

The Rt. Hon Boris Johnson MP

Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA
United Kingdom



London, 22nd June 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), which represents the global Travel & Tourism private sector, is appealing to you for leadership to take urgent action to save the Travel & Tourism sector.

As you may know, our sector has a tremendous social and economic impact on the UK economy. In 2019 our sector contributed 10.1% to the country's GDP, equating to nearly 4.3 million jobs, representing 12% of total employment.

International visitors also spent £35.6 billion, generating growth and prosperity across the United Kingdom, helping to make the UK the fifth biggest economy in terms of Travel & Tourism GDP.

The COVID-19 pandemic turned this world upside down and devastated the Travel & Tourism sector, with 62 million jobs lost globally while many more remain at risk.

Unfortunately, the stringent measures to restrict cross-border mobility have exacerbated the impact of this crisis, magnifying its effect throughout the sector's supply chain.

And stalling the resumption of international travel until August has cost the country dearly. WTTC research has shown that every day the UK goes without international travel during July has meant a daily loss of £639 million.

So while we applaud the enormous progress made by your government with the highly successful vaccine rollout across the country, now is the time to take urgent steps to capitalise on this success. Otherwise, we face inflicting severe long-term damage on the economy and put at risk the competitiveness of the UK's Travel & Tourism sector.

The WTTC 2021 Economic Impact Report (EIR) highlights the UK's alarming fall from fifth to eighth place among the world's biggest Travel & Tourism markets in 2020, after suffering a punishing 62.3% collapse in the sector's contribution towards the country's GDP.

This starkly illustrates how the UK is losing its competitive edge created by the early vaccination rollout as Europe reopens. Meanwhile the UK continues its extremely cautious approach, seriously damaging the fabric of travel in the process – affecting airports, airlines, sales channels, business travel and city hotels and crushing consumer confidence.

The global Travel & Tourism sector is still fighting for survival, and without prompt action to restore mobility and international travel, the economic and social damage could be irreparable.

The time is now to make these vital decisions. We therefore **urge your government to back the following proposals by 24 June:**

- 1. Reopen International Travel by allowing fully vaccinated citizens** to travel freely without quarantine. They should be able to visit destinations with similar vaccination levels and with proven low-infection rates, such as countries in the EU and North America, through a data-driven, transparent approach, which will help restore consumer confidence. This should be considered both for inbound and outbound travel.
- 2. Remove PCR testing requirements** for vaccinated travellers coming from countries on the 'green list' and replace by a rapid test on arrival, or no test.
- 3. Require only one test** upon arrival for those travelling from countries on the amber list, instead of the current requirement of mandatory tests on day 2 and day 8. PCR tests are expensive and inconvenient, and their use will continue to restrict people's ability to travel.
- 4. Align on date to relaunch international travel** - announce on 24 June intention to open up from 19 July, in line with the final unlocking of social measures in England.

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The restoration of free mobility is essential to help drive the economic recovery from the pandemic, with a further 218,000 jobs at serious risk, if international travel continues to be off limits for most of the summer. This is in addition to the 307,000 jobs which were lost in the UK sector last year.

Only through these measures will the future be brighter for many and will we be able to achieve a long term, inclusive and sustainable recovery.

We are grateful for your leadership in these difficult times, and we stand ready to continue working with your government to enable you to build back better.

Best regards,

Arnold W Donald
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Alex Zozaya
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