Information on the recognition of diagnostic tests for SARS-CoV-2 for persons arriving in Germany from risk areas

As of: 19 March 2021

The current list of risk areas can be found on the following website: www.rki.de/covid-19-risikogebiete.

Please note: The Federal Government examines on an ongoing basis to what extent areas should be classified as risk areas. As a result, this list can be modified at short notice and, above all, may be extended further.

Obligation to undergo testing and provide proof of a negative test result

If you spent time within the 10 days prior to entering Germany in a risk area (not a high-incidence area, nor area of variants of concern), you must be able to furnish proof of a negative test result within 48 hours of entry. The swab specimen must have been taken at the earliest 48 hours before entry. Within 10 days following entry, the public health office (Gesundheitsamt) may require that you present the negative test result.

Persons entering Germany from areas associated with particularly high risk of infection (high-incidence areas or areas of variants of concern) are subject to tighter regulation. Persons entering Germany who spent time within the 10 days prior to entry in such an area are obligated to already get tested before departing on their journey to Germany. Before setting off, they must present their carrier (e.g. the airline) with a negative test result or appropriate medical certificate. A negative test result can also be demanded by the Federal Police in the context of checking duties (entry control at the airport or controls performed close to borders when crossing such internal borders by land). When entering Germany from a high-incidence area or area of variants of concern, the swab specimen also must have been taken at the earliest 48 hours before entry.

If persons entering the country from areas associated with particularly high risk (high-incidence areas or areas of variants of concern) are unable to attain a medical certificate or proof of a negative test for infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus before their departure, the carrier may perform the test or have the test performed before departure and can, if the result is negative, transport the passenger. With respect to areas of variants of concern, the swab may not have been taken more than 12 hours before the departure.

To find out more about the exemptions from the testing obligation that apply with different types of risk area, please see https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/coronavirus-infos-reisende/faq-tests-einreisende.html (“Are there any exemptions from the testing obligation?”).

Obligation to quarantine
Persons entering or re-entering Germany from another country, who spent time in a risk area within the ten days prior to entry, are generally required to self-quarantine for ten days directly upon arrival. As a general rule, the obligation to quarantine can only be prematurely lifted with a negative test result taken after the fifth day following entry. Depending on Land law, entries from high-incidence areas and areas of variants of concern may be subject to tighter regulation.

To maintain our communities, family life and commercial traffic, particular groups of individuals are exempt from the obligation to quarantine if they can furnish a negative test result after their entry. For information on whether one of these exemptions might apply to you, please contact the respective Federal Land.

Requirements on tests:

Proof of testing negative may be provided in the form of a medical certificate or test result to confirm the person concerned is not infected with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. The proof is to be provided in paper or electronic form in either English, French or German. In order for the competent public health offices to quickly ascertain whether the minimum criteria have been met, the (rapid) antigen test’s manufacturer details must be provided.

In principle, nucleic acid amplification techniques (PCR, LAMP\(^1\), TMA\(^2\)) for the direct detection of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus that are based on an appropriate specimen of the upper or lower respiratory tract as well as saliva or pharyngeal gargle lavage, are currently accepted from all European Union countries, at present, as well as from the countries mentioned below.

\(1\) LAMP: loop-mediated isothermal amplification, \(2\) TMA: transcription-mediated amplification

Antigen tests for the direct detection of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus are, in principle, recognised from all countries if they fulfil the minimum criteria recommended by WHO for the quality of SARS-CoV-2 antigen detecting rapid diagnostic tests. These include tests that, as compared with PCR tests, meet ≥80% sensitivity and ≥97% specificity (WHO: Antigen-detection in the diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection using rapid immunoassays. Interim guidance, 11 September 2020).

If a negative test result for infection with the SARS-COV-2 coronavirus is presented, but there is a justified suspicion of non-compliance with the minimum testing criteria, it generally lies within the responsibility of the competent authority whether or not to recognise a test result. In order for the competent public health offices to quickly ascertain whether the minimum criteria have been met, the (rapid) antigen test’s manufacturer details must be provided on the test certificate.

- Afghanistan
- Albania
• Algeria
• Andorra
• Angola
• Argentina
• Australia
• Azerbaijan
• Bahamas
• Bahrain
• Barbados
• Belarus
• Benin
• Bosnia and Herzegovina
• Botswana
• Brazil
• Brunei
• Burkina Faso
• Cambodia
• Canada
• Chad
• Chile
• China
• China HK
• Colombia
• Costa Rica
• Côte d'Ivoire
• Cuba
• Dominican Republic
• DR Congo
• Ecuador
• Egypt
• El Salvador
• Eswatini
• Ethiopia
• Georgia
• Ghana
• Great Britain (United Kingdom)
• Guinea
• Honduras
• Iceland
• India
• Indonesia
• Iran
• Israel
• Jamaica
• Japan
• Jordan
• Kazakhstan
• Kenya
• Kosovo
• Kuwait
• Kyrgyzstan
• Laos
- Lebanon
- Liechtenstein
- Madagascar
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Monaco
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Namibia
- New Zealand
- Niger
- Nigeria
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palestinian Territories
- Panama
- Peru
- Philippines
- Qatar
• Republic of Moldova
• Russian Federation
• Rwanda
• Saint Lucia
• Saudi Arabia
• Senegal
• Serbia
• Seychelles
• Singapore
• South Africa
• South Korea
• South Sudan
• Sri Lanka
• Suriname
• Switzerland
• Taiwan
• Tanzania
• Thailand
• Togo
• Trinidad and Tobago
• Tunisia
• Turkey
• Uganda
• Ukraine
• United Arab Emirates
• United States Virgin Islands
• Uruguay
• USA
• Uzbekistan
• Venezuela
• Vietnam
• Zambia