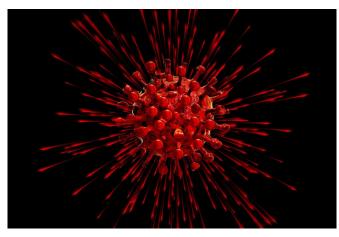


EU parliament could approve COVID 'green' pass in June: lawmaker

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The European Parliament will be ready to ratify the EU's COVID "green" pass in June, a key lawmaker said Monday, paving the way for easier travels during the key summer season.

The proposed vaccine pass was put forward this month by the European Commission—the EU's executive arm—as tourist hotspots on the continent push to save their economies.

It is aimed at facilitating travel for those who have been vaccinated, tested negative or already gone through a <u>coronavirus</u> infection.

MEPs agreed last week to fast-track their consideration of the "digital green certificate" to help speed up an approval process that can take many months or even years.

Parliament committee chief Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar said that a timeframe had been set to "push it forward" and that it could be approved during the session from June 7 to 10.

Lopez Aguilar, who is responsible for negotiating

the proposal on behalf of parliament, insisted that the protection of personal data had to be ensured and there should be a "sunset clause" limiting how long the pass would be needed.

If the <u>parliament</u> backs the move it would then have to be formally signed off by the European Council, the body representing the members states.

The commission has said that is hoping to get the pass up and running by June.

The plan has faced resistance from some capitals, particularly over fears of discrimination against those still waiting for a vaccine as the bloc's inoculation drive has struggled to get going.

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