



## POSITION PAPER

Brussels, 29<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2021

### The European Exhibition Industry

- **welcomes the Commission's proposals to strengthen coordination of safe travel in the EU and for an updated framework to travel from outside the EU and expects swift adoption implementation**
- **calls for a coordinated approach to swiftly adapt the EU Digital COVID Certificate's validity and to adopt the unified EU Digital Passenger Locator Form**
- **encourages the Council and all Member States to specifically enable smooth business travel and to protect the safe functioning of the economy and its exhibition platforms for R&D, innovation and trade**

EEIA welcomes the Commission's proposal to focus on a person-based approach for travel instead of a country-based approach as applied so far. The **EU Digital COVID Certificate** having become a standard within and beyond the EU has become a recognised proof and the aim must be to avoid any diverging rules throughout the EU.

Following the first vaccination campaign, the booster vaccinations are being rolled out across the EU countries. The validity of the EU DCC must therefore be adapted. This should be standardised; different periods of validity must be avoided by all means.

Additionally, the **European Digital Passenger Locator Form** should be applied by all Member States to standardise passenger data collection and avoid the need for passengers to provide data for each travel in different forms and formats. It is currently only used by a handful of Member States although it provides a uniform process, an advantage for both passengers and Member States' authorities.

**The list of essential travellers should continue to include exhibitors, visitors and providers to exhibitions, trade fairs and professional conferences.** Even though most of these business travellers may have had the opportunity to be fully vaccinated or even received boosters, it will be essential to keep this part of travel open given the latest developments and new travel restrictions implemented by EU countries. It goes without saying that EEIA acknowledges the need for a "emergency

break” procedure in particularly serious situations. Additionally, exhibition and conference centres are functioning as vaccination centres, thus contributing actively to the protection of Europe’s population.

EEIA sees the need to adopt the recommendation for intra-EU travel as quickly as possible, before the Christmas travel period starts. Negative effects on forward bookings have already been registered and exhibitions and business events have been cancelled. The outlook to standardised, easy procedures and open borders would hopefully mitigate the effects of the current emergency situation on next year’s planning.

As to the updated framework for travel from outside the EU, EEIA fully supports the **recognition of all vaccines that have completed the WHO emergency use listing** process. The additional PCR test for non-EMA approved vaccines and for recovered travellers seems a reasonable safeguard. The acceptance period of vaccinations shall be the same as for intra-EU travel, to avoid discrimination and confusion. EEIA also strongly welcomes the proposal to update the thresholds for lifting restrictions to non-essential travel from countries with a good epidemiological situation.

In the future, ideally before March 2022, the streamlined approach focussing on the status of the traveller instead on the country of departure should be in place. However, also here, attendees and service providers to trade fairs, exhibitions and professional events must be considered **essential travellers** to avoid any further disruption of the exhibition sector in Europe.

Europe hosts nearly all leading international shows for each industry ecosystem therefore Europe’s exhibition and events sector is specifically vulnerable. Trade fairs, exhibitions and business events will play a vital role in the economic recovery and the transition to green and digital economies and societies. With lead times of min. 4-6 months, our industry needs a clear roadmap for planning and preparing the international innovation and business platforms on time.

**The European Exhibition industry calls for a coordinated approach to intra-EU travel and travel from outside the EU. As a global industry, we stress the need for global coordination of criteria for risk and measures to re-establish overseas travel with the same standards.**



EUROPEAN  
EXHIBITION  
INDUSTRY  
ALLIANCE

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## **Background Information**

### **About EEIA**

The European Exhibition Industry Alliance represents nearly 400 European exhibition organisers and venue operators in Brussels to the European institutions and stakeholders. These trade fairs and exhibition players are organised in UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and the European Major Exhibition Centres Association EMECA.

For more information please visit:

[www.exhibition-alliance.eu](http://www.exhibition-alliance.eu) [www.ufi.org](http://www.ufi.org) [www.emeca.eu](http://www.emeca.eu)

We look forward to receiving any queries and your positive reply.

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