## <u>Foreign Office steps up plans to bring</u> home Britons stranded overseas

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises all British travellers to return to the UK now. Read our latest coronavirus travel advice.

- Charter flights from Bolivia, Ecuador, Philippines and India to bring back thousands of Britons
- 10 new airlines join Government's scheme to get more British travellers back to the UK
- FCO extends advice against travelling overseas for an indefinite period

The Government is ramping up efforts to bring home thousands of travellers stranded overseas by coronavirus with a new package of extra flights and 10 additional airlines joining its scheme to keep commercial routes open and get British people back to the UK.

From next week the Government will start to bring stranded British travellers back from India with flights from Delhi, Goa and Mumbai. Passengers interested in these flights from India are advised to check the <u>travel advice</u> <u>for India</u> which we will be updating when booking for these flights opens.

The number of airlines signed up to the Government's scheme to get Britons home now stands at 14 after 10 new airlines, including British Airways, Norwegian, TUI and Ryanair, joined Virgin Atlantic, Titan, easyJet, and Jet2 who signed up earlier this week.

Since Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab announced on Monday (30 March) that the Government had reached an agreement with airlines more than 1,450 British travellers have flown home on specially chartered flights.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

Travellers are facing an unprecedented challenge on a global scale, and I know people are understandably desperate to get back to their homes and loved ones.

We are committed to supporting Britons getting home either through commercial routes we have helped keep open or through specially chartered flights. With more airlines signing up it should mean more flights available but also a fairer deal for travellers by providing more flexibility over tickets and costs.

Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps said:

We continue to work with airlines round the clock to reunite British citizens with their families and loved ones. With more airlines pledging support, this huge operation becomes a little easier, speeding up the process and helping ensure a greater number of people return home quickly and safely.

Where it is possible to get back to the UK on commercial routes by any carrier, the FCO continues to encourage all British nationals to take such opportunities. The Department for Transport is working closely with airlines to bring those with pre-booked tickets home, either with the airline they booked with or on alternative routes where available. This includes airlines allowing passengers to change tickets between carriers, where permissible, and offering them the latest information and advice as the situation changes.

- The 14 airlines that have signed up to the FCO plan are: Air Tanker, Blue Islands, British Airways, Eastern Airways, easyJet, Jet2.com, Jota Aviation, Loganair, Norwegian, Ryanair, Titan Airways., TUI, Virgin and Wizz.
- Where commercial flights are available, we strongly urge all British travellers to take those opportunities.
- Advice to British travellers on returning to the UK can be found on the coronavirus travel advice page