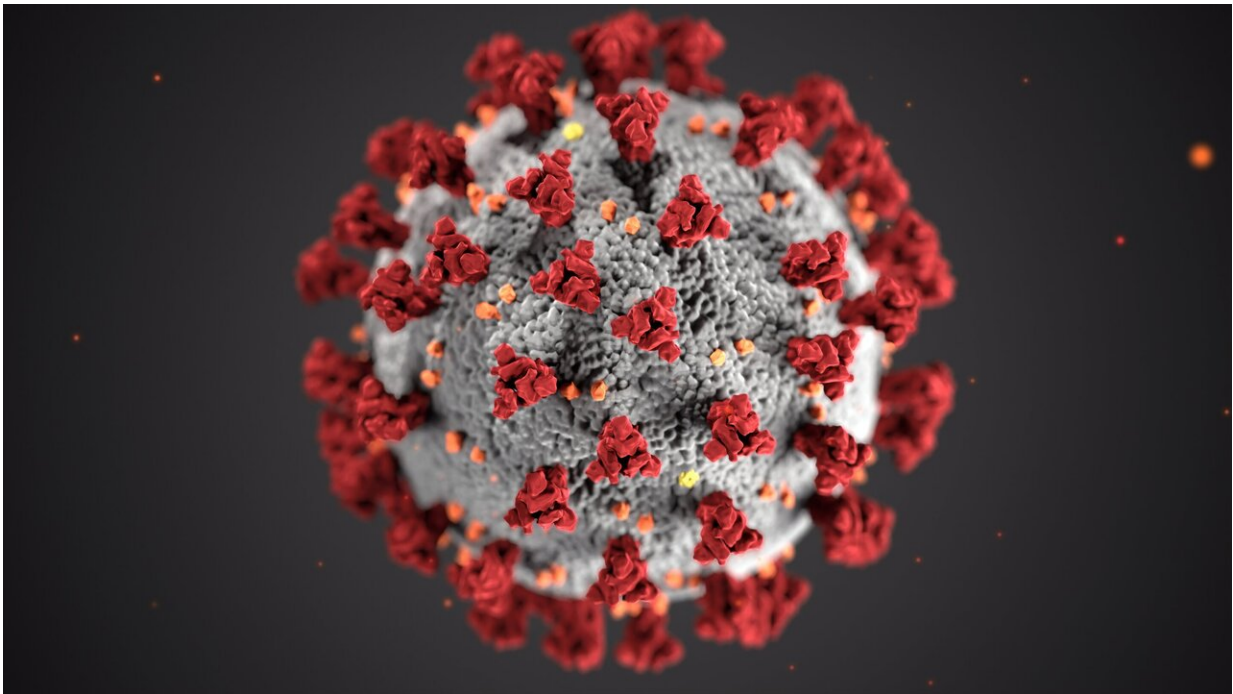


# France tells citizens to avoid Spain, Portugal over Delta variant

July 8 2021

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France warned its nationals Thursday against travelling to Spain or Portugal on holiday because of a spike in COVID-19 cases caused by the highly contagious Delta variant.

France currently allows people to travel to all other EU members as long as they are fully vaccinated or present a negative PCR or [antigen test](#) on

their return.

But Europe Minister Clement Beaune pointedly advised the French against crossing the Pyrenees mountains to Spain or Portugal.

"For those who have not yet booked their holidays, avoid Spain and Portugal as a destination," he told France 2 television. "It's better to remain in France or go to other countries."

Beaune added that France, which fears being hit by a fourth wave of coronavirus infections this summer, was weighing restrictions on travel in Europe over the spread of the highly infectious Delta mutation.

"We have to be careful... the pandemic is not over," he said. "We will decide in the coming days, but we could put in place reinforced measures."

Germany already has a ban on incoming travellers from Portugal, where the Delta variant has become dominant. Only its own citizens or residents are allowed in from Portugal, and they must quarantine for two weeks upon arrival.

Beaune said France was "closely following the situation in countries where the flare-up (in infections) is very fast," singling out the Spanish region of Catalonia, where Barcelona is situated and "where many French people go to party and for holidays."

Portugal's Foreign Minister Augusto Santos Silva acknowledged that the health situation in his country had "worsened" and said France's concerns were "understandable."

But Beaune's remarks caused alarm among French tour operators, who accused the government of sowing confusion.

"What do they mean when they say they 'advise against' (travel to Spain and Portugal)," the head of the Protourisme travel consultancy, Didier Arino, asked.

"Either you close the border or you say nothing," he said.

The Catalonia region this week reimposed curbs on nightlife to try to tame a surge in infections, especially among unvaccinated young people.

Nightclubs there will be closed from this weekend and a negative COVID-19 test or proof of vaccination will be needed to take part in [outdoor activities](#) involving more than 500 people.

Last week, nearly half of Portugal's population was again placed under night-time curfews after the number of daily new cases topped the 2,000 mark for the first time since mid-February.

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