

SL(5)678 – The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Wales) (Amendment) (No. 21) Regulations 2020

Background and Purpose

The International Travel Regulations impose requirements on persons entering Wales after having been abroad. They include a requirement for persons arriving in Wales to isolate for a period determined in accordance with the International Travel Regulations.

The requirements imposed by the International Travel Regulations are subject to exceptions, and certain categories of person are exempt from having to comply.

Persons entering Wales after being in one or more of the countries and territories listed in Schedule 3 to the International Travel Regulations (“exempt countries and territories”) are not required to isolate. Part 2 of these Regulations amends the list of exempt countries and territories.

Regulation 2 amends the International Travel Regulations to remove the entries for Estonia and Latvia.

Regulation 4 amends the International Travel Regulations to add Aruba, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Independent State of Samoa, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Kingdom of Tonga, Mongolia, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands to the list of exempt countries and territories.

These Regulations also lift the specific restrictions that were imposed on travellers from Denmark and members of their household. The Regulations also lift the prohibition on the arrival of aircraft and vessels travelling directly from Denmark. Denmark will not however be included on the list of exempt countries. Therefore, travellers from Denmark will still be required to isolate on arrival in Wales.

The Regulations also add sporting events to Schedule 4 to the International Travel Regulations, meaning those involved in such sporting events do not have to isolate when, for example, competing in a sporting event listed in Schedule 4.

These Regulations came into force at 4.00 am on 28 November 2020.

Procedure

Negative

The Regulations were made by the Welsh Ministers before they were laid before the Senedd. The Senedd can annul the Regulations within 40 days (excluding any days when the Senedd



is: (i) dissolved, or (ii) in recess for more than four days) of the date they were laid before the Senedd.

Technical Scrutiny

One point is identified for reporting under Standing Order 21.2 in respect of this instrument.

1. Standing Order 21.2(vii) – that there appear to be inconsistencies between the meaning of its English and Welsh texts

In regulation 8(2)(a) of the Welsh text, the amendment should be made in “sub-paragraph (e)”, not “sub-paragraph (c)”.

Merits Scrutiny

The following three points are identified for reporting under Standing Order 21.3 in respect of this instrument.

1. Standing Order 21.3(ii) – that it is of political or legal importance or gives rise to issues of public policy likely to be of interest to the Senedd

We note the breach of the 21-day rule (i.e. the rule that 21 days should pass between the date a “made negative” instrument is laid before the Senedd and the date the instrument comes into force), and the explanation for the breach provided by Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd, in a [letter](#) to the Llywydd dated 27 November 2020.

In particular, we note the following in the letter:

“Not adhering to the 21 day convention allows these Regulations to come into force at the earliest opportunity, and in view of the changing evidence on risk in relation to this disease this is considered necessary and justifiable in this case.”

2. Standing Order 21.3(ii) – that it is of political or legal importance or gives rise to issues of public policy likely to be of interest to the Senedd

We note the Welsh Government’s justification for any potential interference with human rights. In particular, we note the following paragraph in the Explanatory Memorandum:

“The amendments contained in these Regulations do not change the engagement under the International Travel Regulations of individual rights under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights; the Government considers that they are justified for the purpose of preventing the spreading of infectious diseases and/or the interference is permitted on the basis that it is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, namely of protecting public health, and are proportionate.”

3. Standing Order 21.3(ii) – that it is of political or legal importance or gives rise to issues of public policy likely to be of interest to the Senedd



We note there has been no formal consultation on these Regulations. In particular, we note the following paragraphs in the Explanatory Memorandum:

"Given the serious and imminent threat arising from coronavirus and the need for an urgent public health response, there has been no public consultation in relation to these Regulations."

Implications arising from exiting the European Union

None.

Welsh Government response

A Welsh Government response is not required.

Committee Consideration

The Committee considered the instrument at its meeting on 7 December 2020 and reports to the Senedd in line with the reporting points above.

