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Coronavirus: Commission proposes to extend the EU Digital COVID Certificate by one year

Today the European Commission is proposing to [extend](#) the [EU Digital COVID Certificate](#) by a year, until 30 June 2023. The COVID-19 virus continues to be prevalent in Europe and at this stage it is not possible to determine the impact of a possible increase in infections in the second half of 2022 or of the emergence of new variants. Extending the Regulation will ensure that travellers can continue using their EU Digital COVID Certificate when travelling in the EU where Member States maintain certain public health measures. The Commission is adopting the proposal today to make sure the European Parliament and the Council can conclude the legislative procedure in time before the current Regulation expires.

In addition to the extension of the EU Digital COVID Certificate Regulation until June 2023, the Commission also proposes some limited amendments:

- **To include high-quality laboratory-based antigen tests among the types of tests for which a test**

certificate can be issued. This aims to widen the

scope of the types of diagnostic tests at a time where COVID-19 tests are in high demand.

- **To ensure that vaccination certificates contain the correct overall number of doses administered in any Member State** and not just in the Member State issuing the certificate. This is to address practical concerns raised by citizens about certificates indicating an incorrect number of doses when they receive vaccine doses in different Member States.
- **To provide that certificates may be issued to persons participating in clinical trials for vaccines against COVID-19.** The EU Digital COVID Certificate issued to trial participants may then be accepted by other Member States. This measure aims to encourage the continued development and study of vaccines against COVID-19.

The **domestic use of EU Digital COVID Certificates** remains a matter for Member States to decide. The EU legislation on the EU Digital COVID Certificate neither prescribes nor prohibits the domestic use of EU Digital COVID Certificate (such as for access to events or restaurants). At the same time, where a Member State establishes a system of COVID-19 certificate for domestic purposes, it should continue to ensure that the EU Digital COVID Certificate is also fully accepted for those purposes. Beyond that, the Commission also encourages Member States to align their domestic validity periods with the validity period set at EU level for the purpose of travel.

Next steps

To ensure that the extension is adopted in time before 30 June 2022, the current end date of the EU Digital COVID Certificate Regulation, the Commission calls on the European Parliament and the Council to adopt the proposal swiftly.

By 31 March 2022, the Commission will also publish a second report on the EU Digital COVID Certificate

Regulation, as provided for in that regulation. The first report was published on [18 October 2021](#). As noted in the first report, the Commission is putting forward today's proposal ahead of the second report to ensure that the necessary legislative procedure can be concluded before the Regulation's current end date.

Members of the College said:

Commissioner for Justice, Didier **Reynders**, said: *“We cannot predict how the pandemic will evolve, but we can make sure that citizens continue to benefit from a certificate that works and is accepted wherever they go. Without this extension, we risk having many divergent national systems, and all the confusion and obstacles that this would cause. The EU Digital COVID Certificate has proven an effective tool to facilitate safe and free travel. While I am looking forward to the day when it is no longer needed, but in the meantime it will enable us to move around safely in Europe.”*

Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Stella **Kyriakides**, added: *“The EU Digital COVID Certificate has facilitated safe free movement and travel in times of great uncertainty. Our citizens have embraced it and it has made their lives easier. This important tool has been key to manage the risks and support public health measures in place to protect citizens during the pandemic. Today we propose to update the possibilities to make use of the certificate for travel across the EU in order to provide certainty for our citizens, as long as the public health needs persist. We also propose to bring our certificate up to date with the latest scientific developments and epidemiological changes, the need to speed up booster campaigns and to support vital on-going clinical research, acknowledging citizens taking part in it.”*

Commissioner for the Internal Market Thierry **Breton**, said: *“With more than 1.2 billion certificates issued and 60 countries connected, the EU Digital COVID Certificate has become a global standard. Through the digital infrastructure of the EU Gateway, we continue to facilitate the acceptance of COVID certificates across borders, as the pandemic*

evolves. This is an important enabler of free movement and travel even in times of uncertainty”.

Background

To facilitate safe free movement during the COVID-19 pandemic, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the [Regulation on the EU Digital COVID Certificate](#) on 14 June 2021. It applies since 1 July 2021. The regulation was set to expire on 30 June 2022.

The EU Digital COVID Certificate is an EU success story. The certificate continues to facilitate safe travel for citizens across the European Union during the pandemic. So far, Member States issued over 1.2 billion certificates. In addition, it has proved to be the only functioning COVID-19 certificate system operational at international level on a large scale, setting a global standard. As of 31 January 2022, 33 third countries and territories are connected to the EU Digital COVID Certificate system, with more expected to join in the future.

[On 21 December](#) 2021, the Commission adopted new rules relating to the EU Digital COVID Certificate, establishing, for the purpose of travel, a binding acceptance period of 9 months (precisely 270 days) for vaccination certificates indicating the completion of the primary series for the purposes of intra-EU travel. These rules started to apply as from [1 February 2022](#).

[On 25 January 2022](#), the Council agreed to update the rules to facilitate safe and free movement in the EU during the COVID-19 pandemic. The rules state that holders of valid Certificates should in most cases not be subject to any additional restrictions when travelling within the EU.

The Commission is also proposing today a parallel Regulation extending the application of the EU Digital COVID Certificate for non-EU nationals legally staying or residing on the territory of the Member States as well.

More information

[Proposal to amend the EU Digital COVID Certificate](#) (EU citizens)

[Proposal to amend the EU Digital COVID Certificate](#) (third-country nationals legally staying and residing in the EU)

[European Commission's ebsite on EU Digital COVID Certificate](#)

[European Commission's coronavirus response website](#)

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