

EU's 'Green pass'

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In news

Those vaccinated with Covishield, the version of the AstraZeneca vaccine being manufactured in India by SII, are not eligible for the EU Digital Covid certificate or "green pass"

About EU's Green Pass(EU Digital Covid Certificate)

- It is an immunity document to ease travel within and to the 27-member bloc.
- It will be in place by July 1.
- It is digital proof that a person has either been vaccinated against Covid-19, received a negative test result or recovered from Covid-19.
- The certificate is both in digital and paper format, comes with a QR code is free of charge, is in the national language and English, is safe and secure and valid in all EU countries
- The EU Digital Covid Certificate contains necessary key information such as name, date of birth, date of issuance, relevant information about vaccine/test/recovery and a unique identifier.
- This data remains on the certificate and is not stored or retained when a certificate is verified in another member state.
- The EU Digital Covid Certificate will also prove the results of testing, which is often required under applicable public health restrictions.

Which vaccines have been approved & not approved by the EU for Green pass?

- Comirnaty of Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca's Vaxzervria and Janssen by Johnson & Johnson are the only

four Covid-19 vaccines approved by EMA.

- None of the three vaccines which have been approved for use in India till date –Covishield, Covaxin and Sputnik V feature on the list.

Who issues it?

National authorities are in charge of issuing the certificate, for example, it could be issued by test centres or health authorities or directly via an eHealth portal.

Is it a precondition for free movement in the EU?

Getting the certificate will not be a precondition to free movement, which is a fundamental right in the EU.

While the “green pass” is expected to make the experience of travel hassle-free for people by doing away with restrictions, it is **not absolutely compulsory**.

How does it work as a pass?

- This Certificate will be accepted in all member states of the EU and will help ensure that restrictions currently in place can be lifted in a coordinated manner.
- The EU Digital Covid Certificate holder should in principle be exempted from free movement restrictions when travelling and member states should refrain from imposing additional travel restrictions on them.
- They can stop the holder from travelling if it is necessary and proportionate to safeguard public health.
- In such a case, for instance as a reaction to new variants of concern that member state would have to notify the Commission and all other member states and justify its decision.

Verification process of the certificate

- The EU Digital Covid Certificate contains a QR code with

a digital signature to protect it against falsification.

- When the certificate is checked, the QR code is scanned and the signature verified. Each issuing body (e.g. a hospital, a test centre, a health authority) has its own digital signature key.
- All of these are stored in a secure database in each country.
- The European Commission has built a gateway through which all certificate signatures can be verified across the EU.
- The personal data of the certificate holder does not pass through the gateway, as this is not necessary to verify the digital signature

India's move

India will take up the issue of approval of the Covishield vaccine by the European Medicines Agency(EMA) with the European Union during discussions between Indian and EU officials on the margins of the G20 meeting in Italy.