

TOWARDS FREE MOVEMENT OF TRAVELLERS WITHIN AND INTO EUROPE

Resilience of the EUDCC System is Critical for EU Tourism Crisis Preparedness

The European Tourism Manifesto alliance, the voice of the travel and tourism sector in Europe, welcomes the ongoing progress of the revision of the EU Digital COVID Certificate (EUDCC) Regulation. While we strongly support countries in their efforts to progressively remove restrictions in the current phase, it is useful to keep the EUDCC at hand in case of a possible resurgence.

We also note that the EUDCC framework has become an international reference standard in which an increasing number of third countries participate. This success provides economic and administrative benefits to the EU, proving the value of a collaborative and unified approach to cross-border health credentials, adding sectoral resilience should the need for health controls reoccur.

As interinstitutional negotiations are moving ahead and are expected to be concluded in the coming weeks, we call on policymakers, both at EU and national level, to keep in mind the following elements:

- Travel restrictions have proved to be ineffective in stopping the spread of the virus, at most postponing by a few days a new wave of infection¹. For instance, the World Health Organisation (WHO) underlined the failure of travel restrictions to limit international spread of Omicron variant and pointed out the “ineffectiveness of such measures over time²”.
- The verification of EUDCC shall not be used as a reason to impose additional restrictions to the freedom of movement such as the temporary reintroduction of controls at internal borders. Its use should be discontinued as soon as there is a clear indication that the virus has reached a manageable level of transmission that does not result in severe impacts on public health.
- To enlarge the scope of the vaccines that may be used as the basis for the issuance of an EUDCC, all vaccines that have completed the WHO emergency use listing procedure should be included in the EUDCC. In addition, people who received a vaccine currently not on European Medicines Agency (EMA) or WHO list should still have a fully accepted EUDCC if they have received a booster vaccination with a vaccine authorized by WHO or EMA.
- Should Member States resume the use of the EUDCC for travel, or allowing access to bars, restaurants, hotels, museums, sites, concert halls, trade fair centres and other venues, it is essential that national rules mirror border and travel requirements. Member States should accept all the certificates (vaccination, recovery, testing) that are accepted at the border at national level, as this would further support the recovery of the EU travel and tourism sector and offer clarity for non-EU travellers.
- In addition, the EUDCC should be implemented consistently by Member States, particularly with regards to the rules for children and young adults below 18 years old.

¹ Oxera and Edge Health research, Impact of travel restrictions on Omicron in Italy and Finland, 26th January 2022 – [link](#)

² World Health Organisation, Statement on the tenth meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee regarding the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Temporary Recommendations to States Parties, 19th January 2022 - [link](#)



Finally, we call on the European Commission to publish its COVID report, initially expected on April 30th. In view of the evolution of the epidemiological situation, the Commission should propose a revision of the two Council Recommendations on intra-EU and international travel, that were adopted back in January and February respectively during the peak of the Omicron wave.

Regarding travel into the EU, should the requirement for COVID certification still be considered necessary for border entry by Member States due to epidemiological reasons, the entry restriction on third country travellers should be lifted and vaccine/recovery/test certification recognised on equal terms. The White List should be discontinued, moving fully to a person-based approach. The updated Recommendations should also foresee the lifting of all restrictions for travel within and into the EU, as soon as the epidemiological situation allows, especially considering the upcoming season which is critical for the sector's recovery.

The **European Tourism Manifesto alliance** gathers 70 European public and private organisations, covering the whole tourism value chain and beyond. The alliance calls on the European Union for action on key policy priorities for the tourism sector. For more information, please visit tourismmanifesto.eu. The Secretariat and Chairmanship of the alliance are currently held by the European Travel Commission (ETC). For any enquiries please contact us via <https://tourismmanifesto.eu/contact/>. The full list of supporting organisations can be found at <https://tourismmanifesto.eu/who-we-are/>