



Press Release

For immediate release

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ETRC urges European Commission and Member States to provide urgent support for Duty Free & Travel Retail

ETRC has written to the European Commission today to outline the impact of COVID-19 on the DF&TR sector, and to ask for the EU and Member States to allocate specific support to help our industry to survive these exceptional circumstances.

The first priority for our industry must be the health and safety of staff and travellers. We support public authorities – at European, national and local level, in the measures they are taking to best manage the spread of the virus and to minimise the risk of infection to people. We are calling on our members do the same and protect employees and travellers as best they can.

DF&TR is uniquely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, more so than any other retail channel. The sudden collapse of passenger numbers in international travel is further compounded by the drop of consumer confidence as wary travellers avoid interaction while in transit. Unlike other retail sectors, the situation will take months to recover, even after the crisis is over, as international travel is heavily dependent on external factors such as airline capacity, holiday bookings and societal health.

During this crisis period ETRC will play a crucial role in coordinating action between our members, exchanging of information and promoting best practices between Governments.

ETRC is also working with retailers and with national and regional associations to help them engage with their governments to ensure that adequate financial and practical support is given to our member companies.

In today's communication with the EU, ETRC have asked for governments to guarantee that any future compensation schemes will cover the wider transport industry, including travel retail operators. ETRC is suggesting the following mitigation measures:

- Direct financial intervention by government to pay staff salaries for the entire duration of global passenger transport restrictions
- Deferral of payments of all VAT, excise duties and other taxes for duration of global passenger transport restrictions
- Direct financial compensation from government to compensate for losses incurred as a result of current government policy
- All local government taxes for retailers to be cancelled for 2020



ETRC President Nigel Keal said: *“Undoubtedly, these are unprecedented times for our industry which call for a united front in order to overcome these challenges. It is ETRC’s duty to support its members in any way possible and overall, ensure that the voice of Duty Free & Travel Retail is heard during this global crisis. At the same time, we must remember that the priority is the health and well-being of our people, employees, partners and customers. Airports, operators, retailers, suppliers... We need to stick together, and wait for better days, as our industry has shown its resilience in the past.”*

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About the European Travel Retail Confederation

The European Travel Retail Confederation (ETRC) is an industry association for the duty free and travel retail industry in Europe, serving the industry and its members to help create the right environment to allow the industry to achieve its potential and protect it when challenges arise.

ETRC is composed of national and regional affiliated trade associations representing over 200 European companies, Tax Free World Association (TFWA) representing 500 brand companies, and direct corporate membership from individual companies working in the duty free and travel retail trade across Europe and beyond. The European Travel Retail Confederation's operations are directed by its Supervisory and Managing Boards and carried out by a full-time secretariat. For more information about the organisation, please see our website – www.etrc.org