



| ICAO

# TRIP 2022

**SEAMLESS AND CONTACTLESS**

Sharing data to accelerate the recovery

13 - 15 SEPTEMBER 2022

# Health policies for safe international travel: Learning from COVID-19

—  
**Frederico Guanais**

Deputy Head, Health Division

Employment, Labour and Social Affairs  
Directorate

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and  
Development (OECD)

# The importance of learning lessons from the “natural experiment” of COVID-19 and putting them to practice



Difficulties of creating criteria for health risk assessment



Unnecessary policy differences in health requirements



Different health/travel certificates that do not speak to each other



Risk of mismanaging new variants of concern

# Criteria for health risk assessment: Making traffic lights more useful

## ECDC

(Jun 17, 2021 to Feb 1, 2022)

Incidence rate (14-day)	Testing < 300	Testing rate >300		
		Positivity <1%	Positivity 1-4%	Positivity >4%
<50	Grey	Green	Green	Orange
50-75	Grey	Green	Orange	Orange
75-200	Grey	Orange	Orange	Red
200-500	Grey	Red	Red	Red
>500	Grey	Dark red	Dark red	Dark red

(Since Feb 1, 2022)

Weighted rate (14-day)	Testing < 600	Testing > 600
<40	Dark grey	Green
40-100	Dark grey	Orange
100-300	Dark grey	Red
>300	Dark grey	Dark red

Weighted rate =  $(C+C*(100-V)/100)/2$   
 C = 14-day incidence rate  
 V = Vaccination uptake

## US CDC (since Apr 18, 2022)

Incidence rate (28-day)	Testing rate < 100			100 < Testing rate < 1500			Testing rate > 1500		
	Positivity <3.3%	Positivity 3.3%-10%	Positivity >10%	Positivity <3.3%	Positivity 3.3%-10%	Positivity >10%	Positivity <3.3%	Positivity 3.3%-10%	Positivity >10%
<50	Low	Unknown	Unknown	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Low	Low
50-100	Moderate	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
>100	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High

## UK (since Sep 2021)

### Variant assessment

- transmissibility
- severity of disease
- escape from natural immunity
- escape from vaccine-induced immunity
- effect on therapeutics
- zoonotic emergence (animal to human)
- current epidemiology

### Triage

- testing rates per 100,000
- weekly case rates per 100,000
- test positivity
- evidence of variants in country
- exported cases of variants to the UK
- genomic sequencing capability
- strong travel links with countries having community transmission of variant

### Further risk assessment

### Outcome

- genomic surveillance capability
- COVID-19 transmission risk
- variant transmission risk

↪ Very low; low; medium, high and very high

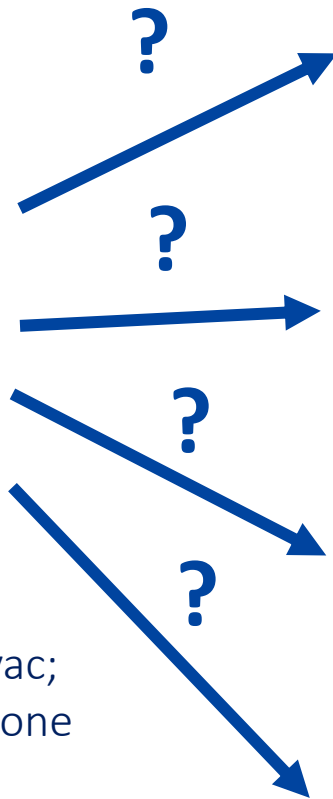
# Reducing the cacophony of health policies for travel

(Policies in place on 23 Mar 2022)



An example of travel plans for a family of four in which:

- (1) one adult had two shots Sinovac;
- (2) another adult had COVID and one shot Janssen;
- (3) a child, 13 yrs old had one shot Pfizer;
- (4) another child, 6 yrs old was not vaccinated.



Fully vax (inc. Sinovac) (18yrs+) **AND**  
PCR 72 hrs or Ag 24 hrs before departure (6yrs+)  
Quarantine may be needed



Fully vax (not Sinovac) and booster **OR**  
PCR 72 hrs **OR** Ag 48 hrs before arrival (6y+)  
quarantine if no documents



Fully vax (inc. Sinovac) **OR**  
PCR 72 hrs **OR** Ag 24 hrs before arrival (5y+)  
quarantine may be needed



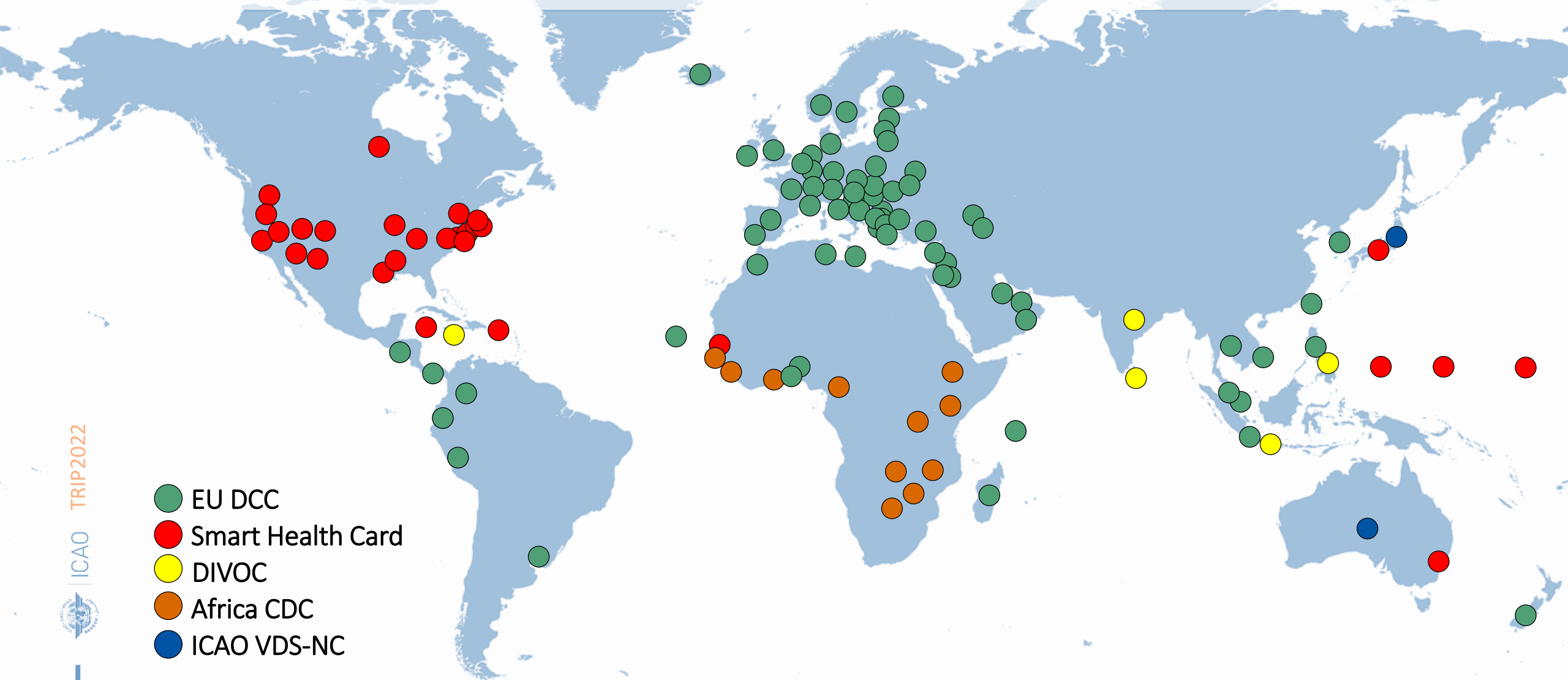
Fully vax (inc Sinovac) **AND**  
PCR 72 hrs **OR** Ag 24 hrs before departure (5y+)  
quarantine may be needed

Source: <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/world.php>, accessed 23 Mar 2022.  
Note: For illustration purposes. Travel regulations may not include all rules and exceptions.

# Unlocking the potential of digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates

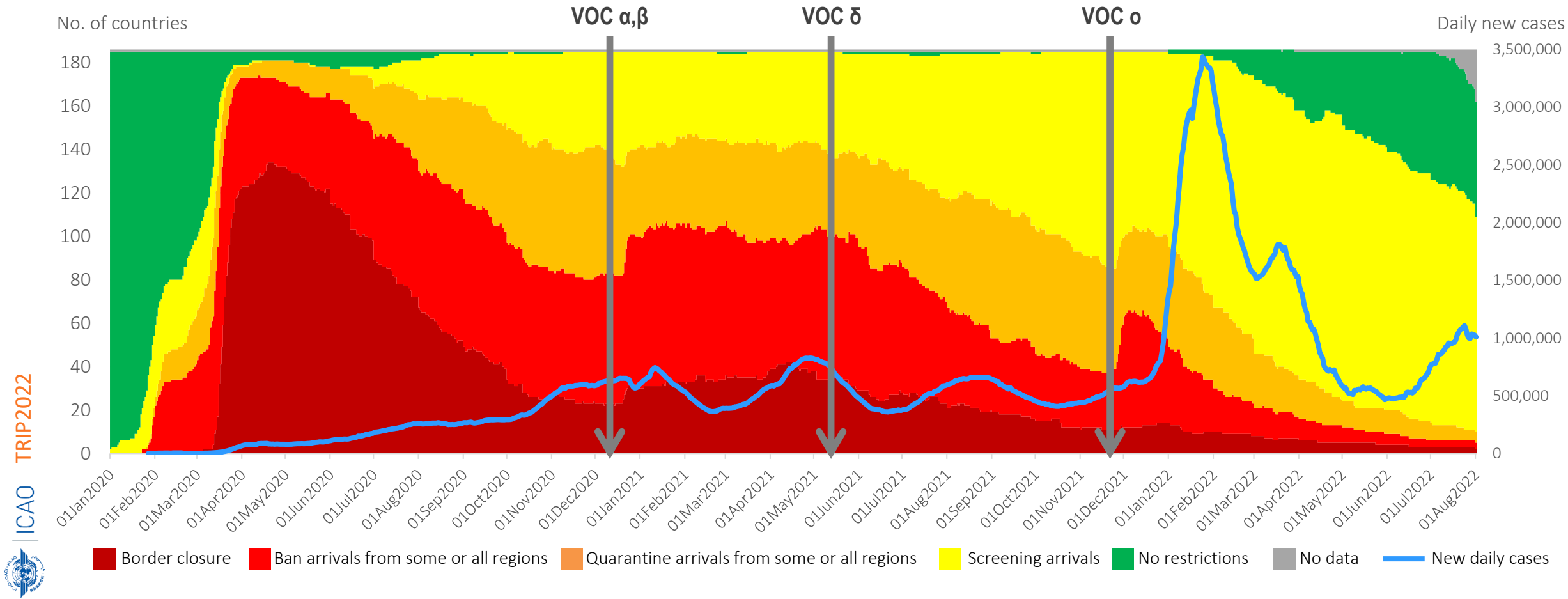


- EU DCC
- Smart Health Card
- DIVOC
- Africa CDC
- ICAO VDS-NC



# Improving management of the response to new variants of concern

**International travel restrictions by type of restriction, and daily new COVID-19 cases worldwide, 1 Jan 2020 to 1 Aug 2022**



VOC: Variant of Concern

Source: Restrictions data compiled by the Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker (downloaded 19 Aug 2022) and COVID-19 cases data compiled by Our World in Data (downloaded 31 Aug 2022). Quarantine may also be applied by countries included in the travel ban categories.

# Spain / OECD Initiative for Safe International Travel

- OECD Blueprint and knowledge forum for safe international mobility (2021)
- 7-8 July High-level Meeting in Ibiza, Spain:
  - 130 Participants from 28 countries + international organisations + key business stakeholders
  - Key partners:
    - International Civil Aviation Organization
    - World Health Organization
    - World Tourism Organization
    - Global Digital Health Partnership
    - G20 Indonesian Presidency



<https://www.oecd.org/health/safe-international-travel/>



# Main challenges and objectives

## Challenges

- The epidemiological situation continues to evolve.
- Unilateral measures concerning **new variants of concern** (nVoC).
- Lack of **communication between different health verification platforms** to ensure compliance to regulations and mutual authentication.
- **Lack of predictability** for travellers and businesses in the tourism and travel sectors.

## Objectives

- Providing **vital political momentum** to promote seamless, interoperable, and safe international travel.
- Ensuring **alignment between multiple initiatives** for safe international travel.
- Promoting **policies to make international travel more resilient** to face future health crises.

**The policy window is closing:** we risk losing the opportunity to develop a more resilient international travel environment for the future

# Areas where we need progress

Issue	Possible progress
1. Unnecessary differences in policies and risk assessment criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HLM agreed principles, but we need more assertive guidance for future pandemics</li> </ul>
2. Different health/travel certificates that do not speak to each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health certificates should be accepted in <b>both digital and non-digital formats</b> to ensure accessibility and equity.</li> <li>• Recognition of the <b>benefits of digitally verifiable certificates</b>, while also welcoming initiatives to make them more widely available.</li> <li>• Working towards technological solutions to ensure <b>mutual recognition</b></li> </ul>
3. Risk of mismanaging new variants of concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HLM agreed principles: react more quickly, end measures more quickly</li> </ul>

# Moving forward

- G20 Health Working Group pilot project for interoperable health certificates.
- A baseline framework on international principles and consensus for international stakeholders to work with, promote and build upon.
- Finish the job!



---

# Thank You



[Frederico.GUANAIS@oecd.org](mailto:Frederico.GUANAIS@oecd.org)