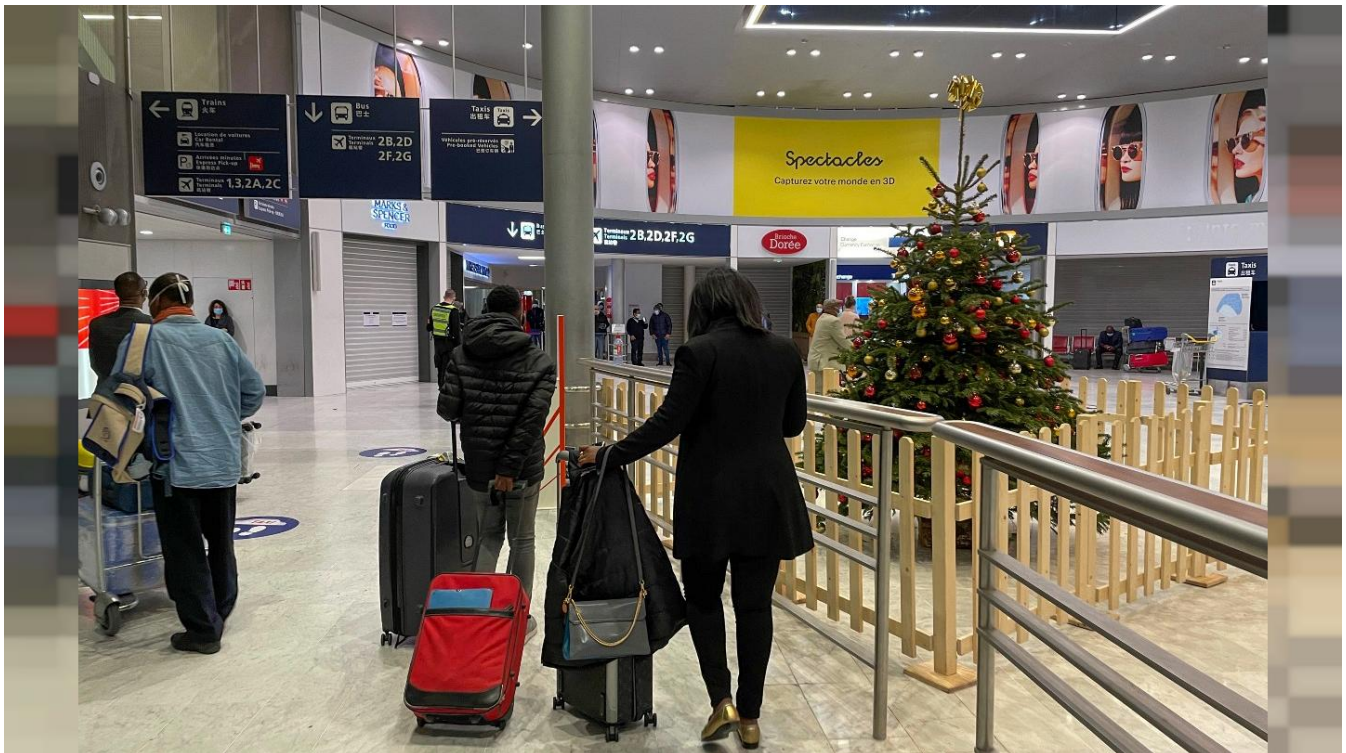


## France lifts ban on UK travelers

- A Monitor Desk Report

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France has lifted its ban on travellers from the UK.

British tourists who are vaccinated are allowed to enter the country from now, French tourism minister has confirmed.

However a negative Covid-19 test, taken 24 hours before leaving the UK, will be required, vaccinated or not.

France brought in the restrictions on December 18th in an attempt to slow the spread of the Omicron variant. However, the country is still battling a surge in Covid-19 infections.

On Thursday, there were a record 368, 817 new cases and 341 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Non-vaccinated travellers will still need a compelling reason to enter France, and must still isolate for ten days upon arrival.

The decision comes as IATA questions whether border closures have any impact on slowing the spread of Covid-19.

Following confirmation of the decision, Julia Simpson, WTTC chief executive, said: "We welcome the reopening of French borders to UK travellers.

"Once a variant is endemic closing borders is pointless and only damages livelihoods especially in travel and tourism one of the hardest hit sectors during the pandemic.

"France is one of the biggest markets for UK tourists who, according to our 2021

Economic Impact Report, account for 14 per cent of overseas visitors.”

WTTC figures show total international visitor spend in France was worth more than €60 billion, pre-pandemic.

At the same time, data analysts Cirium released figures showing there are 2,179 flights scheduled between France and the UK in January this year, offering to 367,164 seats.

The figure is up 144 per cent on last year, but still down by two thirds on the figures seen in January 2019.

The busiest route in terms of flights is between London Heathrow and Charles De Galle in Parris, with 424 trips planned this month.

Eurostar also welcomed the reopening of the border.