

Media handout

Procedure for the temporary reintroduction of checks at the borders with Austria, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg, Denmark, Italy and Spain caused by the spread of the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2

Monitoring the development of infections and avoiding setbacks

Germany has so far succeeded in keeping the number of infections with the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 low in comparison to other countries by putting in place drastic restrictions in almost every area of life. The temporary reintroduction of checks at the EU-internal borders and the travel restrictions in effect since 16 March 2020 have helped break chains of infection, mainly by greatly reducing cross-border traffic.

The downward trend in the number of COVID-19 cases made it possible for the Federal Chancellor and the heads of the federal states to agree on 6 May 2020 to take cautious steps towards returning to normal life.

A great deal has been achieved in Europe and around the world to contain the spread of the coronavirus, too. But this positive trend is still fragile. Containing the pandemic therefore remains our top priority.

Cautiously reducing checks at the borders while maintaining the ability to react

The temporary checks at the borders with **France, Switzerland and Austria** will continue until 15 June 2020 on the basis of Articles 25 and 27 of the Schengen Borders Code, Regulation (EU) 2016/399.

All cross-border traffic routes will be reopened. The Federal Police will conduct flexible, risk-based checks rather than the systematic inspections it has carried out up to now. In doing so, it will work closely with the relevant police forces of the neighbouring states.

Travellers will still need a valid reason for entering Germany. More allowances will be made for travel for family-related and personal reasons. The Federal Police will keep the Federal Ministry of the Interior informed of its experience in practice.

Checks at the border with **Luxembourg** will end at midnight on 15 May 2020. The Federal Police will resume its usual practice of conducting random checks in the border area.

We are also willing to end checks at the border with **Denmark**. We will agree with Denmark on a date as soon as the Danish government has completed its current consultations with its neighbouring states.

The easing of travel restrictions comes in response to the downward trend in the number of COVID-19 cases. Maintaining checks at certain borders ensures the necessary capability to react. If the number of cases in Germany or the neighbouring state rises, it will be possible to

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coordinate with that state and quickly resume more intensive border checks. To provide orientation, Germany has set a threshold of more than 50 new cases per 100,000 residents within 7 days.

Gradual return to normal life in Europe

We seek to end the corona-related border checks on 15 June 2020, if the development of the pandemic allows it.

Regarding the EU's external borders, the European Commission has recommended continuing restrictions on entry from non-EU countries until 15 June 2020. We are following this recommendation.

A 14-day quarantine will only be ordered in future for travellers entering Germany from countries outside of the EU. The federal states are encouraged to revise their quarantine regulations for arriving and returning travellers as needed.

The decision on the next steps for border control has been discussed intensively with the relevant federal states and neighbouring countries.

Federal Minister of the Interior Horst Seehofer:

“It is European to fight a dangerous virus together. It is not European to shirk shared responsibility for unpopular measures.”