

EUROPE'S DIGITAL GREEN CERTIFICATE SHOULD BOOST THE TRAVEL NUMBERS



Although it seems that the COVID-19 pandemic is somewhat under control in Europe, there is still no date for the end of the worldwide health crisis. However, the economy keeps moving forward and, after a year at a standstill due to lockdowns and restrictions, the tourism industry begins to see a light at the end of the tunnel - through the Digital Green Certificate.

The “Digital Green Certificate”, a kind of free and universal health passport, is being developed in the European Union and is expected to be fully implemented by June. **According to the EU authorities, in its first stage of implementation, it will be available only to member countries of the EU**, but it is expected to extend to countries outside the Schengen Area.

Is the Certificate the Same as a Vaccine Passport?

According to the authorities, it is just a certificate and not a “Covid passport”. The name is important, as it hopes to avoid discrimination between those who carry it and those who don't.

This decision comes after the Biden administration in the United States decided not to implement a vaccine passport or any other federal document that guarantees that those holding it have been vaccinated. However, private companies that want to offer vaccine certificates to facilitate mass events and gatherings are allowed to.

What Is the Purpose?

The Digital Green Certificate is a document that does not grant or deny rights. It simply makes traveling within the European Union easier and, in the case of Spain, will allow tourists and travelers to be welcomed while complying with security measures. Unlike the United States, the Digital Green Certificate designed by the EU is not intended for attending events and other large gatherings.

What this means is that the use of this document is limited to ease international travel, but it will not be a reason to deny entry to travelers from countries of the EU. Likewise, its validity period will depend on the duration of the health emergency.

What Information Does It Contain?

The Digital Green Certificate will contain:

- Full name, date of birth, identification document number and date of issue.
- That the person has been vaccinated against COVID-19.
- That the person has recovered from the disease and has (or hasn't) produced antibodies.
- That the person has been tested negative for the disease. This includes RT-PCR tests, rapid tests, and antigen tests.

If you are worried about data confidentiality, you shouldn't be. None of the information contained in the Digital Green Certificate will be retained by any competent authority of any European State. They are managed solely and exclusively to confirm the identity and health status of the person who

holds the document.

FAQs about the Digital Green Certificate

Digital Green Certificates may be issued physically or digitally. Both forms will include a QR code with all the information contained in the document, a unique identifier, and a digital signature that guarantees its authenticity.

How Much Does It Cost?

The document is completely free and issued in the official language of the State that grants it, with English being the common language.

What Countries Can People Travel to with the Certificate?

At first, the certificate will allow traveling to all member states of the European Union and Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein. The document will be issued to both citizens and their families and residents with legal status, regardless of their nationality or place of origin.

When Will It Come into Effect?

The goal is for the Digital Green Certificate to be available before the start of the summer. The resolution has already passed through the European Parliament. The competent authorities are working in accordance with the Digital Health Network to ensure that its implementation is correct and effective.

Is It Mandatory?

No, the Digital Green Certificate is intended to give permission to those looking to travel within the Schengen Area, but **at no time will it be a requirement for entry to any country nor can it be used as an excuse for discrimination against those who have not yet received the vaccine.**

There is no doubt that the entire travel industry awaits the Digital Green Certificate with much expectation. If the certificate turns out as planned, it could mean a reigniting boost for an industry that has been recording millions in losses since last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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