



Impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the taxi sector: answer from the European Commission to TEA's letter to Commissioner Valean

On the 1st of July 2020, Mr. Walter Goetz, Head of Cabinet of Commissioner Adina Valean, replied to a letter previously sent from TaxiEurope Alliance (TEA) to the Commissioner on the **impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the taxi sector.**

In his letter, the Head of Cabinet states that **the Commission takes due note of TEA's recommendations** on the role of the taxi sector as a service of general economic interest during the Coronavirus crisis.

Moreover, Mr. Goetz acknowledges the other remarks made in TEA's previous letter, such as the **challenges that self-employed drivers and small companies** have been facing; how **this crisis has proven the role of taxis as services of general economic interest, providing continued availability of safe transport services at a fair price;** that the **taxi industry has suffered from unfair competition** by international ride-hailing platforms and that a **more liberalised market would negatively impact service quality and consumer protection.**

Commissioner Valean's Head of Cabinet welcomes the efforts made by the taxi sector in keeping drivers and passengers safe, whilst ensuring availability of transport services and refers to the recent **Communication of the Commission of 13 May 2020**, which includes guidelines on the



progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity following the COVID-19 crisis, **and which recognises the role of the taxi sector in the supply of transport services.**

Regarding the **possibility of an action at EU level in the taxi and ride-hailing sector**, Mr. Goetz states that, after the workshop on local passenger transport on demand with stakeholders of the sector which took place in September 2019 (and to which TEA took part), a second workshop is currently being planned with relevant public authorities.

Whilst “these workshops will contribute to enable the Commission to assess if action at EU level in the taxi and ride-hailing sector is appropriate” Mr. Goetz explains that “the Commission’s ultimate aim is fair competition for all market players, reaping the benefits of modern digital technologies, and contributing to the European Green Deal and the goal of decarbonising transport.”

Finally, Mr. Goetz states that **“in light of the current Covid-19 crisis, the European Commission is fully committed to restoring safe and sustainable mobility for our citizens, supporting businesses and Member States in mitigating the effects of the crisis, and addressing all concerns as quickly as possible”**.

As TEA, we are delighted that the Commission has taken into consideration and understood our position on the current situation in the sector. We believe it is essential to continue this dialogue to ensure greater recognition for European taxi drivers and to ensure that everything possible is done at European level to help them overcome this crisis.