



21ST eHEALTH NETWORK MEETING 1-2 JUNE 2022, PARIS, FRANCE

COVER NOTE

2 COVID-19 Coordinated actions (for information) – Contact tracing applications and the European Federation Gateway Service

1. Issue at stake

22 contact tracing and warning applications have been rolled out 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 have been offboarded from the EFGS, with 13 remaining connected, as of early May 2022. The study launched by the Commission to draw lessons learned and assess the effectiveness of this work is ongoing. The transfer of the EFGS to the ECDC was completed by early April 2022.

2. Summary

22 contact tracing applications have been rolled out 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 changes in the epidemiological situation, different infection waves and new more contagious virus variants like Omicron have steered the keys traffic through the EFGS with an absolute peak of over 700 thousand keys uploaded on a single day in March 2022.

With the favourable evolution of the pandemic, as of May 2022, 6 Member States (CZ, AT, CY, DK, PL, EE) have stopped their contact tracing app and have been offboarded from the EFGS. FI has requested to be offboarded by 1 June 2022. NL has temporarily deactivated their national app, but it could be reactivated if the epidemiological situation requires so. It is not unlikely that additional Member States will be offboarded in the coming months, which would eventually lead to the phasing out of the EFGS.

The Commission launched a study on lessons learned, best practices and epidemiological impact of the common EU approach on digital contact tracing apps. The relevant work groups of the eHealth Network, and associated experts, are being consulted in the context of this study. It is expected to be finalised by September 2022.

The mandate of the ECDC is expected to be strengthened under the European Health Union and broadened to include digital contact tracing and their interoperability. The operations of the EFGS were transferred successfully by April 2022.

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.

3. Format of procedure in the meeting

For information on the state of play of contact tracing applications and the EFGS. Member States will be invited to provide any comments on the future of the EFGS, to share lessons learned and to identify any actions on contact tracing apps and the EFGS.