

Brussels, 02 November 2020

Dear Commissioner Breton

I am writing on behalf of IAAPA, the global association for the attractions industry, to bring to your attention the concerns of our industry in the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that uncoordinated actions or measures adopted in a blunt, sweeping fashion, put the attractions sector under a serious threat. These concerns are shared by the below co-signing associations, representing amusement parks, theme parks, attractions, water parks, resorts, family / indoor entertainment centres, zoos, aquariums, science centres, museums, manufacturers, and suppliers.

IAAPA welcomed the Commission's Roadmap toward lifting COVID-19 containment, presented on 8th April, and in particular the categorisation of activities presented there. Amusement parks and attractions should not be classified as mass gatherings for a number of reasons:

- Most facilities include indoor and outdoor sections that can be opened or closed as needed to mitigate infection risk.
- The management of people flows in a park or attraction is easier than in a mass event and is something our members have always done very well. Operators can manage their venues in a way that avoids crowding and bottlenecks, for example by channeling people in specific ways.
- Amusement parks and attractions are traditionally where people socialize with their natural social bubble, i.e. their families. A substantial part of our visitors are families, out to have a nice day in a safe environment.

In addition, once the restart of economic activities began, IAAPA members quickly put in place a number of measures to ensure our operations were safe and those protocols worked to maintain safety in parks.

Among others, these consisted of:

- Significantly limiting visitor capacity to facilitate physical distancing
- Online reservation systems with registration of personal details
- Monitoring a safe distance of 1m50 indications on the floor all around the park and in attractions
- Strongly encouraging employees and guests to wear face coverings
- Additional cleaning and disinfecting rides/playing devices
- Physical barriers (plexi) between operators/cashiers/employees
- Hand sanitisation across the premises, attractions, shops and restaurants
- No access to the park allowed in case of health issues (fever or symptoms of sickness)



As Europe is dealing with the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, we see a range of measures being implemented across Member States.

We caution Member States against sweeping measures that inappropriately group together economic operators with very different risk profiles.

IAAPA values the coordination work of the European Commission to help facilitate information and exchange and the sharing of best practices, as the European economy reopened earlier this year. As we enter a new phase of containment, we hope the Commission can continue to fulfill this role, highlighting intelligent approaches to manage the crisis with an eye to economic recovery that should shortly follow.

We understand that in some cases restrictions up to and including closures may be necessary. If closures are mandated, we would ask the European Commission to make every effort to guarantee that financial support for our industry is available. Such support will be crucial to help our members survive until reopening is possible.

Amusement parks and theme parks play an important role in our economy, our communities, and for the mental wellbeing of the population by offering them distraction from these difficult times. Their safety record remains extremely high and operators have already shown they can implement safety procedures and protocols that greatly mitigate the risk of infection for guests and staff.

We kindly ask for the European Commission's support with the issues outlined in this letter.

Yours respectfully,

Jakob Wahl

Executive Director and Vice President, IAAPA EMEA



Co-signing associations

ANESV – Parchi Permanenti Italiani



BALPPA – The British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions



EWA – European Waterpark Association



FFD – Foreningen Af Forlystelses Parker I Danmark



HISWA-RECRON – Dutch Association for Yacht Building, Water Sports and Recreation Entrepreneurs



SNELAC - Syndicat National des Espaces de Loisirs, d'Attractions et Culturels



Association Française des Espaces de Loisirs Indoor



VDV e.V. – Verband der Deutschen Vergnügungsanlagenhersteller e.V.





Verband Deutscher Freizeitparks und
Freizeitunternehmen



VDFU

Verband Deutscher Freizeitparks
und Freizeitunternehmen e.V.