

## Greece to scrape remaining Covid travel restrictions

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Greece is to remove all remaining Covid-related travel restrictions on May 2, in time for its peak summer tourist season. The nation joins a list of 15 other European countries, including Sweden, Madeira and Cyprus, which have dropped entry rules as infection rates stabilise.

The Mediterranean country is expecting high numbers of visitors this year, with officials predicting revenues reaching 80pc of 2019 levels, a record year before the pandemic brought travel to a halt.

Measures to be removed include vaccine certificates, recovery certificates and the requirement to wear masks in indoor public places from next month.

Greece's Minister for Health, Thanos Plevris said that Covid had stabilised in Greece, allowing the country to proceed with the suspension of the protection measures, but he emphasised that the measure were being suspended, not abolished, and that the rules would be reviewed in September.

Travellers will no longer be required to take a pre-travel test, quarantine or provide proof of vaccination to enter the country. On the ground, visitors will no longer have to wear a mask in indoor spaces such as hotel lobbies, or show vaccine certificates to gain entry to certain venues.

The scrapping its passenger locator form on 15 March, as well as extending the validity of visitors' vaccine passes to nine months on 1 April.

Covid infections in the country have fallen in recent weeks, with authorities recording 15,000 infections and 64 deaths on 12 April. Out of a population of 11 million, some 72% are fully vaccinated.

Greece's summer tourism season typically begins after the Orthodox Easter, which this year falls on 24 April.

The Greek Ministry of Tourism was voted 'World's Leading Tourist Board' at World Travel 2021

From May 1 to August 31, the public will no longer need to present coronavirus vaccination or illness certificates to enter indoor or open spaces such as restaurants, and authorities are also considering lifting the requirement of presenting an EU digital COVID certificate to enter the country.

In addition, wearing masks indoors will no longer be mandatory as of June 1 and students will return to class after the Easter break without needing to regularly present negative self-tests.

Plevris said all measures will be re-evaluated in September.

Greece, one of the most popular summer tourism destinations in southern Europe, attracted more than 33 million visitors in 2019, most of them from Britain and Germany. The industry accounts for about a fifth of the economy and employs one in five people.

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