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## “IT MEANS THE WORLD” FAMILIES AND FRIENDS REUNITE IN THE UK BUT WHAT ABOUT SPAIN?

# KING SAYS SPAIN IS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY IN PALMA



- King Felipe VI said in Palma yesterday that “things are going better” in terms of health and the economy.
- The King met leading local politicians: **SEE PAGE 3**



King Felipe with the Balearic President yesterday.



● Families and friends were overjoyed at Heathrow Airport yesterday after a travel rule change meant they could reunite after 18 months of pandemic separation.

“Very, very excited. It means the world,” said Sue Blake, as she waited to greet her son, daughter-in-law and grandson who had flown in from New York and who she last saw two years ago.

Watching the hugs and tears in the arrivals hall, Heathrow’s boss urged Britain to remove barriers to travel, not add to them, amid speculation that the government was poised to impose more rules.

“Let’s just make it easier now for people to travel,” Heathrow’s chief executive John Holland-Kaye told Reuters.

Britain, where the death toll from the coronavirus pandemic has nearly reached 130,000, reopened its borders to large parts of the world yesterday, scrapping quarantine for fully vaccinated arrivals from the European Union, excluding France, and the United States.

But, for travellers from Britain’s closest neighbour France, who must still quarantine on arrival in Britain due to London’s concerns over COVID-19, the open-

ing up for other countries stung.

“It’s a bit scandalous for the French,” said Alain Jourdain, just before he boarded a Eurostar train from Paris to London, where he will need to spend 10 days in isolation in order to see his children. He last saw them in 2019.

“It’s very complicated, in particular all the paperwork to fill for the UK government.”

And it could get more complicated. The travel industry now faces a new headache with the government set to issue a COVID-19 warning against holidays to Spain, according to the *Times*.

“We just need to keep things simple. We need to build confidence in travel,” Holland-Kaye said when asked about the reports of another rule change.

Britain has one of the fastest vaccination programmes in the world but the government has prevented the travel industry from bouncing back because of its maze of rules and track record for making last-minute changes.

Spain could go on a new category of risk - the “amber watchlist” - meaning it could be upgraded to “red” at short notice, with arrivals having to quarantine in hotels. **CASES PAGE 4**