

Information on the designation of international risk areas

As of: 20 February 2023

Changes since last amendment

As of 0 a.m. (midnight) on 22 February 2023, the People's Republic of China is no longer classified as an “area of variants of concern in which a variant of particular concern threatens to emerge”

Note: Since January 9, 2023, the People's Republic of China (excluding the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) has been classified as an “*area of variants of concern in which a variant of particular concern threatens to emerge*”. With this reclassification, no areas worldwide are classified as areas of variants of concern.

Note:

As of 0 a.m. (midnight) on 7 January 2023, with the entry into force of the “Eighth Ordinance amending the Coronavirus Entry Regulations”, the previous category of “areas of variants of concern” (an area of variants of concern in which a variant of particular concern *already exists*) is complemented by an additional, **new category:**

An area of variants of concern in which a “variant of particular concern *threatens to emerge*”. Classifying an area as such is associated with an **obligation to furnish proof upon entry into Germany** (through proof of testing using a nucleic acid test (PCR) or PoC antigen test).

To help detect potential newly emerging or re-emerging particularly dangerous virus variants, the newly introduced section 5a of the Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations enables the competent authorities to require additional **random testing after entry into Germany** from areas of variants of concern.

There is no obligation to register before entry into Germany.

An obligation to quarantine (“obligation to self-isolate”) upon entry into Germany or a “ban on carriage” still only applies for regions classified as areas of variants of concern, in which a *variant of particular concern already exists*. The criterion for distinction is therefore whether a variant of particular concern *already exists* or (only) *threatens to emerge*.

Further information:

- On the foregoing obligations, exemptions and requirements regarding the relevant proof can be found at: <https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/service/gesetze-und-verordnungen/guv-19-lp/coronaeinreisev.html>
- The existing travel and safety advisories by the Federal Foreign Office (<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/ReiseUndSicherheit/reise-und-sicherheitshinweise>)

as well as the Federal Government's information for travellers and commuters (<https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/themen/coronavirus/corona-regelungen-1735032>) remain unchanged.

Notes on the classification of areas of variants of concern

Classification as an area of variants of concern is determined by the Federal Ministry of Health, in agreement with the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, for regions outside of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Areas of variants of concern can be areas

- a) in which a variant of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus with characteristics causing a particular concern as defined in letter b, that is not yet or no longer widespread in the Federal Republic of Germany, threatens to emerge on account of
 - aa) there being found or presumed to be a faster rate of infection spread (disease momentum) or higher incidence rates relative to the Federal Republic of Germany in combination with
 - bb) insufficiently available or reliable sequencing data on variant incidences and epidemiological data, which could allow conclusions to be drawn regarding disease severity, in particular data regarding hospitalisations, ICU admissions as well as the mortality figures among those infected with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, unless other reports are available enabling sufficiently reliable conclusions to be drawn that the circulating variants do not demonstrate characteristics that would cause particular concern as defined within letter b, or
- b) an area as defined in section 2 no. 17 of the Protection Against Infection Act for which the Federal Ministry of Health, with the agreement of the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, has determined there to be a specific variant of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus possessing characteristics causing particular concern that is not yet or no longer widespread in the Federal Republic of Germany, and there are relevant indications that or in relation to which there is still uncertainty whether
 - aa) vaccination with specific vaccines which are authorised for use in the European Union or previous infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus provides no or only limited protection against that variant, or
 - bb) it demonstrates other similarly serious characteristics causing particular concern, in particular because it causes more serious disease or increased mortality.

The classification as an area of variants of concern becomes effective, at the earliest, upon expiry of the first day following publication of such determination by the Robert Koch Institute on its website. This should provide travellers and the countries and/or regions concerned time to respond to the classification and make the relevant arrangements.