

PRESS RELEASE

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COVID-19: Council agrees to extend the Regulation establishing the EU Digital COVID Certificate

The Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) formally endorsed the Council's negotiating mandate with the European Parliament to extend the Regulation establishing the EU Digital COVID Certificate. The Digital COVID Certificate has played an important role in facilitating the free movement of people during the pandemic. And the principle of gradually lifting travel restrictions if the epidemiological situation so permits still applies.

The European Commission had proposed on 3 February 2022 to extend the Regulation establishing the EU Digital COVID Certificate by one year, until 30 June 2023. It had also introduced other targeted amendments to extend the range of authorised antigen tests and to allow vaccination certificates to be issued to persons participating in clinical trials, for example.

The main changes made by the Council to the Commission's proposals are as follows:

- an obligation for the Commission to submit a detailed report by 1 February 2023 has been added. This report could be accompanied by legislative proposals to allow for a reassessment of the need to repeal or extend the certificate, depending on developments in the health situation;
- the possibility for Member States to request proof of identity and a vaccination or recovery certificate has been introduced in order to be able to include all doses in a vaccination certificate, regardless of the place of vaccination. This possibility would make it easier for Member States to fulfil their obligation to issue a valid vaccination certificate, regardless of the place of vaccination;
- the possibility to issue a certificate of recovery following an antigen test has been introduced in order to take into account both the adoption by the Commission of a delegated act which makes it possible to issue a certificate of recovery following a rapid antigen test and the new possibility provided for in the legislative proposal to use other types of antigen tests.

Next steps

The current Regulation establishing the EU Digital COVID Certificate was adopted on 14 June 2021 and has been in force since 1 July 2021. It expires on 30 June 2022.

In order for the extension to be adopted in time before the expiry date, the Council and the European Parliament must reach an agreement under the ordinary legislative procedure before that date.

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