



22ND eHEALTH NETWORK MEETING 7 NOVEMBER 2022, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

COVER NOTE

3.2 Contact tracing apps (EFGS) (for information)

1. Issue at stake

22 contact tracing and warning applications were deployed across the EU and the European Federation Gateway Service (EFGS) has connected 19 of them. With the favourable evolution of the pandemic, several Member States disconnected from the EFGS, with 7 remaining connected, as of mid-October 2022. With the gradual offboarding of countries, it is now important to start preparing for the next steps with regard to the EFGS. The study launched by the Commission to draw lessons learned and assess the effectiveness of this work is finalised and is expected to be published soon.

2. Summary

22 contact tracing applications were deployed by Member States in the EU since the beginning of the pandemic. A European infrastructure to ensure the interoperability of these apps, the European Federation Gateway Service (EFGS), was deployed by the end of September 2020 and has connected 19 national contact tracing apps out of 22¹.

The outbreak of the Omicron variant steered the keys traffic through the EFGS to an absolute peak of over 700 thousand keys uploaded on a single day in March 2022. The overall traffic has decreased, but the overall daily keys uploads remain high at around 180 thousand keys. These uploads mainly originate from a single country (Germany).

With the favourable evolution of the pandemic, as of mid-October 2022, 11 countries² have stopped their contact tracing app and have been offboarded from the EFGS. It is not unlikely that additional Member States will offboard in the coming months, which may eventually lead to the phasing out of the EFGS. It is, therefore, important to start reflecting for the next steps with regard to the EFGS.

The study on lessons learned, best practices and epidemiological impact of the common EU approach on digital contact tracing apps is under review on the basis of comments received from participating countries and it is expected to be published soon.

¹ DE, IT, IE, LV, HR, DK, ES, NL, PL, BE, FI, AT, NO, SI, CY, CZ, MT, LT and EE. PT requested to join the EFGS, but their onboarding is on hold due to lack of progress. Two other Member States (FR and HU) have deployed apps that are not interoperable with the EFGS.

² AT, CY, CZ, DK, PL, EE, MT, FI, NO, ES and LT. The NL has not officially offboarded, but its application is no longer active.

3. Format of procedure in the meeting

No action required, only for information. MS ideas on the future of the EFGS are welcome.