

Extension of the EU Digital Covid Certificate

Given the continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic and of certain travel restrictions within the EU, the European Commission has proposed to extend the EU Digital Covid Certificate (EUDCC) regulations by one year, until 30 June 2023. The Commission also proposed some limited amendments to the regulations.

European Commission proposal

On 3 February 2022, the European Commission published two proposals to extend the EUDCC by one year: one concerning [EU citizens](#) and the other for [third-country nationals](#). The Commission considers the extension necessary because of current uncertainty about the evolution of the pandemic and persistent travel restrictions by Member States; the latter may continue to require proof of vaccination, test or recovery beyond 30 June 2022 (the date of expiry of the current regulations). The Commission does not seek to encourage or facilitate such travel restrictions. However, if Member States require such a certificate, the use of the EUDCC would ensure privacy, security and interoperability.

The Commission proposes several amendments to the regulations on the EUDCC, aiming to:

- include more types of tests for which a test certificate can be issued (namely, laboratory-based antigen tests);
- ensure that vaccination certificates include all doses administered in any Member State;
- enable the issuing of certificates to persons participating in clinical trials for vaccines against Covid-19.

The Commission proposal complements other initiatives, such as Council recommendations, to harmonise travel measures in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, in its updated [recommendation](#) of 25 January 2022 on a coordinated approach to facilitate safe free movement during the pandemic, the Council states that travellers who have a valid EUDCC should not be subject to additional restrictions to free movement (such as further tests).

European Parliament position

The [European Parliament](#) has repeatedly called to avoid unnecessary restrictions on free movement and to develop a joint approach to travel measures. During a [plenary debate](#) on 16 February 2022, several MEPs criticised Member States for not correctly implementing the EUDCC regulations. They also regretted the way Member States use the EUDCC domestically – for example, to control access to various public places and events that are not expressly covered by the EUDCC regulations. Many called to fully harmonise travel rules or at least better inform citizens about them, but MEPs did not all agree on whether the EUDCC should be extended or not.

The [file](#) has been assigned to the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (no rapporteur has been appointed yet).

Council position

The [Permanent Representatives](#) of the Member States agreed in principle on 11 March 2022 with the proposal to extend the EUDCC by one year. They agreed with the Commission's amendments, made some technical changes and added a clause requiring the Commission to submit a detailed report on the application of the EUDCC no later than 1 February 2023; this report could be accompanied by a legislative proposal to shorten or extend the period of application. They also proposed to allow certificates of recovery to be issued following an antigen test carried out by health or testing personnel.

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