



Ambassador of Spain

Ref. 273

Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

13th July 2020

Dear First Minister,

On 8th July, during your public statement on the measures taken by the Scottish Government in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, you referred to the review of the list of countries for which quarantine will apply in the United Kingdom and, in particular, you singled out, as an exemption, the situation in Spain.

You stated that "as reported by the Joint Biosecurity Centre, the prevalence of the virus in Spain is around 330 people in every 100,000 have Covid" and that "the rate reported for Spain, while less than twice the rate for the UK as a whole, is more than 10 times the estimated rate for Scotland."

May I draw your attention to the fact that the data you presented is not in accordance with the official information registered in our country. At the end of June (time framework used as reference as stated by your officials), the rate for Spain was 10 cases with Covid in every 100,000 (the cumulative incidence in the last 14 days according to the measures used by the European prevalence studies). In accordance with data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the rate for Spain was at that time and continues to be today significantly lower than several countries which have not been included in your list of countries exempt from the quarantine. The exclusion of Spain seems, therefore, inexplicable.

For the record, allow me to send you the official links to both websites of the Ministry of Health of the Government of Spain and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control:

<https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/situacionActual.htm>

<https://qap.ecdc.europa.eu/public/extensions/COVID-19/COVID-19.html>

Such an exclusion, which is of great significance for citizens and the tourist and aeronautical industries, would have required to cross-check data as a preventive measure. Unfortunately, Spanish authorities were informed of the adopted measure only half an hour before made public, which did not allow any possibility to react.

Taking into account the consequences of the implementation of a quarantine requirement which affect tens of thousands of citizens living in Scotland who travel to our country during the summer, as well as the large number of residents in Spain who visit Scotland and the above-mentioned industries, it is absolutely imperative to correct this situation, invalidating the quarantine for the mobility between Scotland and Spain immediately.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end, positioned above the name Carlos Bastarreche.

Carlos Bastarreche

CC: Ms Sarah Taylor
Europe Director
Foreign and Commonwealth Office