



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Sweden - COVID-19: Evolving Immigration/Travel Restrictions

The Swedish government announced on 12 June that it is following the recommendations of the European Commission by extending the entry ban into Sweden for foreign nationals coming from a country outside the European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA)/Switzerland until 30 June .¹ The entry ban essentially applies to all foreign citizens travelling to Sweden from all countries except EU member states, the United Kingdom, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland. (For prior coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2020-199](#) (27 April 2020).)

On 11 June, the European Commission released its new guidelines for EU member states with regards to the current restrictions on non-essential travel to the EU in light of the coronavirus crisis.² Ultimately, the aim of the new recommendations is to gradually phase out the current travel restrictions. The European Commission has proposed measures, which we describe below, for a coordinated phasing out of the travel restrictions.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The travel restrictions have had a considerable impact on travellers and employees moving between Sweden, the EU/EEA/Switzerland, and other countries.

The loosening of the rules that had limited cross-border travel and the restoration of some degree of international travel should be seen as encouraging signs for a gradual restoration of some freedom of movement and is welcome news for businesses and their employees who undertake cross-border travel for business purposes. There is still a way to go, before freedom to travel returns to a pre-pandemic state, but these are hopeful signs for Sweden and the EU's economies and for multinational organisations that are considering plans to bring/send foreign employees into/to Sweden as well as to send Swedish employees overseas.

European Commission Recommendations

During the COVID-19 pandemic, several member states imposed internal border controls and quarantine requirements for individuals arriving from abroad. It is the recommendation from the Commission for all members states to lift internal border controls and quarantine requirements by 15 June. (For related coverage, see the following issues of *GMS Flash Alert*: [2020-267](#) (4 June 2020) and [2020-227](#) (12 May 2020).)

Regarding the external border controls, the Commission recommends prolonging travel restrictions until 30 June. Meanwhile the Commission and EU member states should prepare a list of those third countries fulfilling certain criteria, so that these countries' travel restrictions can be lifted from July.

The Commission has also expressed a recommendation to lift the travel restrictions from the region of the Western Balkans from 1 July. The countries included are:

- Albania;
- Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Kosovo;
- Montenegro;
- North Macedonia;
- Serbia.

KPMG NOTE

As of publication, there are no updates on how the Swedish government will implement the recommendation regarding the countries of the Western Balkans. KPMG will continue to monitor the situation.

FOOTNOTES:

1 See (in English) 12 June 2020 [Ministry of Justice press release](#).

2 See 11 June 2020 [European Commission press release](#).

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RELATED RESOURCE:

This article is excerpted, with permission, from "[Update Sweden – Immigration restrictions related to COVID-19](#)" in *KPMG TaxNews* (15 June 2020), a publication of KPMG AB, a KPMG International member firm in Sweden.

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