

PRESS RELEASE

59/21

03/02/2021

COVID-19 transport measures: Coreper approves mandate to extend temporary flexibility for licences

Today, member states' ambassadors agreed on a negotiating mandate for **renewing temporary measures to help transport operators and citizens** who are unable to fulfil certain **administrative requirements because of COVID-19 measures** taken in the member states. The proposal extends the possibility of temporarily prolonging the validity of specific certificates, licences and authorisations in the areas of road, rail and inland waterways transport as well as maritime security. This applies, for instance, to driving licences, roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and boat-masters' certificates. It follows on from similar rules adopted in May 2020.

As the COVID-19 crisis is persisting, the EU is doing what is necessary to provide legal certainty in the transport sector and avoid potential market disruption. And it's not just transport professionals who are concerned: individual drivers may find it impossible to renew their driving licenses due to COVID restrictions. The Portuguese presidency is working with the European Parliament to conclude these updated rules swiftly.

Pedro Nuno Santos, Portuguese Minister for Infrastructure and Housing, President of the Council

The **Council position** allows the validity of certificates, licences and authorisations with expiry dates falling between 1 September 2020 and **30 June 2021** to be extended by **10 months**.

In the case of professional training certificates and driving licences covered by the May 2020 rules, their validity may be extended by an additional six months, or in certain cases until 1 July 2021, to deal with an administrative backlog of expired certificates and licences.

If renewals remain impracticable beyond the timeframe set out in the regulation, the member states concerned may ask the Commission to authorise a further extension. Such a request must be duly justified, and the decision to grant the extension requires an assessment that such an extension will not increase risks to transport safety or security disproportionately.

Those member states which do not need the extensions laid down in the regulation need not apply them. However, to ensure the smooth functioning of the single market and continued cross-border activity, those member states which opt out from certain provisions will have to accept those certificates, licences and authorisations whose validity has been extended in other member states.

Procedure

Today's mandate was approved by ambassadors meeting in the Council's Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper). Both the Council and the European Parliament will have to agree on the final text.

Negotiations on the proposal are being held between the co-legislators as a matter of urgency.

A link to the approved text will be added to this press release on our website.

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