tests on days six and seven of their isolation period.</p> <p>From 6 January 2022, close contacts of positive cases (including household contacts - who are either under the age of 18 years, four months, or who are older than that and fully vaccinated (first, second and booster or third doses)), the requirement to self-isolate is no longer in place and is now a requirement to take a lateral flow test every day for seven days. If one of these tests is positive, self-isolation will then be required.</p> <p>Anyone identified as a close contact who is over 18 years and four months and not fully vaccinated will still be asked to self-isolate for 10 days and to take a PCR test.</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> <p>Updated 2 January 2022 From 3 January, children and young people aged 12 to 15 can attend drop-in clinics to get their second dose if preferred, as long as it's been at least 12 weeks since their first dose appointment.</p>	
Wales	<p>Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 31 December 2021</p>	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	<p>As of 26 December 2021, organised events and gatherings must not take place for more than 30 people indoors and 50 people outdoors. Licensed premises must ensure there is physical distancing between individual households or groups of up to 6 people from a maximum of 6 households (not including children under 11 from any of those households or carers of anyone present) at their premises and must provide table service only.</p> <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. 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>Wales has moved to alert level 2 as of 26 December 2021.</p> <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> <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 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. From 27 December 2021 there will be a 2 metre rule on social distancing in offices and extra measures to protect staff, such as physical barriers or one-way systems.</p>	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	<p>There will be a 2 metre rule on social distancing and extra measures to protect customers and staff, such as encouraging customers to pre-book, collecting contact details for contact tracing purposes, controlling entry, physical barriers, one-way systems. From 27 December 2021 nightclubs will close.</p>	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>As of 31 December 2021, people who have tested positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate for 7 full days. On days 6 and 7 they should take rapid lateral flow tests 24 hours apart. If the results are positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get 2 negative tests, or after day 10, whichever is sooner. If they are negative they can stop self-isolating and resume normal activities on day 8 of the self-isolation period.</p> <p>For those aged 18 and over, and not fully vaccinated who become close contacts, they must self-isolate from the day they were last in contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 and for the next 10 days. Fully vaccinated adults or those aged between 5 and 17 do not need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact but are strongly advised to take a lateral flow test every day for seven days or until 10 days since the last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier.</p>	
Face coverings	<p>Updated 26 December 2021 It is mandatory to wear a face covering in all indoor premises that are open to the public and on public transport (including taxis), other than public transport which is open to the air. Where food or drink is consumed in part of a premises, like a department store cafe, or hotel restaurant, you must wear face coverings on the premises except when seated to eat or drink. This advice applies unless they are exempt or are seated at a table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ in hospitality settings, such as pubs ▪ at a wedding, civil partnership or alternative wedding ceremony or reception ▪ in the auditorium of a theatre, cinema or concert hall and the viewing areas of an indoor arena or stadium. 	

COVID Pass	<p>Updated 15 December 2021 Booster doses Health boards are now contacting all eligible adults for their booster appointments. Students over the age of 18 studying in Wales or returning to Wales can access both vaccine doses and boosters within 12 weeks.</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. 	
Switzerland	Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 21 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	<p>In Switzerland, new restrictions were introduced from 20 December 2021 until 24 January 2022. For private indoor gatherings if anyone aged 16 years or older is in attendance and is not vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19, no more than 10 people are allowed to meet; children are included in that number. The upper limit for indoor gatherings is 30 if everyone from the age of 16 is vaccinated or has recovered from COVID-19. In indoor settings the '2G' rule will now come into effect (that is, admission only for vaccinated or recovered persons). This concerns restaurants, cultural, sporting and leisure venues and events. A mask requirement still applies in these settings, as does a seating requirement when consuming food or drink. The '3G' rule (that is, admission only for vaccinated or recovered persons, or on presentation of a negative test result) still applies for outdoors events with over 300 people. In settings where it is not possible to wear a mask or apply a seating requirement, admission will be limited to vaccinated or recovered persons, who must also present a negative test result (2G+). This rule applies to bars and discos, but also to amateur sporting and cultural activities where masks cannot be worn, such as brass band practice. It does not apply to young people under the age of 16. People who within the last four months have been fully vaccinated, received a booster or recovered from COVID-19 do not have to take a further test. Businesses and events subject</p>	<p>On 3 December 2021 Switzerland, introduced measures that would apply from 6 December 2021.</p> <p>These measures reflect the sharp rise in the number of COVID-19 patients admitted to hospital and the emergence of the new</p>

	to the '2G' rule may voluntarily choose to adopt the '2G+' rule and thus forgo the mask and seating requirements (17 December 2021).	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.
Primary schools	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Second-level education	In Switzerland, in addition to routine testing, masks will be encouraged in lower second-level schools and mandatory in upper second-level schools (17 December 2021).	
Higher and adult education	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Business activities	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>	

<p>COVID Pass</p>	<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> <p>A booster vaccination with an mRNA vaccine is now recommended for everyone aged 16 years and older as early as 4 months rather than 6 months after initial immunisation, especially for older people (21 December 2021).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>South Africa Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 30 December 2021</p>		<p>Trigger for changes</p>
<p>Social or mass gatherings</p>	<p>On 30 December 2021 gatherings are restricted to no more than 1,000 people indoors and no more than 2,000 people outdoors. Where the venue is too small to accommodate these numbers with appropriate social distancing, then no more than 50% of the capacity of the venue may be used. All other restrictions remain in place.</p>	<p>The changes to IPC recommendations made in 24 December were based on COVID-19 MAC advisories (see here). These were made because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proportion of people with some immunity from infection and/or vaccination is high • past infection in 60-80% in several sero-surveys 2. Containment strategies are no longer appropriate – mitigation is the only viable strategy • Especially true of the newer, more
<p>Primary schools</p>	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	
<p>Second-level education</p>	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	
<p>Higher and adult education</p>	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	
<p>Business activities</p>	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p>	
<p>Culture/leisure/entertainment</p>	<p>On 30 December 2021 gatherings are restricted to no more than 1,000 people indoors and no more than 2,000 people outdoors. Where the venue is too small to accommodate these numbers with appropriate social distancing, then no more than 50% of the capacity of the venue may be used. All other restrictions remain in place.</p> <p>Alcohol establishments that have licences to operate beyond 23h00 will revert back to full licence conditions.</p>	
<p>Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)</p>	<p>On 24 December 2021 the following revisions were accepted based on COVID-19 MAC advisories: However, the department has decided to put the implementation of the revised policy changes on hold, (see here) while taking all additional comments and inputs received into consideration. This means the status quo remains, and all prior existing regulations with regards to contact tracing, quarantine and isolation remain applicable.</p> <p>The revisions, which have not yet been implemented, are as follows:</p> <p>Contact tracing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All contact tracing be stopped with immediate effect except in congregate settings and cluster outbreak situations or self-contained settings. ▪ All contacts must continue with their normal duties with heightened monitoring (daily temperature testing, symptom screening) of any early signs. If they develop symptoms then they should be tested and be managed according to the severity of the symptoms 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All contacts must not be tested unless if they develop symptoms <p>Quarantining for contacts of confirmed cases of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All quarantine is to be stopped with immediate effect ▪ This applies to both vaccinated and unvaccinated contacts ▪ No testing for COVID-19 is required irrespective of the risk exposure unless the contact becomes symptomatic <p>Isolation rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Isolation rules are applicable to both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals ▪ Isolation rules are applicable to high and low-risk individuals ▪ Return to work from Day 10 onwards must as always take into consideration the individual’s clinical status. Only those patients well enough to work should do so <p>Return to work:</p> <p>All people that have been infected and have been in isolation, must be ready to return to work after completing a mandatory period of isolation as above and no further testing is required after either 8 or 10 days of isolation.</p>	<p>infectious/transmissible variants likeOMICRON</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. New knowledge about the virus: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) high proportion of asymptomatic disease, b) high degree of asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic spread, c) aerosol spread. d) Only a small proportion of cases are diagnosed. 4. We never identify most high risk patients 5. “High risk” definition probably isn’t meaningful anymore 6. Quarantine has been costly to essential services and society as many people stay away from their work and thus lose their income and children miss on their schooling. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Testing skewed towards symptomatic (minority) b) Not all symptomatic people test
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		<p>c) Not all negative tests are true negatives</p> <p>a) Doesn't take into account aerosol spread</p> <p>b) Doesn't take into account the newer variants (increased transmissibility)</p> <p>c) Doesn't take into account pre-existing immunity.</p>
Face coverings	<p>No updated advice since 26 November 2021</p> <p>Wearing of a face mask is mandatory for every person (excluding children under the age of 6 years) when in a public place.</p> <p>If a person is not wearing a mask, they will not be allowed to-</p> <p>(a) use, operate, perform any service on any form of public transport;</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(c) be in any public open space..</p>	
COVID Pass	<p>9 December 2021 South African Health Products Authority announced the approval of 3rd dose of COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine in individuals aged ≥ 18 years. No COVID passes used.</p>	
WHO	<p>Date extracted: 4 January 2022 Last updated: 7 December 2021</p>	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	<p>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 severe</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	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	<p>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.</p> <p>Ensure early warning systems are in place to inform efficient adjustment of public health and social measures.</p>	
Face coverings	<p>The WHO recommend that healthcare workers wear a respirator or medical mask along with other PPE before entering a room where there is a patient with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 (22 December 2021). They also 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 (23 December 2021).</p>	

COVID Pass	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	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. Updated 23 December 2021 advice does not specify any changes to facemasks, IPC, business advices, gatherings, culture, schools etc. The document notes higher transmissibility but potentially lower hospitalisation rates (not clear whether this is reduced virulence or increased immunity). PH advice should be tailored as more data emerges.
ECDC	Date extracted: 04 January 2022 Last updated: 15 December 2021	Trigger for changes
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	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	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). 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 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).	

	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. 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.	
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	Booster guidance 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. 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).	
US CDC	Date extracted: 04 January 2022 Last updated: 27 December 2021	Trigger for changes
Social or mass gatherings	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	Despite the increased attention of Omicron, Delta continues to be the main variant circulating in the US (updated 7 December 2021). 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.
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	
Culture/leisure/entertainment	No updated advice since 26 November 2021	
Changes in IPC guidance (includes close contact status, restriction of movement)	On 27 December 2021 the CDC updated advice on isolation and quarantine recommendations for the public. The recommended time for isolation of those with COVID-19 has been shortened to 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving after this time, they should wear a mask for a further 5 days. For those exposed to COVID-19, and who are unvaccinated or more than 6 months from their second mRNA vaccine or more than 2 months from J and J vaccine, 5 days quarantine plus 5 additional days of mask wearing is recommended. Those who have received a booster do not need to quarantine but should wear a mask for 10 days following exposure. If symptoms occur they should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19. Further updated recommendations will be made regarding health care workers isolation and quarantine requirements will be made when further evidence is gathered on Omicron.	
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).	

		<p>Changes to isolation and quarantine recommendations (8 December 2021) are based on emerging evidence that the majority of transmission occurs early in the course of illness (1-2 days prior to and 2-3 days prior to emergence of symptoms).</p>
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