

# Mobility: Immigration alert

February 2022



## Australia

International border re-opening from 21 February 2022

### Executive summary

After nearly two years of tight restrictions, Australia's border will open for fully vaccinated travellers from 21 February 2022. This follows a gradual relaxation of the border over recent months to address Australia's skill shortages and support the economy.

These recent changes have had an immediate impact. Between November 2021 and January 2022 working holiday visas were granted to 22,000 young travellers and Australia welcomed:

- ▶ over 8,000 skilled temporary workers
- ▶ more than 43,000 international students
- ▶ approximately 60,000 visiting family members

### Practical Impact

The list of eligible visa holders who currently do not require a travel ban exemption will become redundant on 21 February 2022.

Fully vaccinated travellers are also exempt from quarantine on arrival in many Australian states and territories.

### Business travellers

Business visitor visas will again be the fastest option for business activities in Australia such as contract negotiations and stakeholder discussions. The most suitable visa will be determined by the passport held by the business traveller.

Eligibility to apply for an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) has been limited to a small number of passport holders via a mobile telephone app while border restrictions have been in place. This list may be expanded from 21 February 2022.

eVisitor subclass 651 visas, available to most European passport holders, are already being granted. eVisitor visa holders may seek an exemption to travel now or travel from 21 February 2022.

ETAs and eVisitor visas are generally processed automatically and quickly.

Any passport holder may apply for a subclass 600 Visitor visa. Applications for these visas are processed and decided on a case-by-case basis. EY expects that processing of subclass 600 visas will be slower initially as capacity is rebuilt to respond to demand.

### Tourists

Tourists may also apply for an ETA, an eVisitor visa or a subclass 600 visa for tourism. EY recommends that intending travellers apply as soon as possible as demand is likely to be high.

### Bridging visa holders

The possibility of visiting their home country and returning to Australia will boost the wellbeing of numerous employees on Bridging visas. A Bridging visa B for return travel to Australia must be granted before leaving Australia. International travel should not impact the processing of a pending employer sponsored visa application.

### Travellers who are not fully vaccinated

Individuals who are not fully vaccinated may be granted a visa after 21 February 2022. However, compelling circumstances will need to be demonstrated to warrant approval of a travel ban exemption.

EY understands that Australian citizens and residents who are not fully vaccinated will also continue to need an exemption to leave Australia.

Travellers arriving in Australia, including citizens and permanent residents, who are not fully vaccinated are expected to continue to be required to undertake 14-day mandatory hotel quarantine on arrival according to arrangements in the state or territory of arrival.

[State and territory requirements](#) for quarantine and travel across domestic borders remain dynamic and should be checked when making travel arrangements.

Flexible arrangements are also in place to enable children who are not fully vaccinated to travel if accompanied by fully vaccinated family members.

#### Fully vaccinated definition

Fully vaccinated travellers are those who can show proof that they have received:

- ▶ a single dose of Janssen (Johnson and Johnson), or
- ▶ two doses of any [approved or recognised vaccine](#) at least 14 days apart, currently these vaccines are:
  - ▶ Comirnaty (Pfizer)
  - ▶ Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca)
  - ▶ Spikevax or Takeda (Moderna)
  - ▶ COVID-19 Vaccine Janssen (Janssen)
  - ▶ Nuvaxovid (Biocelect on behalf of Novavax)
  - ▶ Coronavac (Sinovac)
  - ▶ Covishield (AstraZeneca - Serum Institute of India)
  - ▶ BBIBP-CorV if <60 years of age on arrival in Australia (Sinopharm China)
  - ▶ Covaxin (Bharat Biotech)
  - ▶ Sputnik V (Gamaleya Research Institute)

At least 7 days must have passed since the final dose. Mixed doses are acceptable.

#### Next steps

EY will continue to keep you informed about the relaxation of Australia's international border restrictions and developments in skilled migration. Contact your EY advisor to discuss any of the issues raised in this alert.

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