



THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL AGENTS'
AND TOUR OPERATORS' ASSOCIATIONS

PRESS RELEASE

ECTAA welcomes the Commission response to Covid-19, which is favourable to the travel and tourism industry

While the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak cannot yet be assessed, the damages in the travel industry are immense. This was officially recognised yesterday by the European Commission in its coordinated economic response to the pandemic.

Brussels, 14 March 2020. The publication by the European Commission of a Communication proposing a coordinated economic response to the Covid-19 outbreak brings a positive touch in a very difficult period for the global economy. This Communication outlines the Commission's immediate response to mitigate the economic impact of Covid-19. It recognises that today the sectors most affected are the health sector, tourism, transport, in particular the airline industry.

Pawel Niewiadomski, President of ECTAA, said "It is necessary to provide temporary aid packages to help travel companies overcome financial liquidity problems. Such assistance is currently being considered, and sometimes already granted, in countries most affected by the outbreak. ECTAA welcomes the Commission's announcement that state aid can flow to companies, once approved".

Travel agents and tour operators, as a central part in the tourism value chain, are being squeezed from all sides: they have booked travel services for their customers and have made part or full payments to service suppliers. But customers are cancelling their trips and requesting refunds, without the possibility for travel agents to get the money back from the service suppliers. At the same time, customers are not making any new bookings.

In this context of high liquidity constraints, additional measures are also needed to ensure the sustainability of the travel industry without any financial consequences for the travelers. ECTAA will continue to work with the Commission to find appropriate relief measures for travel agents and tour operators.

ECTAA regroups the national associations of travel agents and tour operators of 29 European countries and represents some 80.000 enterprises.

For more information, please contact:

Eric Drésin, Secretary General

ECTAA - Group of National Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations within the EU

Rue Dautzenberg 36, B-1050 Brussels

Tel: +32 2 644 34 50

e-mail: secretariat@ectaa.org, www.ectaa.org