COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION

COVID-19: Guidelines on the progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity

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I.   **Introduction**

1. The COVID-19 outbreak is having a major impact on transport and connectivity in the EU. Measures to contain the outbreak have resulted in a dramatic reduction in transport activity, especially in passenger transport[1]. Freight flows have been less affected, in part thanks to collective EU efforts to ensure that freight continues to move, although there has been a reduction due to declining economic activity and disruption of supply chains.

2. The Commission has issued guidance on restrictions on non-essential travel[2] and put forward measures specifically for transport, including guidelines for border management measures[3], on the implementation of Green Lanes for freight transport[4], on facilitating air cargo operations[5], and on seafarers, passengers and other persons on board ships[6]. The Commission has offered guidance on how best to protect transport workers and passengers, while keeping freight moving.

3. As long as restrictions on the movement of persons remain in place and freight flows also remain liable to be affected, these measures and recommendations on the flow of goods, free movement   of   workers exercising critical occupations[7], transit and repatriations of passengers and crews should continue to be applied consistently and in a coordinated way by all Member States. Member States should continue using the network of national transport contact points for COVID-19 response coordinated by the Commission.

4. As the public health situation begins to improve, it will be important that transport services and connectivity are progressively restored within the limits that the epidemiological conditions allow, since they are key enablers of the EU and the global economy, and fundamental parts of daily lives of EU citizens.

5. On 15 April 2020, the European Commission, in cooperation with the President of the European Council, put forward a Joint European Roadmap[8] setting out recommendations on lifting COVID-19 containment measures. The Joint European Roadmap announced that the Commission would also "put forward more detailed guidance on how to progressively restore transport services, connectivity and free

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[1] For example, approximately -90% of air traffic compared to a year ago (Source: Eurocontrol), -85% long-distance rail passenger service, -80% on regional rail passenger services (including sub-urban), near standstill on international rail passenger services (Source: CER); more than -90% for cruise and passenger ships in mid-April compared to a year ago (Source: EMSA).

[2] COM(2020) 115 final, COM(2020) 148 final, and C(2020) 2050 final, OJ C 102I , 30.3.2020, p. 12.

[3] C(2020) 1753 final, OJ C 86I, 16.3.2020, p.1.

[4] C(2020) 1897 final, OJ C 96I, 24.3.2020, p.1.

[5] C(2020) 2010 final, OJ C 100I, 27.3.2020, p.1.

[6] C(2020) 3100 final, OJ C 119, 14.4.2020, p. 1.

[7] C(2020) 2051 final, OJ C 102I, 30.3.2020, p. 12.

[8] Joint European Roadmap towards lifting COVID-19 containment measures, OJ C 126, 17.4.2020, p. 1.

movement as swiftly as the health situation allows it, also in view of planning summer holiday travel".

6. The health of citizens, including transport workers and passengers, remains the key priority. Particular consideration should be given to vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions, in full respect of their privacy. The easing of travel and operational restrictions should therefore be gradual to protect health and ensure that transport systems and services, and other related systems (e.g. border controls at external borders), can re-adjust to higher freight and passenger volumes. This should be accompanied by constantly updated communication campaigns to ensure that people travelling can plan and act on the basis of full awareness of the situation, and therefore also of their individual responsibility in following health recommendations when travelling.

7. The progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity will be fully dependent on the approach to travel restrictions, on epidemiological assessments, as well as on expert medical advice on necessary health and sanitary protection and precautions. These EU guidelines for the restoration of transport services and connectivity are therefore without prejudice to and should remain fully aligned and consistent with these policies, and be implemented within the framework of the Joint European Roadmap.

8. They provide a common framework to support authorities, stakeholders, social partners and businesses operating in the transport sector during the gradual re-establishment of connectivity. The guidelines consist of general principles applicable to all transport services and specific recommendations designed to address the characteristics of each transport mode and to be realistic and practical. They aim to provide further guidance on how to progressively restore transport services, connectivity and free movement as swiftly as the health situation allows it, while protecting the health of transport workers and passengers. They should be applied for transport within and between Member States. However, taking into account the cross-border nature of transport, these guidelines should be adequately applied to transport services between Member States and non-EU countries, as soon as the epidemiological situation allows for it.

9. The COVID-19 outbreak has affected the entire EU, but its impacts differ between Member States, regions and areas. To restore connectivity across the EU in a manner that is safe for all persons involved, and in order to restore public confidence in transport services, Member States and EU institutions and agencies would need to closely cooperate. An entirely risk-free environment for travel is not feasible, as is the case for any other activity, but risks should be minimised as much as possible throughout the duration of the outbreak. Until an effective vaccine is developed and widely available, a second wave of infections or clusters of outbreak remain possible; As such, appriopriate plans for the eventual reintroduction of measures, if needed, should be established.

10. Given the global nature of the COVID-19 outbreak and the international nature of transport services, a framework for mutual acceptance of the public health situation and the measures in place between countries, regions and areas, including between Member States and between the EU and third countries, is indispensable for a gradual, timely and safe restoration of European, but also global transport systems. In this context, competent authorities in the EU should cooperate to the greatest possible

extent with third countries countries and sectoral international organisations[9]. Measures will therefore need, as much as possible, to be aligned in their objectives and effects, and accepted as equivalent.

11. As mentioned in the Joint European Roadmap, these guidelines are also relevant in view of the summer holiday season and the planning of associated travel arrangements. Tourism is an important sector of the EU economy, and it is inherently linked to transport and travel, relying on availability of passenger transport services as a precondition and fundamental enabler of tourism. Therefore, the timely restoration of adequate connectivity will be crucial to enable the gradual restoration of tourism.

II.   **Principles for the safe and gradual restoration of passenger transport**

a) **General principles for restoring connectivity**

12. All modes of **transport services should be progressively resumed as a matter of priority, subject to the actual deployment of proportionate and effective measures to protect the health of transport workers and passengers**. These measures should be in line with the general criteria, principles and recommendations set out in the Joint European Roadmap, notably with respect to the epidemiological situation and policies on border controls and restrictions on movement and travel.

13. Accordingly, **measures which might restrict transport operations, as well as health-related protection and prevention measures, should remain limited, in their scope and duration, to what is necessary to protect public health**. In addition to being **proportionate**, all measures should also be **duly motivated**, **transparent, relevant and mode-specific**, **non-discriminatory** and **maintain a level playing field in the Single Market**. Member States will have to **ensure compliance of these measures with State aid rules and all other elements of EU law**.

14. Measures should be continuously monitored so that they can, if appropriate, be re-evaluated and adjusted, taking into account all relevant expertise and considerations, to remain proportionate to the current level of public health needs. As new and more efficient solutions become available, their deployment should be prioritised, so that **less efficient or more burdensome measures can be discontinued**. The **principle of cost-effectiveness should be respected.** This implies that if there are several options available to achieve comparable effects in terms of ensuring the health of transport workers and passengers, the least costly one should be preferred.

15. To protect and restore the full functioning of the Single Market, the cross-border provision of transport services, full effectiveness of health-related measures, and the confidence of the public, **Member States should take actions in a coordinated and cooperative way**. Member States should base decisions regarding the lifting of COVID-19-related travel restrictions on the Commission guidelines on internal borders of 13 May 2020[10]. They should be notified to the Commission and to all

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[9] Such as the International Maritime Organization, International Labour Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, etc.

[10] Communication from the Commission Covid-19 Towards a phased and coordinated approach for restoring freedom of movement and lifting of internal border controls of 13 May 2020.

Member States. The Commission is ready to coordinate the lifting of restrictions and restoration of transport services through the network of national contact points.

16. This also requires a **coordinated approach with countries neighbouring the EU but also beyond**. The coordination channels have already been extended, for example, in the Western Balkans, to the respective national authorities that are closely working with the EU network of national transport contact points. The shared objective is to ensure the provision of transport services and connectivity.

17. In line with the above-mentioned principles that measures should be proportionate and mode-specific, **safe mobility options should be identified instead of general prohibitive measures that lead to the paralysis of transport services** within the EU. An example could be the intensified and regular cleaning, disinfection and appropriate ventilation of transport hubs and vehicles[11], instead of entirely prohibiting the relevant transport services. This approach should allow targeting of risk sources while enabling the gradual return of regular economic and daily activities. Close cooperation between health and transport authorities as well as key stakeholders will be crucial in this regard.

18. **Transport of freight should continue to be safeguarded to ensure that supply chains are functional**. The Joint European Roadmap indicated that "in the transition phase, the efforts to maintain an unobstructed flow of goods and to secure supply chains should be reinforced". Starting from the current maximum 15 minutes for crossing green lane borders, the controls performed should gradually be eased in a coordinated way, using established coordination channels such as the national transport contact points for COVID-19 and the Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR), to ultimately allow crossing internal borders as before the introduction of COVID-19-related restrictions for all freight vehicles and all goods. As traffic will increase again, the role of multimodal hubs, such as ports or container terminals, in supporting the green lanes deserves special attention. Best use should be made of all transport modes, including inland waterways and rail freight, to guarantee functioning supply chains. Free and unobstructed movement of essential transport workers needs to be assured, and for that purpose the access to fast-track lanes at transport hubs should be considered. During the gradual transition, and following public health authorities recommendations, health checks should be reduced gradually, systematic quarantines (i.e. applied irrespective of symptoms displayed or any test results) should be lifted, convoys should be abolished, driving bans could be reintroduced if the fluidity of traffic allows and further derogations from driving and rest time rules after the end of May 2020 should become more harmonised and limited to what is strictly necessary, to gradually re-instate uniform and easily enforceable EU rules.

19. As soon as the public health situation allows, restrictions on individualised transport (e.g. cars, motorcycles or bicycles) should be lifted. Loosening restrictions allows an early resumption of mobility especially at the local and regional level (e.g. allowing people to travel further and faster at local level or within a Member State). The lifting of these restrictions to facilitate individualised transport should remain aligned with the broad distancing measures and prevention measures required or recommended by each Member State.

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[11] In this Communication the term 'vehicle' refers, as relevant in the given context, to all types of vehicles, including, *inter alia*, cars, trucks, buses, coaches, trains, aircraft, ships, boats, ferries, etc.

20. At the same time, the **availability of safe collective transport options should be ramped up**, in line with the gradual de-confinement, to provide mobility alternatives for all citizens. This should be carried out and communicated in a manner that helps to restore the trust and confidence of passengers regarding the safe use of collective transport.

21. **It should be ensured that transport operators and service suppliers that provide equivalent services for the same route are subject to equivalent measures.** The objective should be to provide the same level of safety, clarity and predictability for passengers, to avoid discrimination and to preserve the level playing field.

22. To ensure that measures at departure and arrival on any transport mode are comparable, thus avoiding that travel becomes either overly cumbersome or even impossible, it is crucial to **ensure that equivalent measures**, that are based on shared principles and that each mitigate in an adequate way the relevant health risks, **are mutually accepted at the point of departure and of arrival.** Coordination between Member States and with non-EU countries should facilitate this.

23. In order to allow more informed journey planning, **transport operators and service suppliers could make available information on the average occupancy rates** for particular connections or hours. It will be especially important for services without seat reservations and for local public transport. Such information could be made available online or through dedicated mobile applications.

24. Urban mobility is already being re-thought in several Member States, regions and cities, such as extending pavements and bicycle paths, adapting timetables and developing innovative technologies to manage passenger flows and avoid crowding. **The Commission encourages and supports the development and implementation of new urban mobility solutions and measures** to facilitate active, collective and shared mobility in a safe manner, and to ensure trust among citizens.

25. Where necessary, **clear rules on the rights and duties of transport operators and service providers should apply**, e.g. if operators are responsible for ensuring distancing or refusing access to a transport hub or vehicle without a mask or if certain maximum numbers of passengers are exceeded, the legal framework granting them authority to put in place these measures should be clearly defined.

b) Protecting transport workers

26. Transport workers in all modes have played a critical role in the crisis in delivering freight, supporting the functioning of supply chains, repatriating EU citizens, and transporting essential workers to their jobs, even at heightened risk to their own health and wellbeing. **Transport hubs, service providers and operators should apply business continuity principles** to ensure continuous safe operations **in consultation with social partners.** This also means that **transport workers should be adequately consulted, equipped, trained and instructed** on how to carry out their duties while minimising risks to their own health, that of their families, and also the health of their co-workers and passengers. This should include, for example, information on how to adequately use protective equipment, keep up hygiene, minimise unnecessary contacts with others, and also, to the extent feasible, how to spot potential infections.

27. **Transport workers who are required, due to the nature of their work, to have a high level of interaction with others** (e.g. aircrews, security and safety inspection personnel at airports and ports, ticket controllers, bus and van drivers, passenger vessel crews, maritime pilots, staff providing assistance to passengers, including

persons with disabilities and reduced mobility) **should be provided by their employers with the appropriate level of personal protective equipment**, as further outlined below. Regular changes of such equipment should be ensured as necessary, as well as their safe disposal. General guidance for employers on return to workplaces after COVID-19 was published by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work and includes useful information regarding specific sectors, including the transport sector[12].

c) Protecting passengers

28. For all collective forms of passenger transport, **reasonable measures to limit contact between transport workers and passengers, as well as between passengers, should be taken**. Where feasible, **distancing practices between passengers should be applied as long as the overall health situation requires it**. Other measures that reduce the risk of infections should be applied, such as:

    a. Wearing of personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, etc.) by transport workers.

    b. Reducing, where feasible, the density of passengers in collective means of transport and in waiting areas (the operation of such lower capacity services could be adequately supported to maintain viability, e.g. through temporary public service obligations in line with the applicable EU rules[13]).

    c. Maintaining or adding protective barriers in hubs and vehicles (e.g. around drivers, at ticket stands or controls).

    d. Setting up dedicated lanes or otherwise separating different passenger flows at transport hubs (i.e. ports, airports, train stations, bus stops, ferry landings, urban public transport hubs, etc.).

    e. Hubs should remove facilities that encourage crowding (e.g. benches, tables) or, at least, re-arrange them to ensure adequate distancing.

    f. Clearly displaying accessible information on recommended behaviour (e.g. frequent hand washing or sanitising, keeping adequate distance) and on the specific measures in place in that particular transport hub or transport mode.

    g. Adequate measures at boarding and at security checks (e.g. passengers not entering or leaving buses by the front door, opening of doors by default, disinfection of trays) and other measures that help to minimise contact (e.g. on short ferry routes staying in the car or truck could be allowed if overall safety can be sufficiently ensured).

    h. The transport of persons with disabilities and reduced mobility as well as elderly should be given priority. Transport workers who, in line with the EU rules on passenger rights, provide assistance to persons with disabilities and

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[12] "COVID-19: guidance for the workplace" and "COVID-19: Back to the workplace - Adapting workplaces and protecting workers", https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/COVID-19:_guidance_for_the_workplace#See.

[13] Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) Nos 1191/69 and 1107/70, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007, p. 1; Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community, OJ L 293, 31.10.2008, p. 3; Council Regulation (EEC) No 3577/92 of 7 December 1992 applying the principle of freedom to provide services to maritime transport within Member States (maritime cabotage), OJ L 364, 12.12.1992, p. 7.

reduced mobility as well as elderly, should be provided with the necessary personal protective equipment.

29. **Passengers should wear face masks in transport hubs and vehicles used for collective transport, especially where physical distancing measures cannot be fully observed at all times[14].** Accessible information material for passengers on safe behaviour (keeping distance, cleaning hands, etc.) should be prominently displayed. Protocols for the management of potential infections in these facilities should be set up and clearly communicated to transport workers and readily available to passengers.

30. **Where physical distancing is more difficult to ensure, additional safeguards and measures leading to equivalent levels of protection should be put in place.** Furthermore, in case that different alternatives exist for reaching a destination, **preference should be given to those options where physical distancing can be adequately ensured**, in line with recommendations of public health authorities.

31. **Reducing the risk of infections at transport hubs and vehicles in all modes** should be a priority. Intensified and regular cleaning and disinfection of transport hubs and vehicles should be implemented for all transport modes. Availability of **sanitising/disinfecting gel should be ensured at transport hubs and in vehicles**.

32. Facilities should be provided and protocols implemented at transport hubs to **immediately isolate persons with suspected COVID-19 infections** until further appropriate measures can be taken. For this purpose, designated safe areas should be set up and dedicated, trained staff with adequate protective equipment should be ensured. **Existing medical facilities and medical staff** (e.g. at airports, ports or on board ships) **should be reinforced** to deal with increasing traffic volumes as restrictions are lifted.

33. **Electronic sales of tickets and advanced seat reservations should be prioritised** to reduce gatherings of groups of travellers in specific areas (i.e. ticket machines and sales points) and to better control the permitted number of passengers, while ensuring accessibility to ticket sales for people having no access to electronic means or who are unable to use such electronic means. As far as possible, a contactless environment should be favoured.

34. Sales of other goods, including food and beverages, may be limited in vehicles. To lower the risk of infections, operators of **integrated travel retail locations, such as duty free shops, should take adequate measures**, including, for example: managing passenger flows to ensure distancing (including the use of floor markers, optimising layouts, if necessary restricting customer numbers); regular cleaning and disinfection of locations, equipment and merchandise; setting up barriers between customers and retails staff at till points; providing sufficient hand-sanitising stations throughout the retail location and requiring their use, in particular at entry and exit points; providing

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[14] "Face masks" is a generic term which covers both medical and non-medical masks. ECDC indicates that "The use of non-medical face masks made of various textiles could be considered, especially if – due to supply problems – medical face masks must be prioritised for use as personal protective equipment by healthcare workers" (https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19-use-face-masks-community.pdf). It will be for national health/safety authorities to specify further in their discussion with stakeholders per transport mode, based on epidemiological risk in that country, availability and other considerations. Certain transport workers and passengers, respectively, may be exposed to different levels of risk.

clearly visible information for customers on appropriate safe behaviour; and ensuring that retail staff is adequately trained and equipped to deal with customers and merchandise in line with guidance provided by health authorities on safe behaviour during the COVID-19 outbreak.

35. In addition to other measures aimed at limiting the risk of infection, **contact tracing and warning measures**, for example, with the use of mobile apps, **could be used, on a voluntary basis, by passengers** to detect and interrupt infection chains and reduce the risk of further transmission as long as transmission risks persist. Access to transport services should not be made subject to the use of contact tracing apps. Due to the cross-border nature of transport, it is important to ensure the interoperability and mutual acceptance of such measures. If they are implemented, contact tracing measures should be strictly limited for the purposes of dealing with the COVID-19 outbreak and set up in line with the Common EU toolbox of the eHealth Network on mobile applications to support contact tracing in the EU's fight against COVID-19[15], the Commission Guidance on apps[16] and the Guidelines of the European Data Protection Board[17], ensuring the highest level of data privacy.

36. Transport operators and service providers should have in place **specific protocols in case passengers fall sick or show COVID-19 symptoms during or immediately after travelling or being at a transport hub.** Such protocols should include clearly identified safe areas for symptomatic passengers, defined steps on how to minimise their exposure to other passengers and transport workers, how to collect and analyse all relevant information on contacts with other passengers and transport workers, etc. For travel with reservations, this should include the possibility to identify and alert fellow passengers who were in their proximity.

d) Going forward

37. In order to restore regular levels of transport services and connectivity, a flexible combination of **increased use of suitable personal protective equipment, appropriate and safe ventilation, if possible using outdoor air and avoiding mere circulation of indoor air, increased voluntary contact tracing capacities and decontamination capabilities will be necessary** in the absence of a vaccine.

38. In the medium/long-term, it is recommended that all extraordinary measures put in place during the COVID-19 outbreak should be continuously monitored, assessed and reconsidered on a timely basis unless the epidemiological situation requires to extend them, or where these measures have been beneficial in terms of improving transport systems and efficiency.

39. The ongoing application of containment measures, as well as their easing and the progressive restoration of transport services and connectivity should **not lead to a reduction, even if only temporarily, of the high levels of EU safety and security standards in transport, including health and safet of transport workers**. It is necessary to avoid adding transport safety or security issues on top of the issues we are facing due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

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[15] https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/ehealth/docs/covid-19_apps_en.pdf.

[16] Communication from the Commission Guidance on Apps supporting the fight against COVID 19 pandemic in relation to data protection, OJ C 124I , 17.4.2020, p. 1.

[17] https://edpb.europa.eu/our-work-tools/our-documents/guidelines/guidelines-042020-use-location-data-and-contact-tracing_en

III. **Practical guidance on specific measures to ensure safe passenger transport for all modes in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak**

a) **Cross-cutting recommendations**

40. The above-mentioned principles should guide the overall progressive re-start and increase of passenger transport across the EU for all modes of transport during the exit from COVID-19 restrictions and the subsequent recovery. These common principles should facilitate the mutual acceptance of implemented measures within the EU, but also vis-à-vis non-EU countries, to enable effective continuation of transport services. As stated in the previous section, some principles and measures should be applied for transport hubs and vehicles for all modes of transport, with specific adjustments taking into account the mode-specific circumstances, needs and feasibility.

41. Such cross-cutting measures include in particular:

   a. At least during the initial relaxation of restrictions, the number of passengers may need to be reduced on vehicles in certain transport modes to ensure that any applicable physical distancing requirements are adequately observed.

   b. Voluntary use of contact tracing apps should be considered as an additional layer of risk mitigation.

   c. Transport workers should be equipped with PPE and, where possible, separated with barriers from passengers.

   d. Frequent cleaning and disinfection of hubs and vehicles, and increased frequency of waste collection.

   e. Systematic installing of hand-sanitising stations and requiring their use whenever feasible.

   f. Strengthening ventilation, air filtering and, where appropriate, prioritising use of natural air.

   g. The wearing of masks by passengers, especially where distancing measures cannot be fully observed at all times.

   h. Tickets and information should be provided electronically and automatically. Electronic pre-sales of tickets should be strongly promoted and prioritised, as well as advanced check-in, reservation and registration procedures.

   i. Check-in, loading and unloading of luggage should be organised so that crowding of passengers is avoided.

   j. Pre-ordering of on-board services and meals should be, where possible, facilitated at the time of booking, to reduce contact between staff and passengers.

   k. Accessible information on implemented safe behaviour procedures, as well as required protective equipment for passengers, should be prominently displayed at hubs and in vehicles, and made available in advance of any travel.

42. Stakeholder organisations, operators and service providers active in the different transport modes should develop and implement adequate measures that address the specific circumstances of each mode. They should be in line with the general and mode-specific principles and recommendations set out in these guidelines. Those

measures should be continuously reviewed and, where necessary, adapted to ensure their effectiveness in protecting the health of transport workers and passengers.

43. Furthermore, the following measures, taking into account the specific characteristics and needs of each transport mode, should be implemented and applied:

b) Aviation

44. Aviation has longstanding experience in the field of risk management in safety and security, and is used to operating in a highly controlled environment. Regaining the confidence of passengers that aviation is a safe travel mode will be instrumental for exiting this crisis. To this effect, it will be essential that **aviation and health stakeholders communicate widely on the measures in place**, as well as on how these measures mitigate the risks. The aviation sector should make sure that measures are highly visible, coordinated, and communicated to passengers at all times.

45. **Mitigating the risk of spread of COVID-19 should follow the same principles used for safety and security risk management**, including monitoring compliance, reviewing the effectiveness of measures at regular intervals, and adapting measures to changing needs and improved methods and technologies – taking into account, however, that airports and airlines are not qualified to provide health services, such as taking health screening decisions on passengers, which should be implemented by the competent authorities.

46. To ensure that measures at departure and arrival are comparable, thus avoiding that travel becomes either overly cumbersome or even impossible, it is crucial to **ensure that equivalent measures**, that are based on shared principles and that each mitigate in an adequate way the relevant health risks, are mutually accepted at the point of departure and of arrival. To facilitate this, it is useful to develop concrete criteria that should be translated in an internationally recognised approach. Using equivalent standards and applying reciprocity as regards measures and their acceptance can be fundamental enablers of aviation in the EU and in the global context. Therefore, close cooperation with non-EU countries and international partners, including the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), will be essential.

47. In collaboration with the Commission, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and competent authorities, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) will put forward in the coming weeks technical operational guidelines to facilitate a coordinated approach and assist national aviation authorities, airlines, airports and other aviation stakeholders. These technical operational guidelines will take into account the safety management principles developed to ensure the safety of the European aviation system and will set out a **baseline aviation health safety protocol**, proposed for application across the EU.

48. The protocol should include the following measures:
   a. Strengthening ventilation, hospital grade air filtering and vertical airflow.
   b. Limiting contamination risks along the travel process (e.g. avoiding concentration of passengers, limiting interaction on board, exploring the most appropriate allocation of seats based on technical constraints, and prioritising electronic documents and means of payment).
   c. Reducing movement in the cabin (e.g. less cabin baggage, fewer interactions with the crew).
   d. Adequately managing passenger flows (e.g. advise on early arrival time at the airport; prioritising electronic/self-check-in; ensuring distancing and

minimising contacts at baggage drop-offs, security and border control points, at boarding, and during baggage collection); accessible information on airport processes should be provided to passengers in advance of travel.

49. The forthcoming EASA / ECDC technical operational guidelines will specify additional mitigation measures, in close coordination with national competent authorities, with the aim of deploying measure for the operation of flights coherently across the EU.

c) Road transport

50. High levels of hygiene in all parts of terminals, rest areas (e.g. along the motorways), covered parking facilities, fuelling and charging stations, should be ensured, including regular cleaning and disinfections, to limit the risk of contagion for road users. Passenger flow management should be implemented at stations. Where adequate levels of public health cannot be ensured, the closing of certain stops or stations should be considered.

51. **Bus and coach transport**: For travelling to gradually resume by buses and coaches, appropriate measures, distinguishing regional and long distance services, will be needed. Especially for international bus/coach services, approaches should be coordinated among Member States and operators in order to be effective. Safe operating practices should be introduced, including, for example, rear door boarding and the use of windows for ventilation as much as possible instead of air conditioning. In addition, seating should be optimised to the extent feasible (e.g. families can sit together, while persons not travelling together should be separated). In mini-buses passengers should not be allowed to sit next to the driver unless physical separation is possible. Operators of regular bus services will have to be enabled to progressively re-build the network, depending on national restrictions. To facilitate this, Member States should put in place simplified and rapid procedures to allow operators to swiftly adapt their services, without compromising the health and safety of transport workers. If possible, staff contacts with passengers' luggage should be limited and passengers should handle the loading and unloading of their own luggage.

52. **Transport by car/van on demand (taxi, PHV)**: Taxi and PHV services have largely continued with specific protection measures for drivers and limitations to only one passenger or several people living in the same household. These services should continue operating with specific hygiene and risk mitigating measures. Companies should provide drivers with masks and disinfectants. Vehicle interiors should be disinfected as frequently as possible. Taxi and PHV drivers should avoid physical contact with passengers and electronic payment should always be prioritised. Companies should provide drivers with physical separators (e.g. plastic curtains or barriers) for vehicles to limit contact with passengers. Passengers should not be allowed to sit next to the driver unless physical separation is possible. Companies should share relevant information with passengers before the trip.

d) Rail transport

53. For passenger transport to resume, it will be important to assure passengers that taking collective transport is safe. Measures need to be well communicated, visible and effective. Especially for international rail services, measures need to be coordinated among Member States and operators in order to be effective. The rail sector associations and worker organisations are working towards common rules.

54. Given the high number of passengers transported daily, and the number of stations served, compliance with the general rules for safe behaviour to protect public health, in particular adequate distancing, also depends on the diligence and sense of responsibility of each passenger. Random controls should ensure a good level of compliance.

55. As railways have continued to function throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, there is already a number of measures in place that can be retained and adapted where necessary:

    a. Distancing obligations should be applied on trains where needed, in particular as long as passenger numbers are relatively low. To enable distancing, frequency and capacity of trains should be increased if necessary to reduce passenger density.

    b. Rail operators should implement mandatory seat reservations on long-distance and regional trains, with identification of name/origin and destination of passengers. Alternatively, and especially for short-distance trains, passengers should be required to leave seats empty between them, except for passengers from the same household.

    c. Rail operators should make use of on-board passenger counting systems especially available for commuter and suburban trains (based on weight, footsteps in the door areas, and also CCTV counting algorithms which do not allow for identification of individuals) to manage capacity. The timetabling and path allocation may need flexible adjustments, including optimising capacity in a coordinated manner to reflect demand and the need to reduce passenger density.

    d. Passenger flow management should be implemented at stations. Where adequate levels of public health cannot be ensured, the closing of certain stops or stations should be considered.

    e. Off-peak hour travel should be encouraged with incentives, such as adjusted pricing, or flexible woring hours in the case of commuter trains, to avoid crowding.

    f. To avoid that passengers have to touch door handles or buttons, doors should be opened at each stop either automatically or remotely by the driver.

56. The European Agency for Railways (ERA), which has relevant expertise with railway operations and with Common Safety Methods, as well as an extensive network of communication channels (with authorities, operators, and manufacturers), is ready to play a key role to ensure sharing of best practices. The Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking is already exploring possibilities to support the development of apps, based on anonymised and aggregated data[18], to understand crowding at stations, which could also benefit public transport.

e) Waterborne transport

57. Waterborne passenger transport has been significantly reduced. Measures to ensure public health will be necessary to restore trust and confidence of both passengers and crews. Measures should be tailored to the type of vessel and character and length of the voyage, which can vary significantly in the waterborne sector. There may be a

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[18] Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/518 of 8 April 2020 on a common Union toolbox for the use of technology and data to combat and exit from the COVID-19 crisis, in particular concerning mobile applications and the use of anonymised mobility data, OJ L 114, 14.4.2020, p. 7.

need to increase the number of vessels and voyages, especially where transport by ferries is essential for reasons of connectivity with remote areas and islands.

58. Measures for maritime transport workers are detailed in the Guidelines on protection of health for persons on board ships[19]. Workers, including those on board ships and in ports, should have access to personal protective equipment[20] and adequate medical care at all times during their work. Direct interactions between persons on board should be reduced as far as possible to avoid the risk of transmission.

59. The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) is ready to facilitate sharing of best practices and information that can be useful to the competent authorities and stakeholders (e.g. on vessel tracking, health reporting, etc.). Moreover, considering the international nature of shipping, cooperation with non-EU countries and international organisations, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO), will be important to facilitate global cooperation, and equivalence and reciprocity between COVID-19-related measures and practices.

60. Building on existing experience and measures already applied by Members States, operators and all other entities involved in waterborne transport (ports, ferry terminals, relevant national authorities) should apply the following measures:

    a. Ensure distancing requirements can be observed on vessels, including by reducing the number of allowed passengers.

    b. Limit access to (dis)embarkation quays to passengers with tickets; assign seats to passengers.

    c. Ports should consider dedicated lanes to separate entry and exit of passengers.

    d. When conditions allow for it, move as many passengers as possible to open spaces of the vessel.

    e. In case passengers are recommended or requested to remain in their vehicles on board ferries during short voyages (e.g. less than one hour), such a measure should apply on open decks only, unless additional safety precautions are taken in line with applicable EU rules. Where needed, capacity of decks should be adjusted to ensure safety and personnel trained in fire suppression should be present.

    f. Cleaning and disinfection of vessels and onshore facilities should follow the 'Suggested procedures'[21] of the EU Healthy Gateways Joint Action.

    g. Cruise ships and, where relevant, ferries should develop dedicated protocols for cleaning and hygiene that minimise the risk of cross-contamination between passenger cabins.

    h. Protocols should be developed between ship operators and onshore facilities for persons with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection, including measures before, during and after the voyage. For this purpose, health

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[19] Communication from the Commission Guidelines on protection of health, repatriation and travel arrangements for seafarers, passengers and other persons on board ships, OJ C 119, 14.4.2020, p. 1.

[20] EU Healthy Gateways Joint Action, Overview of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) recommended for staff at Points of Entry and crew on board conveyances in the context of COVID-19.

[21] Suggested procedures for cleaning and disinfection of ships during the pandemic or when a case of COVID-19 has been identified on board; https://www.healthygateways.eu/Portals/0/plcdocs/EU_HEALTHY_GATEWAYS_COVID-19_Cleaning_Disinfection_ships_09_4_2020_F.pdf?ver=2020-04-09-124859-237

screening procedures should be available, rooms for quarantine provided and adequate interaction with the person in quarantine organised.

       i. Cruise ships should have adequate testing capacity for COVID-19 on board, to be used when a passenger or crew member is suspected of being infected.

61. Previous COVID-19 outbreaks on cruise vessels have highlighted the particular vulnerability of closed environments during long voyages. Before cruise ships resume operations, ship operators should put in place strict procedures to reduce the risk of transmission on board and to provide adequate medical care in case of infections. The gradual restoration of cruise services should be coordinated at EU and international level, taking into account the public health situation in the countries concerned. Before starting journeys, cruise ship operators should ensure with ports along the route that, if needed, they can make arrangements for passengers and crew members to receive medical treatment and that repatriations and crew changes can be organised. To ensure the continuity and safety of the maritime transport, the Commission will continue taking steps to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of Member States to enable crew changes in their ports.

f) Urban mobility

62. In many cities and regions, **public transport** (buses, metros, trams, urban and sub-urban trains, etc.) has continued to function throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. To prepare for times when passenger numbers increase again, measures should be put in place as appropriate, in order to ensure the highest safety for passengers, such as:

    a. Requiring safe minimum distancing, for instance, making use of stickers or floor markings to guide passengers in vehicles to keep a safe distance.

    b. Contacts between drivers and passengers should be minimised (e.g. by using barriers, closing front door entrances, promoting electronic tickets and payment methods)

    c. Increasing and adapting operational frequency, as well as readjusting lines, to allow safe minimum distancing when passenger numbers increase and to better serve some destinations (e.g. where demand is particularly high).

    d. To avoid that passengers have to touch door handles or buttons, doors should be opened at each stop either automatically or remotely by the driver.

    e. Optimising passenger flows at stations and transport hubs to avoid crowding and peak hours, and to minimise contacts, through the use of innovative technologies and mobile applications (e.g. predicting density and crowds, installing passenger counters at doors with a maximum limit, organising travel time slots by appointment, etc.), and allowing flexibility in work hours.

63. It is essential to communicate clearly all the measures taken, to facilitate their smooth implementation, reassure citizens and maintain their confidence in public transport. Communication campaigns (e.g. "stand on stickers") have also been shown to be effective Many of the measures that might be required (e.g. managing crowds, access to transport hubs and vehicles, maintaining physical distancing, etc.) have effects that go beyond the remit of public transport and should be developed in cooperation with health authorities and other stakeholders, with a clear definition of the rights and obligations of each actor. The resulting extra costs could be incorporated into public service contracts.

64. **Shared mobility solutions**: Shared mobility companies should take various measures to protect drivers and passengers from infection. Rental vehicles should be thoroughly disinfected after each use, and vehicles used for car-sharing should be disinfected at least once on every day of use. There should be increased disinfection of station-based services (e.g. shared bicycles). E-scooter and e-bike rental companies should disinfect scooters and bikes at least with each battery change.

65. **Active mobility**: Many European cities are taking steps to make active mobility (e.g. walking and cycling) a safe and more attractive mobility option during the COVID-19 outbreak. Urban areas could consider temporary enlargements of pavements and increased space on the road for active mobility options to facilitate the needs of the population to move in a safe and efficient way, while reducing speed limits of vehicles in increased active mobility areas.

66. **Sharing of best practices**, ideas and innovations for safe mobility in urban and sub-urban areas during the COVID-19 outbreak has started through dedicated platforms and networks, and it is key to further develop such cooperation and knowledge sharing. The Commission will also gather Member States, local authorities and stakeholders active in the field of urban mobility in order to analyse the impact of this outbreak, draw lessons and gather experiences gained so far, and identify the opportunities for future, more sustainable mobility in the EU, in line with the European Green Deal.

IV.   **Conclusion**

67. The Commission will continue working with other EU institutions, agencies and bodies, Member States, transport stakeholders and international partners to coordinate actions and to facilitate the implementation of these guidelines in a transparent and objective way. The Commission will in particular monitor that containment measures and their progressive lifting do not undermine the Single Market or create discriminatory effects contrary to the Treaties between EU transport operators and service providers, and that they do not discriminate between EU citizens or workers on grounds of nationality.

68. The situation remains dynamic and the Commission will continue to work with competent authorities, stakeholder organisations, transport operators and services providers to adjust and update our approaches and measures, taking into account latest epidemiological developments, feedback on the effectiveness of existing measures, and the needs of EU citizens and our economy. As long as the COVID-19 outbreak continues, public authorities, stakeholders and citizens need to remain vigilant, keeping up a high level of preparedness for a potential increase in infections. In this context, the Commission will continuously monitor the application of these guidelines and update them if necessary to ensure their effectiveness in the changing circumstances.

69. While focusing on restoring transport services and connectivity, it is necessary to look towards the sustainable and smart recovery of the EU transport sector so that it can regain its pre-crisis strength, remain globally competitive and continue to be a fundamental part of the EU economy and citizens' lives. Lessons learnt from the COVID-19 crisis will be reflected in the upcoming Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy in 2020.