European Union Digital Passenger Locator Form System (EUdPLF) development

Nick Bitsolas

N Bitsolas[1], J Janiec[2], M Dionisio[3], C Marotta[3], B Kairiene[4], A Raulinaitis[4], Y Ibanez[5], R Ripoche[5], K Bitenc[6], C Hadjichristodoulou[1]
[1]Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology, University of Thessaly, Larissa, Greece
[2]National Institute of Hygiene, National Institute of Public Health, Warsaw, Poland
[3]Ministry of Health, Rome, Italy
[4]National Public Health Centre, The Ministry of Health, Vilnius, Lithuania
[5]Directorate General of Health, Ministry of Health, Paris, France
[6]National Institute of Public Health, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Contact: nmpits@med.uth.gr

Introduction:
Passenger Locator Forms (PLFs) are used by public health authorities to facilitate international contact tracing. Digital PLFs (dPLF) allows for easier, more rapid data collection and exchange between stakeholders, making international contact tracing more effective and efficient. In response to COVID-19, EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS developed a common European Union digital Passenger Locator Form System (EUdPLF) for all transport sectors (aircrafts, cruise ships/ferries and ground transport).

Methods:
A working group was established consisting of 9 EUMS, EASA, EMSA, ECDC, IATA, ERA, CLIA EUROPE. A minimum mandatory dataset was developed. Personal data protection procedures and security measures were implemented. Interconnection of EUdPLF with the EASA exchange platform allowing exchange of data between MS with national dPLF and MS using the EUdPLF was completed. Pilot testing was conducted with four MS for the air and ferry sector.

Results:
The EUdPLF system developed consists of a multilingual website being the first point of information for users and the EUdPLF app which is the web app for completion of the dPLF. One dPLF is completed per family/group, a QR code is generated and dPLF is sent to the passenger's email. Pilot testing generated 1013 PLFs submissions and 1450 passenger registrations. Feedback received was positive and used to improve user experience. To date, Italy is officially using the EUdPLF for all arriving passengers for all modes of transport. France, Slovenia, Lithuania and Austria are finalising practicalities before official use and testing of the system is ongoing with other MS.

Conclusions:
EUdPLF provides multilingual, user-friendly, secure and GDPR compliant single entry point and database for the collection of PLFs, flexible to be customised to the MS needs and to be connected to external systems e.g. check-in system of transport operators, vaccination/testing/certificate information systems of each MS.