

A4E Reaction to Latest European Commission Proposals on EU Travel during COVID-19

Brussels, 25 November 2021 -- In light of the evolving epidemiological situation, A4E notes the European Commission's proposal for an updated Council Recommendation for intra-EU travel, specifically its aim to prioritise freedom of movement and avoid a patchwork of diverging national measures. However, the recommendation to shorten vaccine certificate validity to nine months and require third doses (booster shots) to maintain this status is premature and may put people's ability to travel at risk, given many EU countries are yet to make third doses available to the majority of their adult populations.

We are also surprised that the ECDC colour-coded map will continue to be used as a source of information as it relates to travel restrictions, in spite of the European Commission's focus on an individual traveller- based approach. In their report yesterday, the ECDC confirmed that travel restrictions have no impact on the spread of the virus in Europe. Given the success of the EU Digital COVID Certificate (DCC) system — which has become the global standard, we call on EU leaders to refrain from reintroducing a patchwork system of travel restrictions and maintain freedom of movement within the EU.

Finally, A4E welcomes the European Commission's updated <u>proposal for inbound travel to the EU</u> from third countries, in particular the discontinuation of the EU "White List" from 01 March 2022. This change will greatly improve predictability for international travellers planning their journeys by setting clear rules on travel requirements in advance.