

**Background note for discussion with the EU COVID19 Scientific Advice Platform – 11/03/2021**

17 March, the European Commission intends to adopt a Communication providing guidance to Member States on the proportionate, sustainable, safe and coordinated lifting of COVID-19 control measures. Swift and effective deployment of vaccines will be the primary driver of when and how measures can be lifted. Lessons should be learned from 2020 and avoid damaging and costly cycles of opening and closing. In that respect the Communication will discuss:

- ECDC framework for re-opening, with an operational tool to be in place early April for use by Member States. The tool will help individual Member States to choose which restrictions are most appropriate for lifting according to their specific characteristics, based on the likely impact they will have. This will enhance the confidence that Member States have in each other and enable re-opening to progress as swiftly as the epidemiological situation permits. It will also provide confidence for citizens, combat non-compliance due to fatigue and push back against vaccine disinformation. The next European Council (March 25-26) should endorse this approach.
- Returning to free movement with a proposal for a Digital Green Certificate demonstrating an individual's vaccination, test or recovery status, and providing a common approach for their issuance, verification and acceptance. The certificate does not discriminate in terms of ability to travel, but rather determines an individual's responsibilities in relation to quarantine and further testing. Inter-operability and possible extension to third countries is developed with WHO. Likewise, the recommendation will remain under constant review as the situation evolves (new vaccines, variants...).
- The Green lanes principles for freight transport will continue to be applied in full.
- Guidance to support the development and implementation of testing strategies, including of wastewater, and a common approach to the quality standards of different tests, as well as of self-tests. Further, the improvement of mobile contact tracing will be discussed.
- The development of a platform enabling the exchange of data between digital passenger locator forms between Member States, facilitating contact tracing.
- A common EU strategy on therapeutics and the development of other technologies for disinfection of clinical settings.

- The development of the Re-Open EU website to support the tourism sector, in addition to information on accessing EU support funds, as well as the development of guidance and standards for the hospitality and cultural industries.
- A summary of Team Europe support for COVAX and vaccine sharing.
- The ability to respond to a resurgence of COVID through HERA and its HERA incubator, and with the Emergency Response Coordination Centre.