

EUROPE DIRECT

Weekly Guidelines for the EUROPE DIRECT centres

[Video message from Sandra Cavallo, Deputy Head of unit C.4](#)

TO KEEP YOU IN THE BIG PICTURE

Hit the road again: As of 1 July, the **EU Digital COVID Certificate Regulation entered into application**. This means that EU citizens and residents will now be able to have their Digital COVID Certificates issued and verified across the EU. 21 Member States as well as Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein had already started to issue certificates ahead of 1 July, and five EU countries started on 1 July. Welcoming the entry into application of the EU Digital COVID Certificate, President Ursula von der Leyen said: *"The European Union is delivering for its citizens. The European Digital COVID Certificate is a symbol of an open and safe Europe that is opening cautiously putting the protection of the health of our citizens first."* More [here](#).



EU 2021, Source: EC AV Service, *EU Digital COVID Certificate - Sofia*, 22/06/21,P-051409/00-04, Photographer: Xavier Lejeune

NextGenerationEU at full strength: In its **second NextGenerationEU transaction on 29 June the Commission raised €15 billion** to finance Europe's recovery from the coronavirus crisis and its consequences. Commissioner in charge of Budget and Administration, Johannes Hahn, said: "This is the second time the Commission has gone to the markets to borrow under NextGenerationEU and again we have received a strong vote of confidence from our investors..." Here is the [story](#).

Fresh boost for the countryside: On 30 June the Commission put forward a long-term vision for the EU's rural areas, identifying the challenges that they are facing, as well as highlighting some of the most promising opportunities that are available to these regions. Based on foresight and wide consultations with citizens and other actors in rural areas, the [vision](#) proposes a Rural Pact and a Rural Action Plan, which aim to make our rural areas stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous. The [story](#).

Open up for culture: At a time when the epidemiological situation is improving and vaccination campaigns are speeding up, Member States are gradually reopening cultural venues and activities. To ensure the safe resumption of activities in the **cultural sector**, the Commission has published a set of EU guidelines. The [guidelines](#) aim to provide a coordinated approach in line with the specific national, regional and local conditions. They are expected to guide the design and implementation of measures and protocols in EU countries to cover both the safe reopening as well as the sustainable recovery in the cultural and creative sectors. More [here](#).



CALL TO ACTION THIS WEEK ...

Be sure to underline the important role played by the Commission in making the COVID Certificate a reality by reaching out to all your audiences. This is about nothing less than restoring our basic freedom of mobility.

The national recovery and resilience plans may not be the most exciting summer read, but it will surely help you **pick up projects that resonate with the people in your catchment area**. So, add the plan to your summer basket and make good use of the projects in your own communication campaign.

With many of you having a steady connection with rural audiences, **the Commission's long-term vision for the EU's rural areas is a good piece to promote**.

Conference on the Future of Europe: Your role

CoFE is having a great start, with over 18 000 participants and some 5000 ideas shared. We need to keep up the momentum! You can help boost the visibility of the Conference and the platform by using the CoFE signature on your emails, appended to the guidelines – it's available in all EU languages.

Some words on the degree of engagement with the digital platform. We see that an extra push would be needed in the large Central and Eastern European countries (notably Poland and Romania). In addition, there is clearly a need to involve people with diverse socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

And finally, strongly encourage all participants of your events to register on the platform, submit ideas and actively participate in the discussions.

Looking ahead

Tuesday 6/07. College in Strasbourg: Strategy for Financing the Transition to a Sustainable Economy; Proposal for a Regulation on European green bonds; President von der Leyen delivers the VC opening speech at the New European Bauhaus – Werkstatt der Zukunft at the Frankfurt Fashion Week; The EU-UK Forum Annual Conference with VP Šefčovič and HoDel London Vale de Almeida