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# Europe's post-lockdown rules compared

Tourists can now go on a summer break, but social distancing rules differ from country to country.

By **CORNELIUS HIRSCH** | 6/21/20, 7:15 AM CET | Updated 6/22/20, 7:23 PM CET



A terrace in L'Escala, in the Catalan province of Girona | David Borrat/EPA

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Europe's summer break is back on — but how coronavirus will impact your trip depends on where you go.

Countries are beginning to open up their borders after Brussels asked EU governments to reboot free travel from Monday (as detailed in POLITICO's travel guide).

When you reach your destination, however, things are not yet back to normal. Some countries have remnants of their lockdown measures in place along with social distancing rules and bans on large events. Face masks will be an essential travel accessory for most tourists.

Here's a guide to what to expect when you arrive in the EU27 and the U.K. and the lockdown path that led there — [Privacy Settings](#) on of each country's lockdown:

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Austria | Belgium | Bulgaria | Croatia | Cyprus | Czech Republic | Denmark | Estonia | Finland | France | Germany | Greece | Hungary | Ireland | Italy | Latvia | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Netherlands | Poland | Portugal | Romania | Slovakia | Slovenia | Spain | Sweden | United Kingdom

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## Sweden


**Reopening timeline:** Sweden was the poster child for a light-touch approach, but the government recommended people limit personal contacts and apply social distancing. People are also encouraged to work from home.



Visitors in the Kungsträdgården park, in Stockholm | Jonathan Nackstrand/AFP via Getty Images

**Face masks:** Not mandatory.

**Lockdown length:** No lockdown.

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## Finland

**Reopening timeline:** First schools reopened on May 14. Restaurants, bars and cafés, as well as museums, libraries and swimming pools opened June 1. Public gatherings of up to 50 people are allowed after up to 10 people were allowed to meet since May 13. The state of emergency declared in March was lifted June 16.

**Face masks:** Not made mandatory.

**Lockdown length:** Finland never really locked down, with authorities advising against non-essential movement but not banning it. Shops stayed open.

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## Latvia

**Reopening timeline:** First restrictions eased starting May 12, which included allowing gatherings of up to 25 people and reopening shopping malls. The state of emergency ended on June 9.




A statue of a female doctor by Latvian artist Aigars Bikse in Riga | Gints Ivuskans/AFP via Getty Images

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**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport.

**Lockdown length:** No strict lockdown.

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## The Netherlands

**Reopening timeline:** Businesses such as hairdressers allowed to reopen from May 11. From June 1, restaurants, theaters, libraries and cinemas could reopen if distancing rules could be upheld. Primary schools reopened on May 11 with secondary schools following on June 1.

**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport.

**Lockdown length:** A less strict approach compared to other countries, with many shops remaining open.

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## Czech Republic

**Reopening timeline:** First small shops reopened on April 9, markets and craft shops on April 20. Larger shops followed on April 27; cinemas, theaters, shopping centers, outdoor spaces of restaurants, cafés and bars on May 11. Public gatherings of up to 10 people were allowed as of April 24.


From May 11, social, sports and cultural events, as well as weddings and church services with up to 100 people, were allowed. From May 25, all other businesses, hotels, restaurants, bars, cafés, indoor and outdoor pools opened, with gatherings of up to 500 people permitted.



A barber wearing a face mask and protective shield in Prague | Gabriel Kuchta/Getty Images

**Face masks and contact tracing:** No longer required outdoors as of May 25, but still mandatory on public transport and in indoor public spaces where 2-meter distancing cannot be maintained. A "smart quarantine" system based on cell phone and credit card data is in place.

**Lockdown length:** 24 days (from the first measures being put in place to the first non-essential shops opening).

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## Poland


**Reopening timeline:** Parks and forests reopened and more people allowed into supermarkets and churches as of April 20. Since May 4, shopping malls, hotels and certain cultural institutions reopened. First kindergartens reopened from May 6.

As of May 18, hairdressers, restaurants and football pitches reopened under certain conditions. Polish schools remained closed until May 24. Primary schools resumed classes on May 25. Restrictions regarding the number of people in shops and restaurants were lifted as of May 30.

**Face masks:** Initially mandatory in public. Since May 30, face masks have only been mandatory on public transport, in shops and whenever a 2-meter distance cannot be maintained.



**Lockdown length:** 25 days.

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## Denmark


**Reopening timeline:** Nurseries and schools reopened April 15. Some small businesses, such as hairdressers, allowed to reopen from April 20. Shopping malls, cafés and restaurants reopened from May 11.



Stands during a football match between Vejle Boldklub and Skive IK in Vejle on June 9 | Claus Fisker/EFE via EPA

**Face masks:** Denmark did not make the use of masks mandatory in public. Since June 15, masks are mandatory at airports.

**Lockdown length:** 28 days.

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## Germany

**Reopening timeline:** On May 6, the government announced that all shops could reopen

under strict hygiene measures, with individual federal states having the option to announce further steps. First schools began to reopen from May 4. People will still have to keep a distance of 1.5 meters from each other in public places at least until June 29.

**Face masks and contact tracing:** Mandatory in indoor public spaces and on public transport. Contact tracing app launched on June 16.

**Lockdown length:** 29 days.

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## Austria

**Reopening timeline:** Small shops reopened April 14, with other shops and businesses following May 1. The ban on non-essential movement was lifted and public gatherings of up to 10 people were allowed as of the same date.


Restaurants, bars and cafés reopened May 15, hotels followed on May 29 along with weddings and funerals for up to 100 attendees. Indoor events with up to 250 people and outdoor events with up to 500 people are allowed as of July 1. This number increases to 500 and 750, respectively, on August 1.



Andy Warhol paintings at the Albertina museum in Vienna | Florian Wieser/EFE via EPA

**Face masks and contact tracing:** Masks are mandatory on public transport and for businesses that involve physical contact. A voluntary contact-tracing app has been rolled out.

**Lockdown length:** 29 days.

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## Slovenia

**Reopening timeline:** Most shops and businesses not requiring physical contact reopened on April 20. Bars, restaurants and businesses such as hairdressers reopened on May 4. Schools and kindergartens gradually started reopening from May 18. All shops were allowed to reopen May 18 and public gatherings of up to 50 people were allowed. All tourism facilities have reopened and gatherings of up to 200 people have been permitted since June 1.

**Face masks:** Masks and gloves are mandatory in indoor public spaces.

**Lockdown length:** 31 days.

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## Belgium

**Reopening timeline:** Shops selling fabric and some companies were allowed to reopen from May 4. Visits of a small number of close friends and family were allowed from May 10. Since May 11, all shops allowed to reopen under strict conditions.

First schools reopened May 18, as well as hairdressers, museums and outdoor food markets under certain conditions. On June 2, nursery schools fully reopened with social distancing not required. Children of all grades at primary schools resumed classes as of June 8. On the same date, restaurants, bars and gyms opened and the number of people allowed to meet per week per household increased to 10.






The coastal resort city of Oostende | Olivier Hoslet/EFE via EPA

**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport, at airports, at hairdressers and beauty salons. They are also recommended in public whenever a distance of 1.5 meters cannot be maintained.

**Lockdown length:** 34 days until April 20, when garden centers reopened.

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## Italy

**Reopening timeline:** Bookshops, stationery shops and stores selling baby products reopened April 14. Other sectors gradually resumed economic activity from May 4. Factories, building sites and parks reopened and companies no longer need authorization to restart operations.

Italians were allowed to visit their relatives in small numbers as of May 4. Shops and museums reopened May 18, as did restaurants, bars and cafés. Hairdressers resumed business on May 18. Gatherings of up to 30 people were permitted as of May 30. Gyms and swimming pools reopened May 25, followed by cinemas and theaters on June 15. Schools will not restart until September.

**Face masks:** Mandatory in shops and on public transport.

**Lockdown length:** 35 days from March 10 to April 14.

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## Luxembourg


**Reopening timeline:** DIY shops reopened April 20. From May 4, universities and final-year classes at secondary schools resumed. Secondary schools reopened from May 11, primary schools and nurseries followed on May 25. Shops and businesses such as hairdressers opened on May 11. Restaurants and bars followed on May 29.



A woman wears a mask in the center of Luxembourg | Julien Warnand/EFE via EPA

**Face masks and testing:** Mandatory where 2-meter social distancing cannot be guaranteed. Luxembourg has also announced plans to test its entire population as well as cross-border workers.

**Lockdown length:** 35 days.

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## Malta

**Reopening timeline:** Non-essential retail shops were allowed to reopen on May 4. All

businesses allowed to reopen from June 5.

**Face masks:** Mandatory in shops and on public transport.

**Lockdown length:** 35 days.

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## Hungary

**Reopening timeline:** First restrictions were eased from April 29 but remained in place in Budapest. Shops reopened and public transport resumed in the countryside from May 4. Restrictions on movement in Budapest were lifted from May 18.




Boxes of face masks at the MODEM museum in Debrecen, Hungary | Zsolt Czeglédi/EFE via EPA

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**Face masks:** Mandatory in shops and on public transport.

**Lockdown length:** 37 days.

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## Lithuania



**Reopening timeline:** All shops reopened April 23. The nationwide quarantine was lifted on June 17.

**Face masks:** No longer mandatory in public since June 17.

**Lockdown length:** 38 days.

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## Croatia


**Reopening timeline:** All shops allowed to reopen as of April 27, apart from big shopping centers. Businesses not requiring physical contact allowed to resume operating from May 4. From May 11, gatherings of up to 10 people were allowed, and shopping centers and first schools reopened. Bars and restaurants allowed to serve customers in outdoor spaces. Limits on the size of public gatherings were lifted on May 30.



A beach in the island of Cres | Dominik Bat/EFE via EPA

**Face masks:** Croatia did not make face masks mandatory, but they have to be worn on all Croatia Airlines flights

**Lockdown length:** 39 days.

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## Slovakia

**Reopening timeline:** Small stores of up to 300 square meters reopened on April 22. As of May 20, most restrictions have been eased. Cinemas, theaters, shopping centers, restaurants with indoor seating were allowed to reopen and events with up to 100 people are permitted. Schools and kindergartens reopened June 1.

**Face masks:** No longer mandatory outdoors as of May 20.

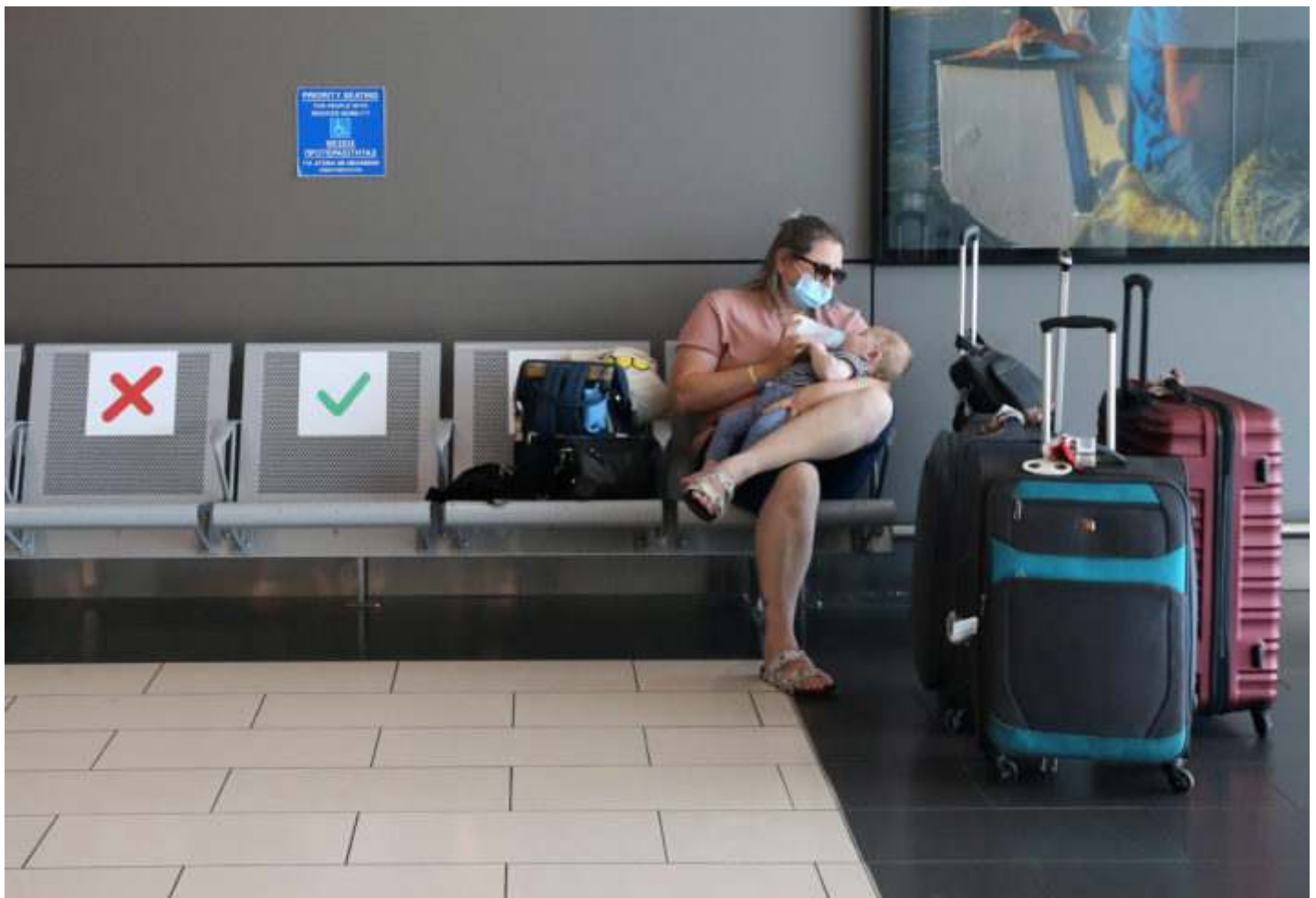
**Lockdown length:** 40 days.

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## Cyprus


**Reopening timeline:** The country started its third phase of easing restrictions on June 9 with most measures lifted including allowing restaurants, bars and hotels to fully reopen.



Larnaca International Airport in Cyprus | Katia Christodoulou/EFE via EPA

**Face masks:** Masks are recommended but not required.

**Lockdown length:** 41 days.

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## Greece

**Reopening timeline:** Small retail shops and hair salons allowed to reopen as of May 4. All shops except those in shopping malls from May 11. Churches resumed services on May 17. Restaurants, cafés and bars followed on May 25. Primary schools, preschools and daycare facilities reopened fully June 1.

**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport and in closed public spaces.

**Lockdown length:** 42 days.

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## Estonia

**Reopening timeline:** Shopping malls were allowed to reopen from May 11. Schools reopened from May 15.






An Estonian police officer holds leaflets at the border with Latvia | Valda Kalnina/EFE via EPA

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**Face masks:** Recommended but not mandatory.

**Lockdown length:** 48 days.

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## Portugal

**Reopening timeline:** From May 4, small shops, hairdressers, beauty salons, car showrooms and bookstores reopened. First schools, shops of up to 400 square meters, restaurants, cafés and museums reopened from May 18. Religious services resumed on May 30 and larger stores, other schools, daycare centers and cinemas also reopened.

**Face masks:** Mandatory in shops and schools.

**Lockdown length:** 49 days.

 Select another country

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## Spain


**Reopening timeline:** Non-essential economic activities in industrial and construction sectors permitted since April 14. Since May 4, in the vast majority of provinces, adults are allowed to exercise and some businesses reopened but only to offer services booked in advance. Restaurants and bars with outdoor spaces reopened May 11. Schools started reopening from May 26, as well as cinemas and theaters. The state of emergency is set to end June 21.



A man looks out at the beach in Roses, Spain | Josep Lago/AFP via Getty Images

**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport and in public whenever social distancing cannot be maintained.

**Lockdown length:** 49 days.

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## Romania

**Reopening timeline:** State of emergency expired on May 14. Hairdressers reopened from May 15, as did museums and dentists. Restaurants and cafés with outdoor spaces reopened June 1 and indoor restaurants followed on June 15. Traveling between regions is allowed again, as are outdoor events with up to 500 attendees. Kindergartens, schools and universities will remain closed until September.

**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport and in indoor public spaces.

**Lockdown length:** 52 days.

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## France

**Reopening timeline:** Nurseries and schools progressively reopened from May 11 along with shops, libraries and small museums, but not shopping malls. Gatherings of up to 10 people are permitted.


The country is divided between high-infection red zones and green zones, where coronavirus figures are lower. In the green zones, secondary schools, cafés and restaurants were allowed to reopen from early June. From June 15, all of France moved into the green zone, meaning that restaurants and cafés in Paris could reopen. The state of health emergency may end on July 10.



A class at the Lycée Georges Freche school of hotel management in Montpellier | Guillaume Horcajuelo/EFE via EPA

**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport.

**Lockdown length:** 55 days.

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## Ireland

**Reopening timeline:** Since May 5, people have been allowed to exercise within a 5 km radius of their home. Garden centers and markets, as well as parks, beaches and golf courses, were allowed to reopen from May 18. On June 8, shops reopened and people were allowed back to their workplaces if they can maintain a 2-meter distance; up to six people are allowed to meet, and outdoor gatherings of up to 15 people are allowed again. Up to 25 people are allowed to




attend funerals.

Shopping malls reopened on June 15. First preschools and nurseries will reopen for essential workers from June 29 along with non-essential shops, hotels, cafés and restaurants, which will resume business under social-distancing conditions. Services involving physical contact such as hairdressers are to resume from July 20.

**Face masks:** Recommended, but not mandatory.

**Lockdown length:** 55 days.

 Select another country

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## Bulgaria


**Reopening timeline:** First measures were partially eased in late April with farmers' markets resuming. Travel restrictions between cities were lifted from May 6; individual outdoor sports activity was also allowed. Shopping malls reopened May 18. The government allowed restaurants, bars and cafés to reopen at full capacity on June 1.



A beach resort at the Black Sea near the Kavarna | Vassil Donev/EFE via EPA

**Face masks:** The Bulgarian government wanted to make face masks mandatory at the end of March, but the order was changed to a recommendation.

**Lockdown length:** 57 days.

 Select another country

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## United Kingdom

**Reopening timeline:** Lockdown rules in England began to relax from May 13, with the "stay at home" message changing to "stay alert." From that date people were allowed to exercise outdoors more than once a day and restrictions on visiting parks and beaches were eased. Meeting one person from another household outside was allowed, as long as social distancing is maintained. The devolved governments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have opted to retain stricter rules.

Nurseries in England reopened from June 1, and some primary pupils have been allowed to return to school. The government plans to bring all students back to school in September. Schools in Wales reopen on June 29. In Scotland, from May 29 people are allowed to meet those from another household in groups of no more than eight. Stores and shopping malls reopened in England as of June 15 but restaurants and bars remain shut.

**Face masks:** Mandatory on public transport in England as of June 15. In Scotland, wearing masks is advisory.

**Lockdown length:** 83 days.

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*CORRECTION: An earlier version of this article misidentified L'Escala, Spain in a photo caption.*