Statement

European Business Services Alliance supports the European Roadmap to lifting coronavirus containment measures and encourages a targeted approach to most affected sectors

4th May 2020

In the past weeks and month, focus was laid in EU and national policy on containing the coronavirus and on ensuring the protection of the health and safety of workers. Recent data show that these containment measures, drastically reducing economic activity and enforcing social distancing, have shown a positive impact. At the same time, the measures have severe, economic impacts and thus focus must be laid on mitigating the socio-economic impact of the pandemic and the containment measures. Our sectors have been hardly hit by the closures of schools, universities, factories, offices.

On 15th April 2020, the joint European roadmap to lifting coronavirus containment measures proposes a gradual approach and the progressive replacement of gradual measures by more targeted ones.

The European Business Services Alliance supports this Roadmap to lifting the containment measures. Based on several economic support packages and the useful recommendations on how to gradually lift containment measures, **the EBSA calls on the European Commission to continue supporting with targeted measures the most affected sectors** and their ecosystems, under recognition of the essential role that business services play for their economic recovery.

Business services are key drivers in increasing productivity and transforming the European economy

Business services represent around 12% of the European economy and are key drivers in increasing European productivity and transforming the European economy, which will be essential after the easing of the containment measures linked to COVID-19. Several business services' segments and European Business Services Alliance members play a key role in the gradual opening-up and in a safe return to work in the new normal:

- The European cleaning and facility services industry (with more than 4 million employees in over 280 000 companies), represented by EFCI, provides essential cleaning, hygiene and sanitisation services, that will ensure that people and companies can live, travel and work in safe and healthy environments.
- Private security services represented by CoESS are to play an essential role for the reopening of business sectors, shops, transport and the economy overall by ensuring compliance with public health

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and safety measures during access controls and when controlling the number of people entering facilities.

- The **European Textile Services Industry** (commercial laundries) and its European federation ETSA continue to play a key role in providing hospitals and healthcare facilities, as well as food processing and other essential services, with protective and hygienically clean textiles.
- The **private employment services industry,** represented by the World Employment Confederation-Europe supports the economic recovery after the lock-down based on its labour market allocation role, supporting workers to move from declining to rising sectors, provide key services to companies by offering the required talent and HR solutions matching their needs by ensuring a safe return back to work in the new normal.
- The **contract catering sector**, represented by FoodServiceEurope, has played a vital role in continuing to provide food services to those working in essential sectors, such as hospitals and care homes. The sector will now require support and recognition in the progressive return to normality, as contract catering services will play an increasingly relevant social role in providing warm and healthy meals to the most vulnerable to the economic crisis.
- The **engineering consultant**s, represented by EFCA, provide the necessary design development of projects at a time when private and public developers are putting projects on hold; their role is essential to secure the future pipeline for contractors and construction in the post COVID 19 recovery period.

The European Business Service Alliance (EBSA) brings together the European associations within the business services sector. Business services are important for the European economy, however they are often invisible in our everyday lives. EBSA's vision is to achieve an internal market for business services in the EU, and to gain recognition for the important role business services play in the European economy. EBSA therefore work on increasing knowledge, visibility and recognition of the business services industry at the European level and promote the convergence of views and positions expressed by European Business Services associations in order to enhance our ability to make strong representations to the EU Institutions and other relevant European and international stakeholders.

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