

Switzerland COVID-19

Update 8th July 2020

Real estate

Operating close to normal, with some viewings being offered virtually, or with limited parties in the building at any given time. Federal guidelines being followed on the use of face masks.

Entrance and exit inspections are taking place again in accordance with the social distancing rules.

Construction and repair work are being carried out but sometimes this is taking a little longer than prior to the lockdown.

Transportation and shops

Train/buses

These are running now on a normal timetable. The advice is to travel during off-peak if possible and try and keep a distance between each other. Wearing of face masks is now mandatory at all times.

Taxis

Taxi continue to run normal (regulated per law) although special measures for disinfection have been introduced.

Cars

Fuel stations are open, and Winter tyres can be changed.

Shopping

All shops are now open and operating again, however limited numbers are being allowed in at any given time. Face mask wearing has become mandatory in some Cantons, so our advice is to always have one available. The floors are marked for social distancing and in hairdressers' masks are always required.

Education

Local and international schools are now closed for the Summer holidays. The break is for between 8-9 weeks (so end of August) for the majority and they then will be re-opening.

Administration office for international schools may be open for another week, as they try and organize arrivals and departures disrupted by the travel restrictions.

Events

All public and private events can take place for up to 1,000 people (assuming rules are followed, and contact tracing is in place). Gatherings of more than 1,000 are banned until the end of August.

International travel

Entering by car or air from Schengen/EFTA and UK is now possible as of the 15th of June. From the 6th July third country national workers (non-EU/EFTA) have been able to enter with the appropriate documentation on assignment (but not those attending short term training, non-essential business meetings or for holidays).

Travelers arriving from certain countries will face quarantine periods. The list has been published but is subject to change by the FOPD (Federal Office of Public Health). Those entering will be advised at either the point of entry or whilst in transit.

Airports are open but many flights have been cancelled, and there are only a few planes offering intercontinental travel and not always on a daily basis.

Work and permits

Offices are generally open, and the government recommendation for employees to work from home has been lifted leaving it to the employers to set the rules and necessary levels of protection required. Employees in the high-risk category (people with serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and lung disease, or aged over 60) must be allowed to work from home.

Administration offices for permits are open (sometime with limited opening hours); application processing of permits has restarted for previously submitted ones, also for new ones from EU/EFTA citizens. For those who had already registered at the townhall then the physical copy issued is taking longer than normal and, in some Cantons, it is not being issued at all until the current challenges have passed.

For 3rd country nationals (non-EU/EFTA), permits will be issued again and entry to the country permitted from the 6th of July under the quota systems as was in place prior to the COVID lockdown. This lifting relates to workers, so those coming on holiday, short-term training, non-essential business meetings are still blocked.

Deregistration during the lockdown has been possible remotely, but now with offices open often an in-person notification is required (as was the case prior to situation).

Timetable for lifting restrictions

Masks should be worn when social distancing is not possible.

Contact tracing app is now available called SwissCovid

6th July 3rd country nationals (non-EU/EFTA) can enter for work purposes with the required documentation (assignments). Short-term training, non-essential business meetings and holidays are still not permitted.

20th July possible lifting of restrictions on some third country nations deemed "low risk"

22nd July next scheduled Federal announcements

Helpline number

0041 58 463 0000 (for residents)

0041 58 464 4499 (for travelers)

Germany COVID-19

Update 8th July 2020

Real estate

As of 17 June, the federal government of Germany and the federal states have agreed upon allowing the federal states to adjust and lift individual restrictions, while the general hygiene, distancing, and contact restrictions remain in place. In addition, Germany has introduced a Corona Warning App as of 15 June. Usage is not mandatory, but strongly recommended.

Citizens are asked to keep the number of people with whom they have contact to a minimum and to keep the number of people they have contact with as constant as possible. Closer and longer contacts should be kept to a minimum. Where possible, meetings should preferably be held outdoors.

Home finding viewings are possible. Housing prices remain relatively solid despite reduced demand currently.

Public authorities are open for in-person services, albeit on an appointment-only basis. Distancing and Hygiene measures are in place.

Transportation and shops

Train/buses

Public transportation is available and running on regular schedules. All states will require wearing a mask when using public transport, some will require wearing a mask in stations.

Taxis

Taxis continue to run normal (regulated per law) although special measures for disinfection are introduced.

Cars

Fuel stations, as well as repair shops are open.

Shopping

All shops are allowed to be open. Hygiene and distancing regulations are required, and all states are requiring wearing a mask for shopping to date. Restaurants are allowed to be open observing the hygiene and distancing measurements. Bars are still closed in most German states.

As of 1st July, the VAT has been lowered from 19% to 16% (from 7% to 5% for selected goods) to strengthen the economy. This measure will effective until the end of the year.

Education

All children are to be accepted to Nurseries and Kindergartens, but yet with a reduced schedule, as hygiene rules apply. Schools (nursery/primary/secondary) have started to resume operation with limited schedules minding the distancing and hygiene measures. Individual regulations vary from state to state.

It is planned to allow for a regular school schedule at the latest following the Summer holidays.

Events

Large public events with a limited possibility for contact tracing remain forbidden until 31st October. Museums, Theaters, etc. are starting operations again and depending on the respective restrictions of the individual states.

International travel

Travel within Germany is possible, distancing measures remain in place. Restrictions may be imposed to travelers from areas with an increased number of infections.

As of 15 June, all borders will be open for travel within the EU/Schengen/GB. Inbound travelers will not face Quarantine measures, unless they are entering from a country deemed to be high risk due to the number of Covid-19 infections. Currently, travelers entering the country from Sweden will be required to undergo quarantine measures in several federal states.

As of 2 July, citizens from selected third countries can enter Germany. Germany initially allows entries from the following countries: Australia, Georgia, Canada, Montenegro, New Zealand, Thailand, Tunisia and Uruguay. For three further states (China, Japan and South Korea), the entry restrictions will be lifted on condition that these states in turn expand the entry possibilities for German citizens. In addition, entry should be possible for travelers from third countries if there is an "important reason for travel". Travelers entering the country from Non-EU/ non-Schengen countries deemed "risk areas" are required to undergo a quarantine period after arrival. These countries will be re-evaluated regularly.

Flight schedules have been reduced significantly but are picking up again.

Work

No federal regulation is in place for prohibiting employees to go to work. However, hygiene regulations should be observed in companies - with protective measures for employees and visitors. Companies are advised to allow for home office solutions where possible.

Timetable for lifting restrictions

This is provisional and subject to the trend of reduced infections continuing.

The federal government has imposed general guidelines for easing the restrictions as of 6th May, including safety measures, in case infections start to increase. If more than 50 new infections per 100,000 inhabitants occur within seven days in an administrative district or an independent city, immediate regional restrictions must be imposed.

As of 15 June, all borders will be open for travel within the EU. Individual restrictions may still apply based on the situation in the respective country.

Some federal states will resume unrestricted schooling as of 22 June.

As of 2 July, citizens from selected third countries can enter Germany.

The German states will govern individually how many people will be allowed to be meeting again, as well as other measures. We will monitor the situation and will be able to advise individually, depending on the respective situation and request.

Large public events remain forbidden until 31st October.

Helpline number

+49(0)30 346465100 Mo – Thu 8:00am - 6:00pm, Fr 8:00am - 12:00pm

Belgium COVID-19

Update 8th July 2020

Real estate

The National Security Council approved to proceed with phase 4 of the phasing-out plan, starting from 1 July. It is now possible to have closer contact with 10 – 15 different people every week, in addition to the family members (= extended personal bubble).

Real Estate agencies are open again.

Town halls typically offer email applications and may deliver certain documents by email.

Transportation and shops

Train/buses

Public transportation is running on regular schedule, but passengers need to respect the social distancing rules. People are being asked to only take public transport if necessary. As of 4th May, wearing a mask is required in public transport.

Taxis

Taxis continue to service customers, provided that a minimum distance of 1.5 m is maintained between passengers. The number of people that can be transported therefore varies according to the type of vehicle. People living under the same roof may share a taxi. In this case the rule of minimum distance is not applicable.

Cars

Fuel stations are open. Car/glass/tire repairs can be done in garages.

Shopping

All shops are open. Pubs and restaurants are open until 1:00 a.m. It is possible to meet up with a maximum of 10 persons. Discotheques or night clubs are not yet allowed to reopen.

Education

Nurseries, Nursery schools, as well as primary and secondary schools are open.

Events

For regular events held in permanent infrastructures such as theatres, cinemas, stands and congress halls that are organized, protocols will be developed with the competent ministers and GEES experts.

For one-off events taking place in the public space an online tool (matrix) will be available from 1 July, which will serve as a reference for local authorities when granting permits for these events.

All these events are subject to a capacity limit: 200 people indoors; 400 people outdoors. When people take part in cultural and leisure activities, wearing a mask is recommended at all times.

International travel

Travel inside of Belgium is unrestricted.

As of 15 June, Belgium has opened its borders for travel to and from the European Union, including the United Kingdom and the four other Schengen countries (Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway), as well as selected non-EU countries.

As of 2 July, The EU has issued a recommendation to allow for citizens from selected third countries to enter the EU again. Initially, this applies to the following countries: Algeria, Australia, Canada, Georgia, Japan, Montenegro, Morocco, New Zealand, Rwanda, Serbia, South Korea, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay, China (subject to confirmation of reciprocity). In addition, entry should be possible for travelers from third countries if there is an "important reason for travel". Travelers entering the country from Non-EU/ non-Schengen countries deemed "risk areas" are required to undergo a quarantine period after arrival. These countries will be re-evaluated for risk assessment regularly.

Work

Working from home is recommended for all employees for whom it is possible. When working from home is not possible, companies must guarantee social distancing.

Timetable for lifting restrictions

This is provisional and subject to the trend of reduced infections continuing.

Sports and Culture: From 1st July, people are allowed to exercise together with 50 other participants.

Cinemas and Theme Parks are allowed to reopen, an audience is allowed. A maximum of 200 people indoors is allowed, seating only. This capacity limit will be increased in August to 400 people indoors and 800 people outdoors, provided the health situation allows for it.

From 1st August, Village fetes and funfairs may go ahead.

Helpline number

0032 0800 14 689 weekdays 8am – 8pm /weekends 10am – 8pm

About us

Packimpex with the support of all employees will be offering a flexible working solution. We will ensure we constantly have the staffing required to deliver the authorized services to your employees.

Please contact us if you have any specific concerns with regards to the current situation, our services or our ability to work with you and your colleagues in the weeks and months ahead.