



Written by [James Murphy](#) on September 13, 2021

England Shelves Plans to Initiate Domestic Vaccine Passport System

England will not be using vaccine passports to enable citizens to enter crowded venues such as nightclubs and restaurants, according to the United Kingdom's Health Secretary Sajid Javid. Instead, the nation will forgo vaccine passports for now, while keeping them as an option should the pandemic worsen in the future.

Javid made the announcement on Sunday on the BBC's *The Andrew Marr Show*.

"What I can say is that we've looked at it properly and whilst we should keep it in reserve as a potential option, I'm pleased to say that we will not be going ahead with plans for vaccine passports," the Health Secretary said.

According to Javid, Great Britain may soon drop other COVID-19 restrictions as well including mandatory testing for returning travelers.

"I've never liked the idea of saying to people, 'You must show your papers' or something to do what is just an everyday activity," Javid said.

According to Javid, England didn't want to simply submit to international peer pressure regarding the vaccine passports, which are in use in many parts of the world including continental Europe, Japan, Israel, and parts of America.

"So many countries, at the time they implemented it, was to try and boost their vaccination rates and you can understand why they might have done that," he said.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson is expected to address the nation on Tuesday regarding managing the Chinese virus in the UK over the autumn and winter. A push for citizens to receive booster vaccine shots is reportedly on the agenda.

Only a day before the announcement, Javid told Sky News that the government had not yet made a final decision on whether to initiate a domestic vaccine passport system.

The announcement comes after a week during which political leaders from across the spectrum issued grave doubts about the possibility of British citizens having to "show their papers" to gain entry into entertainment and dining venues.

Liberal Democrat MP Alistair Carmichael noted that vaccine passports would open "the door to a major change in the relationship between the citizen and the state."

"The introduction of vaccine passports will have enormous practical implications for the literally thousands of businesses across the country who will be required to gather and to hold our data,"



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Carmichael said.

The Labour Party's top deputy Angela Rayner said that her party "cannot support any potential COVID pass scheme for access to everyday services."

And to complete the ideological opposition to vaccine passports, Johnson's own Conservative Party also dismissed the possible use of such documentation, with Conservative MP William Wragg calling the plan "a load of rubbish," and fellow Conservative MP Mark Harper saying it was a "pointless policy with damaging effects."

Javid's comments were welcomed by music clubs and other entertainment venues. The Night Time Industries Association (NTIA), led by CEO Michael Kill commented in a statement: "Following an intense political and public campaign by the NTIA, its members and wider industry supporters, we welcome the comments from the Health Secretary this morning."

The entire United Kingdom is not following England's lead on vaccine passports, however. On Thursday, Scotland's Parliament voted 68-55 to support the implementation of vaccine passports for entry to nightclubs and other crowded venues. Negative COVID tests will not be accepted.

Northern Ireland has created a vaccine passport but, thus far at least, it is only needed for international travel. The government of Wales has yet to decide on issuing vaccine passports.

So, it seems as though a bit of common sense regarding COVID-19 is finally breaking out in parts of Europe. Over the weekend, [Denmark](#) did away with all pandemic restrictions including mandatory masks and vaccine passports. Sweden is expected to do the same by the end of September. Now, England has decided against vaccine passports.

Hopefully, the politicians in Washington, D.C., can find a way to import some of that common sense. It seems to be a rare commodity these days.



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