

Austria, Germany to reopen border mid-June

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Austria and Germany plan to open their border in mid-June after it was closed for two months in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, the government in Vienna said Wednesday.

"From June 15, the opening of the [border](#) between Germany and Austria will be possible," Tourism Minister Elisabeth Koestinger told state radio

station O1.

Restrictions on crossing the border will begin to be eased from May 15, enabling business trips and family visits to take place, she added.

The German and Austrian chancellors, Angela Merkel and Sebastian Kurz spoke Tuesday and "agreed on a gradual opening" of the border", the minister said.

Both nations consider they have the virus under control and were among the first in Europe to start lifting the measures taken to halt the spread of the pandemic.

The Austrian government was to examine Wednesday a progressive lifting of restrictions on freedom of movement to and from other border countries including Switzerland, Liechtenstein and eastern nations.

Germany has a warning in force until mid-June against taking foreign holidays.

With the tourism sector reeling, the European Commission was Wednesday set to urge EU countries to gradually reopen shuttered internal borders and to treat each member state according to the same criteria.

This would mean that if Austria opens its border with Germany, it must also open the border with the Czech Republic if that country is in a comparable health situation to Germany.

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