



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate B – Schengen, Borders & Visa
B.1 – Schengen & External Borders

Brussels

Dear respondents to our public consultation,

Thank you for your interest and letters in response to the public consultation *Travel – digitalising travel documents to make travelling easier*.

In its Communication of 24 July 2020 on an EU Security Union Strategy, the Commission made a pledge to continue and to extend the scope of its ongoing work on EU travel and residence documents, including through further digitalisation to improve the tools for combating document fraud, as well as promoting seamless cross-border travel and passenger clearance.

The initiative on the digitalisation of travel documents and facilitation of travel was announced on 2 June 2021 in the Commission Communication ‘A strategy towards a fully functioning and resilient Schengen area’. This initiative is closely linked to the ambitious Digital Europe strategy on shaping Europe’s digital future, aiming to ensure European integrity and resilience and to support technologies that will make a real difference to people’s daily lives.

In view of adopting a legislative proposal on this important initiative, the Commission is now carrying out an impact assessment to gather evidence that supports policymaking. In the context of this assessment, the Commission has carried out multiple stakeholder consultations, including a public consultation.

We welcome your feedback and appreciate the concerns you have raised. We have taken note of the important issues you have mentioned and will address them in the course of the impact assessment.

The introduction of digital travel documents has the potential to facilitate travel across the external borders, shorten waiting times as well as increase the efficiency of border checks and the internal security of the EU. The legislative proposal will ensure that the principles of non-discrimination, inclusivity and transparency are fully respected. Moreover, the concerns that you mention, especially with regard to data protection and privacy, cybersecurity and practical aspects linked to the use of digital solutions, will be addressed in the impact assessment as well as the legislative proposal.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that even with the introduction of digital travel documents, physical travel documents will continue to co-exist in the near future.

I hope this information is helpful for you, and I thank you for writing to the Commission about this important topic.

DG HOME Unit B.1