

THE RECOVERY OF INTERNATIONAL TOURISM DEPENDS ON E-VISA AND VACCINE



For a year now, tourism stakeholders have seen their activity sharply reduced due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. With the closing of borders, the new sanitary rules to be implemented and the governmental directives of each country, is it possible to envisage a resumption of international tourism in the coming

months?

Since the start of COVID-19, most countries around the world have closed their borders. For some destinations, the date for lifting the restrictions remains unclear. **This is the case of India, for example, which has suspended all electronic visas since March 2020, and is postponing its reopening to international tourism every month.**

The same is true for the United States, which has still not lifted the ban on travelers from Europe to Uncle Sam's territory, despite the outgoing president's announcement on the opening of borders on January 26.

Australia and New Zealand could well remain closed for another year, to be opened only at the beginning of 2022. These two countries remain very cautious, and do not wish to put forward a date, but one thing is sure, we will not go surfing on the Australian waves, nor eat a burger in Auckland in the coming months.

The Olympic Games are so far maintained in Tokyo this summer, despite the many rumors of cancellation in recent weeks. This major world event will adapt to the crisis, it is time to reflect on the course of events, welcoming the public.

Africa remains the most open continent for international tourism during this global crisis. The majority of its countries are open with relatively flexible reception conditions.

The closed Latin American countries are postponing their opening quite regularly, so no specific date can be announced in advance. However, some countries such as Brazil and Bolivia are open to travelers.

Towards a Digitalization of Administrative Procedures

The current health crisis is prompting tourism stakeholders to consider new methods regarding visa issuing policy. Technology is being used to facilitate traffic in airports and thus improve reception conditions and strengthen security related to the health context. The e-Visa also allows better control of foreign passengers.

At a time when human contact is to be limited, the e-Visa is one of the safest solutions for the recovery of international tourism.

From June 21, 2021, it will be possible to apply for an electronic visa for Mongolia, which was passed by their parliament on December 31, 2020. The conditions of validity of this e-Visa remain to be defined.

Kenya has made its e-Visa mandatory as of January 1, 2021. It is valid for 3 months for a period of 30 days on the territory with the possibility to renew it twice on the spot.

In the same vein, Pakistan requires international travelers wishing to visit the territory to go through the website of the Pakistani authorities to obtain an e-Visa.

The Russian government has decided to unify its e-Visa for the entire country as of January 1, 2021. Valid for 60 days, it will allow the 112 eligible nationalities to stay 16 days on the territory, once the restrictions have been lifted.

Generalization of the Vaccine for Traveling

What if vaccination was the key to a resumption of international tourism? This is the question on everyone's lips. Would the vaccine be one of the conditions for being able to travel freely in certain countries again?

Romania has recently indicated that nationals who have received the two doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be exempted from the obligatory fourteen days quarantine upon arrival on the territory. The same applies to the Seychelles and Lebanon.

Sri Lanka, which is planning to reopen its borders to international tourists, has made a statement on its dedicated website: "Currently, no exceptions will be made for vaccinations being carried out; all safety protocols must be followed independently".

In addition to destinations, some tourism providers, such as cruisers, are wondering how to deal with vaccinated and unvaccinated passengers. The mandatory vaccination for cruises is not yet in place, but the subject is on the table.

At this time, it is not yet possible to say which countries will impose or recommend the vaccine to travelers. News circulating on the internet and social networks should be taken with caution.

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