

COVID-19 BRIEF – FRANCE

In his speech on Sunday 14 June, the President of the Republic presented new measures that came into force on June 15, concerning the end of lockdown in France and the opening of its borders.

- **Total reopening of restaurants and cafés in Paris and Ile-de-France from June 15**

Since June 15, the entire territory, with the exception of Mayotte and French Guiana, is considered a “green” zone. This notably means the full reopening of cafés and restaurants in the Ile-de-France region, of which only terraces have been authorized since June 2.

- **Reopening of internal European borders**

Given the improved health situation in France and in Europe and in accordance with the recommendations announced last Thursday by the European Commission, at midnight (0:00, Paris time) on 15 June, France lifted all restrictions on movement at its European internal borders (land, air and sea), which have been applied to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

From June 15, people arriving from the European Space (European Union Member States as well as Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland and the Vatican) will be able to enter French territory without COVID-19-related restrictions, as was the case before 18 March 2020. These travellers will no longer be required to have an exempted international travel certificate to enter France. As a reminder, persons coming from the European Space are exempt from the 14-day quarantine upon their arrival in France.

In reciprocation, the restrictions will continue to apply at the borders with Spain, until June 21, and the United Kingdom until further notice.

Spain has chosen to maintain its COVID-19-related travel restrictions and the mandatory 14-day quarantine for air passengers arriving from European countries until June 21. To be consistent with Spanish authorities, France will maintain restrictions that are currently in force until June 21. Until that date, air passengers coming from Spain will be subject to a 14-day quarantine upon their arrival in France.

On June 8, the United Kingdom opted for a 14-day quarantine requirement for travellers arriving from France. On June 15, travellers arriving from the United Kingdom will no longer be subject to COVID-19-related restrictions for entering national territory, but will be asked to observe a 14-day quarantine upon their arrival.

- **July 1st : gradual and differentiated opening to international visitors from outside Schengen**

In line with the European Commission's recommendations, France will progressively start to open its Schengen Area external borders from July 1st. This will occur gradually and in a differentiated manner depending on the health situations in third countries, and in line with the European procedures to be issued by that time.

HEALTH MEASURES

Health measures will be maintained in order to limit the spread of the virus and avoid a second wave of contamination. Health recommendations are as follows :

- Wash your hands regularly or use a hydro-alcoholic solution
- Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow or a handkerchief
- Blow your nose into a disposable handkerchief and then dispose of it
- Avoid touching your face
- Maintain a distance of at least one metre from other people
- Greet other people without shaking hands or embracing

ECONOMIC MEASURES

On 10 June last, in accordance with the Prime Minister's announcements at the interministerial committee on tourism on 14 May, the Government announced new support measures for all tourism's businesses which have suffered a very sharp drop in activity with the confinement.

Concerning businesses in partial activity, regardless of their size, they will continue to be able to benefit from 100% coverage of the partial activity allowance for hours not worked until September. For the other business sectors, since June 1st, 85% of the hours off in respect of partial activity have been covered.

Furthermore, more companies will be able to benefit from the Solidarity Fund set up by the Government. Since June 1st, companies with up to 20 employees (compared to 10 employees previously) and a turnover of up to €2 million (instead of €1 million) will be eligible for the fund. Companies that have not yet applied for the second tier of the fund can do so until July.

What is more, VSEs (less than 10 employees) and SMEs (less than 250 employees) in these sectors will be entitled to an exemption from employer contributions paid or deferred during the months of March to June 2020 (for the periods of employment from February to May). In addition, an aid for the payment of social security contributions equal to 20% of the exempted wage bill will be introduced.

Self-employed workers belonging to these sectors will be able to benefit from a flat-rate reduction in contributions equal to the equivalent of 4 months of the contributions due on average in these sectors in 2019. Micro-entrepreneurs will benefit from an exemption from contributions due for months of activity between February and May or June.

All other companies may benefit, depending on their situation, from exceptional measures of exemption from contributions, remission or clearance of social debts.