



Press release

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Minister President Laschet: North Rhine-Westphalia is still paving the way for good neighbourship and more Europe

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The federal and state governments repeal quarantine obligation for travellers returning from EU and Schengen states as well as the United Kingdom – Minister President Laschet: This step is a great relief for people, especially in border regions / New ordinance comes into effect in North Rhine-Westphalia at midnight tonight

The state government has issued the following statement:

The states and the federal government agreed today that the states will exempt outgoing and returning travellers from EU and Schengen states (EU and Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) as well as the United Kingdom from the obligation to first spend two weeks in home quarantine. North Rhine-Westphalia will implement this arrangement today.

"Germany will only overcome the coronavirus crisis if European freedom of movement is completely restored for people, goods and services," says Minister President Armin Laschet. "The end of the quarantine obligation for EU and Schengen citizens declared by the federal and state governments is an important step that we must implement today. This creates legal clarity and is a great relief for people, especially those in border regions, and sends a signal to our domestic economy. We are also sending a clear message to our neighbouring countries on the path back to European normalcy."

And he adds: "For us, Europe was part of the solution when the pandemic began. We have also asserted this to the federal government. North Rhine-Westphalia's borders with Belgium and the Netherlands never once closed. With a Cross-Border Task Force, we have been working closely with our neighbours to jointly combat the coronavirus from the start.

This not only concerns the exchange of information among authorities and governments as well as mutual medical aid, but also getting our domestic economies back on their feet. In the mid-term this includes facilitating cross-border tourism once more. This is only possible without quarantine regulations.

The state government is prepared and will announce the changed regulation today. The new regulation will come into effect at midnight."

These changes will not only exempt return travellers from the EU and Schengen states of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, from the restrictions. The pandemic overseas will also be considered. This means that travellers from other states will be exempt if the Robert Koch Institute deems that a quarantine for these states is not necessary. In turn, a worsening of the pandemic in EU and Schengen states can result in protective measures resuming for these states.

This press text is also available online on the state government website at www.land.nrw

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