

# Digitalisation of the coordination of social security systems and establishment of the European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS)

2026/0271(COD) - 15/09/2026 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish a framework for the European Social Security Passport (ESSPASS).

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: while the Commission and Member States have already taken steps under the current framework to digitalise cross-border procedures, services and data exchanges in the area of social security coordination, further action at EU level is required. This aligns with repeated calls from the European Parliament, including in its 2021 Resolution on a European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS).

The Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI) system has significantly improved the handling of cases under the EU social security coordination rules. However, some obstacles to fully realising the benefits of the system remain. **Further digitalisation is needed to:**

- reinforce the protection of individuals and workers by facilitating more effective access to social security rights across Europe;
- reduce administrative hurdles and costs for individuals accessing social security benefits in other Member States and for businesses operating across borders;
- increase the quality of cross-border public services;
- provide Member States with more effective tools to fight against fraud, thus strengthening the protection of rights and fair mobility.

The ESSPASS **pilot phase** from 2021 to 2025, launched under the European Pillar of Social Rights action plan and supported by the Digital Europe programme, proved both the technical feasibility and the practical benefits of the ESSPASS. The proposed regulation will support a smooth transition from the ESSPASS pilot phase to full-scale implementation by establishing rules for the rapid deployment of ESSPASS in all Member States.

CONTENT: the proposed regulation lays down rules for the **establishment and operation of the European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS)**. This is a digital solution for the electronic request, issuance and cross-border verification of social security documents, including the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and the portable document A1.

The ESSPASS should ensure that individuals are able to swiftly prove their social security rights and should support the seamless exercise of those rights in cross-border situations, while enabling social security institutions, labour inspectorates and healthcare providers to efficiently and securely verify the relevant information. This in turn would facilitate fraud checks and strengthen enforcement.

The ESSPASS should also simplify compliance with applicable requirements for businesses engaging workers, and for self-employed, in cross-border situations.

The ESSPASS legal framework will apply:

- from **12 months** after the date of entry into force of portable document A1;
- from **3 years** after the date of entry into force of the EHIC and other social security documents.

No later than 18 months after the date of entry into force, the Commission may adopt delegated acts establishing, on the basis of an assessment, a list of social security documents, other than the portable document A1 and the EHIC, to which the framework would not apply.

Over a 12-year period, digitalisation could save businesses up to EUR 64 million, healthcare providers EUR 69 million, and labour inspectors EUR 72 million through faster cross-border verification. Digital signatures could prevent up to EUR 277 million in fraud over the same period.