Denmark to develop digital passport proving vaccinations

3 February 2021, by Jan M. Olsen

Acting Minister of Finance Morten Boedskov faces the media at the Ministry of Finance in Copenhagen, Wednesday Feb. 3, 2021. (Martin Sylvest / Ritzau via AP)

Denmark's government said Wednesday it is joining forces with businesses to develop a digital passport that would show whether people have been vaccinated against the coronavirus, allowing them to travel and help ease restrictions on public life.

Finance Minister Morten Boedskov told a news conference that "in three, four months, a digital corona passport will be ready for use in, for example, business travel."

"It is absolutely crucial for us to be able to restart Danish society so that companies can get back on track. Many Danish companies are global companies with the whole world as a market," he added.

As a first step, before the end of February, citizens in Denmark would be able to see on a Danish health web site the official confirmation of whether they have been vaccinated.

"It will be the extra passport that you will be able to have on your mobile phone that documents that you have been vaccinated," Boedskov said. "We can be among the first in the world to have it and can show it to the rest of the world."

The coronavirus has seen a near-total halt in international travel as countries try to contain the spread of the virus. Major European airlines, for example, are flying a tenth of their normal traffic.

The Danish government's presentation was made together with representatives of the main business organizations, the Confederation of Danish Industries, which represents Denmark's major companies, and the Danish Chamber of Commerce.

Denmark, like neighboring Nordic and Baltic countries, has in recent years moved toward a completely digital system to reduce bureaucracy with online platforms that support electronic authentication and digital signatures to enable paperless communications across both the private and public sectors.

The European Commission, meanwhile, has been weighing proposals to issue vaccination certificates to help get travelers to their vacation destinations more quickly and avoid another disastrous summer for Europe's tourism sector. But the EU's executive arm said for now such certificates would only be used for medical purposes, for instance to monitor the possible adverse effects of vaccines.

Some similar digital passports are being developed to help travelers to securely show they've complied with COVID-19 testing requirements. One, called CommonPass, says it could also track vaccinations.

On Tuesday, Estonia said it will allow passengers arriving into the country with a proof of COVID-19 vaccination to avoid quarantine requirements.

The Baltic country said that the certificate must meet certain criteria, including information saying when the vaccine was made, which vaccine was used, the issuer of the vaccine and the [vaccine](#) batch number. The certificate must be in either in Estonian, Russian, or English.

The Danish government said it will decide later on whether the digital [passport](#) should be used for purposes other than travel to help reopen public life.

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