

THE EU COVID-19 VACCINE PASSPORT TO BE LAUNCHED WITHIN 3 MONTHS



in this context.

The Covid-19 pandemic is having an unprecedented effect on the world as we know it. For months, leaders worldwide have been looking for solutions to some difficult and controversial topics. One of the topics addressed, in particular in the European Union, was the potential introduction of the so-called EU Covid-19 vaccine passport. In the past couple of days, there has been some progress

EU leaders met in February in a video meeting to discuss the pandemic and the possibility of a digital Covid vaccine passport was also addressed. **Countries heavily dependent on tourism such as Greece, Cyprus, Spain and Italy, are pushing for the introduction of this tool to facilitate the recovery of the sector.**

Some countries, however, are not entirely convinced about the initiative. There are fears about such a tool being discriminatory as well as doubts about whether vaccinated individuals can actually no longer infect other people.

Nevertheless, there is an agreement between the EU member states that such a passport should be implemented, however, the exact form is still up for discussion.

According to Ursula von der Leyen, head of the European Commission, the infrastructure to link national vaccination certificates is being developed. The process will take about 3 months.

The member states and the Commission have already agreed on which data should be required for the Covid-19 vaccine passport. It should be possible to record a Covid vaccination there, as well as a negative PCR test or an immunity proven by antibodies after an illness.

Now, however, the member states have to develop their national corona certificates and equip their health and border systems accordingly. Many countries have already started, while others have not and is completely unclear whether national certificates will be available for the summer season.

“The member states have to hurry so that the technology is up and running by summer,” von der Leyen warned. The Commission will coordinate the standards and develop the infrastructure for the exchange.

How would the vaccine passport work in practice? This tool would enable it to be possible to quickly and easily check the vaccination status while on vacation and travelling.

Airlines could use it to deny people without a vaccination the flight and thus the trip. The Australian airline Qantas had already announced that it would take this step for certain routes.

Moreover, **quarantine rules for vaccinated people could also be relaxed further.** This is already the case in some countries, for example, Poland or Iceland.

Finally, it must be said that the exact implementation of such an initiative is still dependent on many factors. Member states have to find the right form of implementation. At the same time, the question of vaccination pace must also be addressed, as it remains to be seen how quickly the majority of the

EU population can be vaccinated.

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