

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

EU readies for tourists, makes progress on vaccine certificates

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Travel restrictions in Europe are changing. Image credit: Italy Ministry of Health

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

The European Union is taking more steps to welcome back foreign tourists, marking another turning point in the COVID-19 pandemic.

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The Council of the European Union has updated its **recommendations on non-essential into the E.U.** With so many countries and industries relying on international tourism, Europe's economic recovery has been hampered as lockdowns and slow vaccine campaigns have kept travel limited.

Prepping for tourists

The European Council is recommending that member states waive testing and quarantine requirements for all travelers who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. To qualify, travelers must have received the last recommended dose of an approved vaccine at least 14 days prior to entry.

Unvaccinated visitors who are traveling for nonessential or leisure purposes must meet other requirements, including coming from countries with low rates of COVID-19. However, the E.U. is raising the limit of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people over the previous 14 days from 25 to 75.



The E.U.'s vaccine certificate is only meant to be a temporary requirement. Image credit: European Commission

Despite these announcements from May 20, no dates have been confirmed and member countries will be able to set their own terms and timetables. Some European countries, including France, Italy and Greece, have already begun or set dates to welcome tourists.

The E.U. is also encouraging members to adopt an "emergency brake mechanism" for countries or regions where the COVID-19 situation is urgent. The United Kingdom faced harsh travel restrictions in late 2020, and the European Commission has recommended limiting essential travel from India, which is currently facing the world's worst COVID outbreak.

Additionally, the European Parliament and Council have also reached an agreement on an E.U. Digital COVID certificate. It is expected to be available by the end of June and will be free of charge to citizens.

"All E.U. citizens have a fundamental right to free movement in the E.U.," said Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, in a [statement](#). "The E.U. Digital COVID Certificate, available in paper or digital format, will make it easier for Europeans to travel whether to see their families and loved ones or to get some well-deserved rest."

Earlier this month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revised its recommendations for fully vaccinated adults in the United States. The announcement followed weeks of rising vaccination rates, falling COVID-19 infections and promising data on the efficacy of the vaccines ([see story](#)).

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