Position Paper
European Commission Communication "Tourism and Transport in 2020 and beyond"

Brussels, 19 May 2020

The Confederation of European Security Services (CoESS) highly welcomes the European Commission Communication on "Tourism and Transport in 2020 and beyond" (*COM (2020) 550 final*) – in particular the Guidelines on the progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity (*C(2020) 3139 final*), and the EU Guidance for the progressive resumption of tourism services and for health protocols in hospitality establishments (*C(2020) 3251 final*). In this statement, CoESS provides detailed feedback on some of the recommendations outlined in these guidelines.

As a next step, the European Commission and Member States must ensure their safe implementation. This is only possible with financial support and public-private cooperation. CoESS strongly agrees with the Commission that Member States must now (1) support the travel and tourism sectors financially in the implementation of public health and safety measures, and (2) genuinely cooperate with actors in the transport and tourism ecosystems to implement the guidelines. To support this process, CoESS calls on the European Commission to establish an EU mechanism that allows for a pro-active exchange of information with these ecosystems.

These include private security: in the past months, private security has been providing essential services by controlling access to supermarkets and nursing homes, protecting hospitals and critical infrastructure. Security guards are supporting the enforcement of public health and safety measures on a daily basis, and CoESS expects that private security will be asked to implement many of the recommendations provided in the guidance documents on tourism and transport – in collaboration with, or on behalf of, public forces.

The European Commission and Member States should therefore engage with our industry and consider our practical recommendations, as stated in the Annex, but also in our Joint Declaration with our Sectoral Social Partner UNI Europa. In the years to come, effective public-private collaboration on EU-level will be crucial for a successful implementation of COVID-19 measures and crisis management.

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Annex

Guidelines on the progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity

CoESS highly welcomes these guidelines, which include a range of important principles that can help ensure a safe and secure restoration of transport services. We underline the document's statement that the implementation of containment measures, as well as their easing, must at no time lead to a reduction of the high levels of EU safety and security standards in transport to avoid adding safety or security issues on top of the challenges we are facing due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Private security will be responsible for implementing many public health and safety principles provided by the guidelines – for example with regard to physical distancing procedures at airport security; access controls at ports and ferry terminals; communication of good practices and measures to travellers at all times; and general compliance with health and safety measures at transportation hubs – to name only a few. CoESS also adds that private security can provide important expertise to ensure that restrictive measures remain proportionate, duly motivated, transparent, relevant and mode-specific.

For the practical implementation of the guidelines, we now need effective public-private partnerships. The guidelines correctly state that clear rules on the rights and duties of service providers should be set, for example if they are responsible for ensuring distancing or refusing access, and that it is important that these measures are developed in cooperation with authorities, with a clear definition of the rights and obligations of each actor.

CoESS further strongly supports the Commission's recommendation that the extra costs resulting of public health and safety measures could be incorporated into public service contracts. As part of the European Business Services Alliance (EBSA), CoESS recently supported a statement on good contracting practices in the COVID-19 crisis.

With regard to the provision of personal protective equipment to workers, we refer to the Social Partner Declaration of CoESS and UNI Europa on "Ensuring business continuity and protection of workers in the COVID-19 pandemic". The Declaration also stresses that private security must be procured under consideration of quality criteria. CoESS recommends that for the procurement of services, the principle of "value-based procurement" should be rather respected than merely "cost-effectiveness", as stated in the guidelines, to avoid incentives for low-cost procurement and to be coherent with the European public procurement legislation. Supported by EU-funding, CoESS and UNI Europa have developed a guide on "Buying Quality Private Security Services".

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EU Guidance for the progressive resumption of tourism services and for health protocols in hospitality establishments

CoESS congratulates the European Commission for this very useful guidance. As in the field of transport, CoESS expects that private security will be responsible for the implementation of many recommendations made in the document – for example with regard to access control and physical distancing at hotel lobbies, restaurants, fitness areas, pool areas and beaches.

Importantly, CoESS stresses the importance of the European Commission's statement that Member States are encouraged to support tourism establishments in the implementation of this guidance, also using available EU funds. Without this financial support, CoESS fears that a safe re-opening of the tourism sector with respect to the principles of the guidance will not be feasible.

CoESS also recognises the European Commission's support for public-private collaboration in the elaboration of concrete infection prevention and control (IPC) measures and protocols. This aspect is key in order to ensure an effective and diligent implementation of the principles outlined in the guidance, and CoESS calls on competent authorities to involve the Sectoral Social Partners in private security in this process. This is particularly important with regard to the adequate training of guards on IPC measures. In their Joint Declaration on "Ensuring business continuity and protection of workers in the COVID-19 pandemic", the Sectoral Social Partners CoESS and UNI Europa stress that security personnel implementing public health and safety measures must be sufficiently qualified and trained in order to ensure that health, safety and distancing measures are properly enforced and communicated to guests. Knowledge and respect of respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, and use of appropriate personnel protective equipment among security staff is key. The Joint Declaration therefore stresses the importance of best value procurement based on quality criteria, which ensures that hired staff is adequately qualified and trained.

As in the previous comments on the transport guidelines, CoESS recommends that for the procurement of services, it would be more precise to refer to the principle of "value-based procurement" instead of "cost-effectiveness" only to avoid incentives for low-cost procurement and to be coherent with the European public procurement legislation. Supported by EU-funding, CoESS and UNI Europa have developed a guide on "Buying Quality Private Security Services".

CoESS particularly welcomes the announcement of the European Commission to set up a dedicated website with an overview of information on sectoral protocols and compliance schemes, to which CoESS will gladly contribute.

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About CoESS

CoESS acts as the voice of the private security industry, covering 23 countries in Europe and representing 2 million guards as well as over 45,000 companies. The private security services provide a wide range of services, both for private and public clients, ranging from Critical Infrastructure facilities to public spaces and facilities, including transport, events, HORECA, retail, supply chains, national government and EU institutions buildings.

CoESS is actively involved in European Social Dialogue with UNI Europa and official member of multiple EU Expert Groups, including the EU Operators Forum on the protection of public spaces as well as SAGAS (aviation security), SAGMAS (maritime security), LANDSEC (land transport security) and RAILSEC (rail transport security).

Selected publications for further reading

May 2020 – CoESS and UNI Europa – Joint Declaration on "Ensuring business continuity and protection of workers in the COVID-19 pandemic"

May 2020 – European Business Services Alliance – Good Contracting Practices in the COVID-19 crisis

April 2020 – CoESS Statement – Call for EU measures towards a safe and secure recovery of the tourism and transport sectors

April 2020 – CoESS Statement – Better Recognition of Private Security for Safe and Secure Economic Recovery in the COVID-19 Situation

April 2020 – Airport Security Services Association International (ASSA-i) – Observations and Recommendations on the COVID-19 Situation

April 2020 – CoESS Statement – Call for pro-active Engagement with the Private Security Sector on the COVID-19 Situation

March 2020 – CoESS Statement – Observations and Recommendations on the COVID-19 Situation

October 2019 – CoESS White Paper – The Security Continuum in the New Normal

October 2017 – CoESS White Paper – Best Practices in Transport Security

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