

APEX demands U.S. allow vaccinated travelers from Europe now

[APEX \(Airline Passenger Experience Association\)](#) today called on the United States to end its blockade of international travelers from Europe.

In a [letter](#) to U.S. President Joe Biden, APEX cites that refusing entry to fully vaccinated travelers goes directly against [Centers for Disease Control](#) guidance, which proposes that people who are fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine or a vaccine authorized for emergency use by the [World Health Organization](#) can travel safely within the United States.

Many barred locations currently have lower per-capita COVID-19 rate than the U.S., such as Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy (including Vatican City), Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Monaco, San Marino, and the United Kingdom.

"Many of these European nations have warmly open their arms to vaccinated Americans. The United States must now reciprocate before Europe's doors are closed to vaccinated Americans, as hinted at last week by the European Commission President," reads the letter.

The letter from APEX comes as a result of the Biden administration indicating two weeks ago that a consideration to end the blockade was underway.

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Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your administration's leadership in public discussion on reopening America for vaccinated individuals from Europe. Many of these European nations have warmly opened their arms to vaccinated Americans. The United States must now reciprocate before Europe's doors are closed to vaccinated Americans, as hinted at last week by the European Commission President.

On behalf of the millions of vaccinated airline passengers across Europe, we ask for you, Mr. President, to reopen the doors to the United States now. The previous administration closed travel to our European allies at a time well before the vaccines. With our country having reached over 70% of adults vaccinated, we know that welcoming fully vaccinated individuals from Europe that are additionally tested prior to entry only strengthens your administration's message: vaccination provides all of us more freedom.

APEX proposes a staged reopening of the United States for vaccinated international travelers beginning with Europe, effective immediately. As the largest international airline association advocating for passenger experience, APEX points proudly to the scientific facts touted by your administration. Every European country currently blocked by the United States has significantly lower COVID-19 infection rates than our nation. Citing U.S. Centers for Disease Control guidance: "People who are fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine or a vaccine authorized for emergency use by the World Health Organization can travel safely within the United States."

Finally, we strongly believe that the U.S. must show that vaccination stands as a beacon of hope for overcoming the human toll experienced by millions of Europeans divided from their families, friends, and colleagues. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg recently answered on live television to a U.K. journalist that he had to watch his own father's funeral over an iPhone, stating, "I am among those impatient to see loved ones who live across the Atlantic." Secretary Buttigieg may now do so as an American, but the U.S. now should reciprocate for our European allies. There are millions of weddings, funerals, relationships, births, birthdays, and other human experiences already missed – including touching ones that have been shared with us at APEX. A hopeful mother from France flew to the U.S. in February 2020 for IVF, but her healthy embryo has awaited implementation since March 2020. An elderly retired couple from the U.K. eagerly awaits to fly and see their only son in America. A European grandmother cannot meet her only grandchild born during the pandemic. Mr. President, America's continued blockade of Europeans has separated families, friends, colleagues, and our world for far too long.

We implore you to use your power as President to immediately enable Europe as a test of your administration's proposed vaccinated international travel program for foreign nationals. Our airlines are ready, our European travelers are ready, and our world needs your inspirational vaccinated leadership forward.

Sincerest thanks,



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"With our country having reached over 70 percent of adults vaccinated, we know that welcoming fully vaccinated individuals from Europe that are additionally tested prior to entry only strengthens your administration's message: vaccination provides all of us more freedom," said APEX CEO Dr. Joe Leader in the letter.

Currently, foreign nationals from 160 countries may enter the U.S. without any vaccination requirement and after COVID-19 testing or with 90-day proof of COVID-19 recovery. Meanwhile,

vaccinated and tested foreign nationals from European nations are banned from flying into the United States without “extraordinary special exceptions,” reads the [August 11 press release](#) from APEX.

It continues: “A European national may fly to a nation with much higher COVID-19 infection rates, wait for 14 days, and then enter the United States after testing. The current U.S. approach defies the scientific logic touted by the administration, the Centers for Disease Control, and the World Health Organization.”

According to APEX, under Section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, Former President Trump in March 2020 used his authority to protect Americans from COVID-19 variants that had not yet reached the United States. At end of April 2021, India was added by President Biden to the list of banned countries for the B.1.617 “Delta” variant. Despite the blockade of foreign travelers from India, the variant has become dominant in the United States. The previous 212(f) protective orders each had been designed for variants that have reached the United States and have spread despite the lack of foreign nationals traveling from those countries.

“The United States continues to stand as a beacon of hope and freedom around the world. That includes a vibrant domestic air travel market that has rebounded to fully recover from the effects of COVID-19,” said Leader. “In our 42-year history, APEX successfully advocated for passengers and encouraged the reversal of a Presidential policy only once before, when a passengers electronics ban occurred in 2017. We call upon President Biden to immediately modify the Section 212(f) acts to allow the lawful entry of properly vaccinated and COVID-19 tested foreign nationals from Europe.”