

## Germany plans to drop Aircraft Mask Mandate

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Germany is expected to remove the requirement to wear a mask onboard aircraft from its Infection Protection Act. The change will impact both domestic and international flights.

As part of the proposed policy, German Health Minister, Karl Lauterbach, will retain the authority to reintroduce mask requirements if there is a sharp rise in cases.

The country's other COVID-19 health measures on masks and testing are expected to remain in place for the upcoming winter.

This significant change in policy will come as a surprise to many. Just last week the German Government announced plans to further tighten mask requirements, with N95 or FFP2-style masks being required from October 1st, 2022 onwards. The mask mandate was also expected to be extended through April 2023.

This was met with "sheer incomprehension" by the Board of Airline Representatives in Germany (BARIG). BARIG represents more than 100 national and international airlines, and at the time, its Secretary General, Michael Hoppe, stated,

"The German Federal Government's plan is not reasonable to us. There is no epidemiological basis for such a step."

The requirement to wear a mask in German airports was removed several months ago, and passengers have since been calling out the inconsistency in having to wear a mask on the aircraft, after having already been in the airport for several hours without one.

They argued that thanks to their advanced HEPA filters, the air quality onboard the aircraft was superior to that in the airport.

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