

PRESS RELEASE

Europe needs urgently common approach to travel restrictions and testing

ECTAA joins the calls from multiple stakeholders reaching out to European leaders and the Commission to agree on a common approach to travel restrictions and testing

Brussels, 2 October 2020. Every day we are subject to new travel restrictions which considerably affect the ability to travel cross-border. Such restrictions – and in particular quarantines – are in effect the same as border closures. It has a massive impact on people’s lives, our societies, and on the global economy. The travel and tourism industry is amongst the hardest hit. But is also affects economic actors of all industries, as highlighted in the recent joint statement¹ by the CER, Copa-Cogega, Eurochambres, EuroCommerce, SME United and UETR: “The actions of some governments in maintaining major restrictions on European citizens moving from other EU member states can often seem haphazard, and ultimately damaging to the European economy.”

ECTAA joins the many calls of different stakeholders that Europe needs to act in a more coordinated way when it come to travel restrictions. We need the rapid adoption of the Recommendation proposal² for the coordination of travel restrictions, which includes common criteria for risk assessment and a common colour coding system/mapping of designated risk areas.

In addition, the industry has gathered in force behind the call for the replacement of quarantine requirements by testing³. ECTAA strongly supports the proposal by the three air transport stakeholder associations A4E, ACI and IATA, presented yesterday on an EU-wide Testing Protocol for Travel (EU-TPT)⁴. This would see quarantine requirements replaced by testing prior to departure for travel from high risk areas in the EU/Schengen space and from third countries. The latter builds on the criteria for risk assessment and colour-coding contained in the Recommendation proposal mentioned above.

Said Pawel Niewiadomski, President of ECTAA: “We need European political leaders to act now, as we are very close to the collapse of the travel and tourism industry, which will have a cascade effect on other economic sectors.”

¹ [Joint Statement](#) ‘Europe needs predictable and harmonised approaches to travel rules under COVID-19’, 1 October 2020

² [Proposal](#) for a Council Recommendation on a coordinated approach to the restriction of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, 4 September 2020

³ [Press release](#) ‘Unprecedented industry appeal to European Commission President to end quarantines and develop common EU Testing Protocol’, 18 September 2020

⁴ [Press release](#) ‘Pressure intensifies to drop quarantines in favour of EU-wide passenger testing protocol’, 2 October 2020

About ECTAA

ECTAA represents some 70,000 travel agents and tour operators in Europe, which provide consultancy and sell transport, accommodation, leisure and other tourism services as well as combined products to leisure and business customers.

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