

Summary of events and actions
related to tourism
since the outbreak of COVID-19

Event

Date

Action

January

WHO report on a cluster of pneumonia cases - with no deaths - in Wuhan, Hubei province

4

People who have been in Wuhan test positive, first in Thailand, then Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Canada, Dubai. Airline passengers travelling from China are required to undergo screening tests

Mid-Jan

First case detected in Europe

24

Recommendation of the Chinese government to suspend all group tours out of China

27

Member info on state of play of covid-19 outbreak and evolving travel advice of some Member States

29

Member info on repatriation flights from China and evolving travel advice of Member States

WHO declaration that the novel coronavirus outbreak is a Public Health Emergency of International Concern
Some airlines start suspending flight to/from China

30

Member info on suspension of tour operator programmes to China in some markets

February

5

ECTAA participation to WHO confcall with focus on tourism

6

Member info on state of play of covid-19 outbreak

12

ECTAA participation to WHO confcall with focus on tourism

13

Member info on state of play of covid-19 outbreak

First death in Europe (Chinese national).
Gradual spread of virus in Italy, France, Germany, etc.

15

18

D&S Committee Confcall on repatriation

Event

Date

Action

Suspension of flights from China

19

ECTAA participation to WHO confcall with focus on tourism
ECTAA participation to 1st meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

Some 20 towns in Lombardi and Venezia close access to public places

21

Adoption of first EU aid package of 232 million euros (WHO support, research, repatriation of EU citizens from Wuhan)

24

25

Member info on state of play of covid-19 outbreak

26

ECTAA participation to WHO confcall with focus on tourism
ECTAA participation to 2nd meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

27

ECTAA-EUTT meeting with chinese Mission to the EU

WHO raises Coronavirus threat to 'very high' - but not yet a pandemic

28

March

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) upgraded the risk of infection from 'moderate' to 'high'

2

ECTAA press release calling for coordinated and proportionate measures in response to the COVID-19 outbreak

In Brussels, a team of five Commissioners was set up to focus on three key aspects: health, mobility and the economy

3

Member info on state of play of covid-19 outbreak

4

ECTAA participation to WHO confcall with focus on tourism

Letter to PTD expert group to comment European Commission's PTD Covid 19 notice. (quarantined guests at hotels/ cancellation)

Event

Date

Action

	5	Meeting with MEP Ujhelyi on covid-19 impact and EU responses needed Info about suspension of airline Flybe
Italy goes into lockdown	9	Member info on state of play of covid-19 outbreak, call for actions
Member States start closing internal borders within the Schengen zone overview flight cancellations / rebooking policies	10	Member info about suspension 80/20 rule for airport slots Member info about new IATA information sources concerning coronavirus - measures taken by governments / entry information in Timatic Communication to DG MOVE on impact coronavirus for travel and tourism
WHO assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic	11	Dedicated page on covid-19 on ECTAA website with continuously updated information ECTAA participation to WHO confcall with focus on tourism Info flight cancellations / rebooking policies in member section ECTAA website Letter to President von der Leyen, Commissioners Breton (GROW) and Valean (MOVE) on the impact of COVID-19 on the travel industry and the need for support measurers.
WHO now considers that Europe is the epicentre of the pandemic	12	ECTAA participation to 3 rd meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW NET open letter to European policy makers for dialogue and financial support Press release ETC - ETOA - ECTAA - USTOA on detrimental implications of US travel ban on European and American tourism ECTAA Legal Committee - drafting of a position on PTD Vouchers/flexibility measures/ State aids Letter to IATA - remittance cycles, temporary relief needed

Event

Date

Action

	13	<p>Member info on EU response to covid-19, state of play of covid-19 outbreak, ECTAA actions</p> <p>Draft letter on a position on PTD Vouchers/flexibility measures/ State aids to be sent to DG JUST-DG GROW</p> <p>Reporting on national flexibility measures/state aids in the EU (real time update)</p>
<p>EU decision to close the external borders of the EU (other than for travel deemed essential) and to repatriate EU citizens from third countries</p>	17	<p>ECTAA letter to Commissioners Breton (GROW), Reynders (JUST) and Valean (MOVE) on supports measures and flexibility of PTD</p> <p>Member info on temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU</p> <p>Press release of Tourism Manifesto (of which ECTAA is a member) on urgent support measures for tourism</p> <p>D&S Committee confcall on repatriation</p> <p>Member info about short notice IATA PAPGJC crisis call on 18 March and ECTAA planning to attend</p> <p>ECTAA Press release: The European travel agents and tour operators call for pragmatism and flexible application of the refund rules</p> <p>AMC info on IATA BSP info - small flexibility measures</p>
<p>The Commission published guidelines to ensure EU passenger rights are protected and applied in a coherent manner across the EU, in light of the mass cancellations and delays</p>	18	<p>Member info on Commission guidelines on 261/2004</p> <p>Member info with overview of the EU and national responses to covid-19</p> <p>ECTAA letter to Commissioner Reynders supporting EGFATT letter on protected vouchers</p> <p>IATA PAPGJC crisis call - lack of refunds, flexibility remittance - initial info to AMC</p> <p>Request to IATA to extend ADM dispute time</p>
<p>Commission updates its PTD Covid 19 notice, taking into account ECTAA's comments</p> <p>The Commission adopted a Temporary Framework to enable Member States to use the full flexibility foreseen under State aid rules to support the economy in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak</p>	19	<p>ECTAA press release on cancelled travels and vouchers</p> <p>ECTAA participation to 4th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW</p>

Event

Date

Action

Member info on repatriation flights organised by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism

AMC info on refunds/vouchers in preparation of AMC call 20 March

Request to IATA - reduced financial guarantees during the year

20

Member info on repatriation flights organised by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (travel restrictions, lockdown level, aid package, etc.)

ECTAA confcall with Trainline on covid-19 impact and support measures

Joint AMC/TWG call - refunds vs. vouchers

AMC info about IATA reminder to airlines of refund obligation according to IATA resolution 824r and Air Passenger Rights 261/2004

AMC Confcall working group on BSP / guarantees

21

Member info about risk when refunding customers before money is on account from the BSP

22

Letter to IATA - BSP about to collapse and guarantee fund needed

23

Member info on ECTAA activities 2nd weekly Legal Committee meeting

AMC info about letter from Israeli lawyer to IATA concerning changed refund policies / enforcement and on open letter A4E / ERA

24

Letter to commissioner Reynders as a reaction to his interview on vouchers

D&S committee confcall to discuss repatriation of customers, travel restrictions, etc.

Confcall with Trainline on covid-19 impact and support measures

Executive Board confcall

Letter to PTD Expert Group on art 17.1 PTD

EP Tourism Task Force letter to Commission calling for a tourism rescue action plan

Event

Date

Action

24

Member info on possible reductions of Remittance Holding Capacities - to be sent to IATA

Letter to Commissioners Vestager, Breton, Reynders, Valean - BSP about to collapse, refunds at risk, request to extend remittance cycle and set up of guarantee fund needed

Member info on possibility for IATA accredited agents to approach Travel Agency Commissioner to possibly set-off debts with receivables

Exchange of views with TAC for general ruling - refunds not processed, setting-off debts to be allowed

25

Air Matters Committee confcall

ECTAA participation to WHO confcall with focus on tourism

Communication to Politico, Euractiv, Thomson Reuters, Phocuswire about letter to COM concerning possible collapse of BSP

26

ECTAA participation to PAPGJC crisis confcall

ECTAA participation to 5th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

Member info on repatriation flights - update 26/03/2020

Communication of ECTAA views on article 17.1 PTD to DG GROW

27

ECTAA Executive Board confcall

ECTAA confcall of Members and D&S Committee on repatriation flights

Member info on EU Civil Protection Mechanism

ECTAA/European Consumers association (BEUC) confcall on vouchers

ECTAA/European Guarantee Fund association (EGFATT) confcall on protection on vouchers

Communication to PTD Expert Group of ECTAA views on art 17.1 PTD

Event

Date

Action

27

Letter Commissioner Reynders to Member States on PTD vouchers

Member info about TAC ruling concerning setting-off debts - agents need to approach IATA first

Member info about letter of EDV to IATA with copy to EU Commission about lack of refunds, need for guarantees

30

Consultation of Members in view of determining a position on airline

3rd ECTAA weekly legal committee meeting

Info about TAC ruling - options in case of rejection to set-off debts by IATA, demand to use escrow account and hold IATA accountable

Communication to Politico, Euractiv, Phocuswire on TAC decision and options in case of rejection to set-off debts

31

ECTAA Conference call on Regulation 261/2004 and airline vouchers

Member info on repatriation flights - update 31/03/2020

AMC info about possible issues around payout of amounts due to agents to please confirm

Member info about IATA document on vouchers to airlines

Member info about possible non-payment of outstanding amounts to be confirmed and provide info to TAC

April

1

Member info on possibly consider setting-off debts and check if possibility is covered by national legislation

Member info on possible update of bank account needed to receive pay out from BSP

AMC info on phocuswire article about ECTAA turning to regulators concerning airline refunds

Event

Date

Action

The Commission proposes to set up a EUR 100 billion solidarity instrument to help workers keep their incomes and help businesses stay afloat, called SURE. It is also proposing to redirect all available structural funds to the response to the coronavirus.

Commissioner Breton's hearing in European Parliament IMCO Committee

2

Member info on repatriation flights - update 02/04/2020

ECTAA participation in IATA PAPGJC crisis call

Member info on how to update bank account information to receive pay out from BSP

AMC/LC info on IATA global advocacy package - feedback welcome

3

Joint press release with aviation stakeholders highlighting unprecedented liquidity crisis of Europe's aviation industry and need for action - ECTAA

Joint press release with social partners calling for emergency measures - ECTAA initiative

Member info on repatriation flights - update 03/04/2020

ECTAA participation to 6th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

Model letter to Members on PTD vouchers (to Commissioner Reynders and government)

AMC info about answers received in Greece from IATA on request to use escrow account and hold IATA accountable

Joint letter eu travel tech and ECTAA to DG GROW and DG COMP concerning lack of airline refunds, damage to whole ecosystem and request this will be considered when granting state aid - Info all members and committees

Member info about open letter of IATA Director General to travel agency community - pushing for vouchers

4

Letter to President von der Leyen, Commissioners Breton, Reynders and Valean on the need to protect vouchers issued by airlines

6

ECTAA Executive Board confcall

4th weekly Legal Committee meeting

ECTAA conference call with CAB Reynders on PTD, vouchers and state aids

Member info on US DOT ruling - obligation to process refunds

Event	Date	Action
<p>Communication inviting Member States to prolong restriction on non-essential travel to the EU until 15 May</p> <p>Adoption of comprehensive aid package of €500 billion, in the form of (i) activation of credit lines under more favourable conditions, (ii) the creation of a temporary and targeted Recovery Fund, to pay for economic recovery; (iii) solidarity instrument to help workers keep their incomes and help businesses stay afloat, called SURE; (iv) set up a pan-European fund to provide guarantees for businesses, including SMEs.</p>	7	<p>Stakeholders confcall (including ECTAA) with Cabinet of Commissioner Breton (GROW) & Follow-up document to Commissioner Breton</p> <p>Member info on repatriation flights - update 07/04/2020</p> <p>Member info on IATA - temporary changes in settlement days / Visa and Mastercard on chargebacks</p>
	8	<p>ECTAA participation to PAPGJC covid-19 crisis confcall - e.g. issue of cancellations of Global Default Insurance</p> <p>Member info on Communication of 8.4</p> <p>Press clipping 1 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament</p> <p>Member info about suspension of airline TAME</p> <p>Demand to IATA to suspend process relating to TAC office changes until 31.12 2021</p> <p>Communication to IATA with cumulated feedback on IATA global advocacy package</p>
	9	<p>ECTAA participation to 7th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW</p> <p>Member info about suspension of airline Braathens Regional Airways</p>
	10	<p>Member info about ANVR approach to airline vouchers – find workable solution</p>
	13	<p>5th weekly Legal Committee meeting</p> <p>Position of ECTAA on PTD flexibility measure and state aids to IMCO MEPs</p>
<p>European Parliament IMCO Hearing of Commissioner Reynders</p>	14	<p>AMC info on Euractiv article on passenger rights issue reach out to European Passenger Federation to share concern about airline insolvencies and guarantees needed</p> <p>Conference call with BEUC on voucher</p> <p>AMC info on IATA update on covid-19</p>

Event

Date

Action

Adoption of European roadmap to phase-out the containment measures due to the coronavirus outbreak. The roadmap lists principles and recommendations Member States should consider when planning to lift containment measures.

15

Executive Board conference call
ECTAA Executive Board confcall
Conference Call with Commissioner Didier Reynders on vouchers

16

ECTAA participation to 8th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW
Press clipping 2 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament
Joint call AMC / TWG - update refunds vouchers, ANVR approach, letters to airline CEOs
ECTAA participation IATA PAPGJC crisis call

17

AMC info - info about global allocation of BSP funds - to be confirmed

Council Tourism ministers informal Meeting

18

Press release: ECTAA welcomes Tourism Ministers' strong support for a swift and effective recovery of tourism sector

21

ECTAA Executive Board confcall
Press clipping 3 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament
6th weekly Legal Committee meeting
Letter to Commissioner Valean - minimum requirements airline vouchers - right of choice, flexibility, guarantee
Input to IATA initiative on possible travel agency recommendations concerning vouchers requirements
Request to IATA to include dedicated coronavirus section in Timatic
Follow up email to DG MOVE - minimum criteria vouchers
Member info on possibility for legal steps concerning airline refunds

Event

Date

Action

22

Letter to Commissioner Reynders' Cabinet on situation in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, Finland and Estonia

Member info about suspension of airline Cabo Verde Airlines, about status of South African Airways and Virgin Australia and about IATA overview of airline voucher legislation

23

Communication to IATA with a list of airlines massively breaching refund obligations

Member info on inclusion of covid-19 section in Timatic

ECTAA participation IATA PAPGJC crisis call

ECTAA participation to 9th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

24

ECTAA press release calling on Tourism Ministers to step up efforts for travel and tourism

Member info that Commissioner Vălean considers that it is up to States to financially support air sector in order to enable passengers to be reimbursed

Press clippings 4 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament

27

ECTAA press release welcoming Tourism Ministers' support for swift and effective recovery of tourism

7th weekly Legal Committee meeting

Joint tourism industry position on vouchers in travel and tourism (NET+ EUTT) sent to Commissioners Reynders' Cabinet

Hearing Commissioner Vălean in European Parliament TRAN Committee

28

Executive Board conference call

Conference call with Commissioner Vălean on airlines**Letters sent to 10 CEOs of airlines that delay massively refunds - reminding them on their refund obligations**

Press clipping 5 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament

Event

Date

Action

Informal College Meeting on Tourism (European Commission)
Informal Council transport ministers meeting

29

Member info about answer DG COMP and DG MOVE on state aid - possibility of de minimis aid

30

ECTAA participation extraordinary IATA ADAF meeting - refunds and vouchers

ECTAA participation to 10th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

Letter to Commissioner Valean on vouchers for airlines

May

4

8th weekly Legal Committee meeting
Press clipping 6 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament

Finalization of ECTAA survey on COVID-19 providing the Commission with economic and financial information on the impact on TO & TA, as well as proposals for a restart of tourism and a recovery plan

5

Executive Board conference call
Mail to DG JUST on chargeback and friendly fraud

6

Joint TO and D&S Committee conference call
Shared recommendation paper on refunds and vouchers of all distribution stakeholders to be sent to IATA

Request to IATA to delay deadline to provide audited accounts and PCI DSS audits

7

Press clipping 7 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament

AMC info on answer Croatia Airlines

Distribution stakeholder recommendation on refunds and vouchers shared with IATA and members

Request to IATA to postpone deadline for audited accounts and PCI DSS audits

Member info about IATA card payment advocacy

Event

Date

Action

Commission invites Member States to extend restriction on non-essential travel to the EU for another 30 days, until 15 June.

8

Info AMC on answer SAS

12

Executive Board conference call
Press clipping 8 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament

13

Commission presents a package of measures to help Member States gradually lift travel restrictions and allow tourism businesses to reopen.

The package includes:

- An **overall strategy** towards recovery in 2020 and beyond;
- A **common approach** to restoring free movement and lifting restrictions at EU internal borders in a gradual and coordinated way;
- A **framework** to support the gradual re-establishment of transport whilst ensuring the safety of passengers and personnel;
- A **recommendation** which aims to make travel vouchers an attractive alternative to cash reimbursement for consumers;
- **Criteria** for restoring tourism activities safely and gradually and for developing health protocols for hospitality establishments such as hotels.

ECTAA press release welcoming Commission's comprehensive package on travel and tourism but highlighting lack of ambition in taking concrete actions

Member info of covid19 bulletin of IATA covering refunds and vouchers

Member info of Avianca bankruptcy filings

14

ECTAA participation to 12th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

15

NET press release on avoiding quarantine measures and need for information on travel and tourism

18

Member info about suspension of airline Eastar Jet

19

Executive Board conference call

Event

Date

Action

Commission presents a Recovery plan for Europe: it includes a new recovery instrument, Next Generation EU, embedded within a revised long-term EU budget (Multiannual Financial Framework).

20

NET letter to Commissioner Breton - Follow-up Tourism and Transport Package

Joint AMC/TWG call - Chair LC and D&S/TO attended
Press clipping 9 sent to the Commission

ECTAA participation to 13th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

21

ECTAA participation IATA PAPGJC crisis call
Letter to President of Republic of Lithuania on vouchers & support measures

25

AMC info on IATA answer to postpone audited accounts deadline / PCI-DSS audits

27

28

ECTAA participation IATA PAPGJC crisis call
ECTAA participation to 14th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

29

Publication of the WTTC guidance for tour operator protocols, to which ECTAA contributed

June

2

Executive Board conference call

3

NET position: NET calls on the EU to match its recognition of tourism's significance with proper funding: recovery and long-term

4

Letter to Cabinet Verstager calling for state aid measures being linked to refunds

Press clipping 10 sent to the EU Commission and Parliament

ECTAA participation IATA PAPGJC crisis call

Event

Date

Action

The Commission recommends to lift internal border controls by 15 June 2020 and to prolong the temporary restriction on non-essential travel into the EU until 30 June 2020. It also set out an approach to progressively lifting the restriction afterwards.

Commission launches new web platform Re-Open EU which provides real-time information on borders, available means of transport, travel restrictions, public health and safety measures, as well as other practical information for travellers.

Aviation Round Table

Informal network on COVID-19 - Meeting #18

ASEANTA seminar

5

ECTAA participation to 15th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

8

Joint TO and D&S Committee

9

Executive Board conference call

11

ECTAA participation to 16th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

12

VCM with Greek Minister of Tourism

15

ECTAA press release on restart of tourism but still too many travel restrictions

17

Press clipping 11 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament

ECTAA participation in Aviation Round Table : refunds, insolvency protection are to be addressed

18

ECTAA participation to 17th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

23

Executive Board conference call

24

ECTAA participating PAPGJC Weekly Conference Call

25

ECTAA participation to 18th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

Joint call Air Matters Committee / Technology Working Group

Joint TO and D&S Committee conference call

Event

Date

Action

Council adopts 'white list' of countries for which the ban on non-essential travel into the EU should be lifted

26

ECTAA letter to Commissioner Valean on airlines' refunds & insolvency protection

30

July

Telematics RU/IM SteCo, TSGA Advisory Board, Common RU/IM-Retail meeting

2

ECTAA participation IATA PAPGJC crisis call

Plenary Aviation Round Table

3

ECTAA contribution in Aviation round Table: consolidation, insolvency & refunds

6

Weekly Legal Committee meeting

7

Press clipping 12 sent to the EU Commission & Parliament

Executive Board conference call

VCM with the Bulgarian Tourism Minister

9

Joint TO and D&S Committee conference call

10

ECTAA press release on package travel vouchers being the best solution

13

NET letter the Director General of DG GROW on situation of tourism uptake and the need for targeted and continued financial support for travel and tourism

Joint call Air Matters Committee / Technology Working Group

15

ECTAA-ETOA Webinar on risk management in travel sector

Event

Date

Action

Council adopts revised 'white list' of countries for which the ban on non-essential travel into the EU should be lifted

16

ECTAA participation to 19th meeting of informal network of tourism stakeholder on covid-19 impact with DG GROW

ECTAA participation in IATA Risk Management Working Group on airline risk

17

ECTAA press release on travel restrictions and travel warnings

VCM with the Cypriote Deputy Minister for Tourism

20

Executive Board conference call

EU leaders agree on the recovery plan and multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027

21

22

ECTAA participation in IATA Risk Management Working Group on airline risk

24

Joint TO and D&S Committees conference call

29

Communication to IATA, DG MOVE & DG JUST on ongoing airline refund issues

30

ECTAA participation IATA PAPGJC crisis call