

EU eases COVID-19 travel rules within the bloc for fully vaccinated

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(HealthDay)—European Union residents should be able to move freely

between the 27 member nations if they've been vaccinated in the past nine months or have recently recovered from coronavirus infection, bloc officials said Tuesday.

The announcement was made a day after the World Health Organization (WHO) said the spread of the [Omicron variant](#) could change the COVID-19 pandemic from overwhelming to manageable.

Still, while the Omicron variant "offers plausible hope for stabilization and normalization," it's too soon to do away with restrictions entirely because large numbers of people worldwide remain unvaccinated, Dr. Hans Kluge, WHO's director for Europe, said in a [statement](#).

Under the new EU [recommendation](#) that takes effect Feb. 1, residents of member nations will be able to move freely within the bloc if they have a COVID-19 [digital certificate](#) with their full course of vaccination, a certificate of recent recovery from [coronavirus infection](#) or a negative result from a test within the past 72 hours, *The New York Times* reported.

However, individual EU members can still place further restrictions on visitors, such as quarantine or testing.

And the EU recommended additional restrictions for unvaccinated people, those who have not recovered from the virus, and travelers from areas with high levels of virus circulation.

Along with a negative test result, these people will have to undergo further testing and quarantine.

The EU also said that proof of two-dose vaccinations will expire after nine months, in an effort to encourage more Europeans to get booster shots. After that, [people](#) who want to renew their digital certificates must

get an additional vaccine dose. Slightly over 40% of the bloc's residents have gotten a booster.

The bloc is also retaining a legal tool that will allow it to swiftly introduce more restrictive travel rules if a threatening new variant or other COVID-19 emergency emerges.

More information: Visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more on [traveling safely during the pandemic](#).

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