

# Majorca Daily Bulletin

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# Spain hopes easing of UK quarantine will save island winter tourism



**A**fter a disastrous summer tourism season, Spain is hoping a more flexible British quarantine police will make it possible to save some of the winter season in the Canary Islands and to a lesser extent the Balearics, Foreign Minister Arancha Gonzalez Laya said yesterday.

Britain, the largest source of foreign visitors to Spain, imposed an unexpected quarantine on travellers over the summer after COVID-19 infections

surged there, and many other European countries also imposed restrictions.

That wrecked efforts to revive a tourism industry that accounts for more than one in eight Spanish jobs. The number of foreign tourists visiting Spain fell 75% in July from a year earlier.

While the winter tourism season is not as big as summer's, it is still substantial. Spain's Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean are one of the few parts

of any European country warm enough for beach holidays in winter.

"The important thing is that there is a window of opportunity that did not exist before because the UK previously considered Spain as a whole," Gonzalez Laya said in an interview with RNE radio, adding that there would now be negotiations on details.

"It is important for the Canary archipelago which benefits from winter tourism."

Britain's transport minister Grant

Shapps said on Monday that London could now make decisions on whether to impose quarantines from incoming travellers on specific islands rather than on whole countries.

Spain is also still pushing for a European Union harmonisation of COVID-19 travel measures and for exemptions, Gonzalez Laya said.

Spain has been calling unsuccessfully for such a harmonisation since lockdowns were eased all over Europe in May.



# D-DAY FOR SCHOOLS

**W**earing colourful masks, the pupils of the Mariano Jose de Larra primary school in Madrid laughed and played yesterday

morning before their teachers made them form two lines at the gates to measure their temperature. It was the first day back at school for millions of Spanish children after a

six-month break, bringing parents feelings of both relief and worry about a possible rise in coronavirus infections. "I'm a teacher and I still haven't brought my children back to school

because it's not safe yet," said Maria Varas, who teaches music. "For many days we've been working long hours, but it doesn't just depend on us. Families, society, they've got to join us in this." On Monday Spain became the first western European country to pass 500,000 cumulative cases of coronavirus after detecting almost 50,000 in the past week. Eight new deaths were reported on Monday, bringing the total to 29,516.