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European Commission
President Ursula von der Leyen
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Bruxelles
Belgium

Object: non-compliance with EC recommendations for reopening of borders

Distinguished President von der Leyen,

Two weeks ago, the European Commission has presented to Member States a package of guidelines and recommendations to help them to gradually lift travel restrictions and allow tourism businesses to reopen while respecting necessary health precautions.

The guidelines and recommendations are not legally binding for Member States, nevertheless European foundations are based on solidarity, tolerance, inclusion, justice, and non-discrimination.

Based on these core principles, in the presented documents it is clearly stated that "the gradual removal of restrictions to free movement and lifting of internal borders, proportionality and non-discrimination between EU citizens must be ensured".

Free movement and cross-border travels are key for the tourism sector, and hence governmental advises not to travel outside home countries for the forthcoming summer holidays can significantly disrupt the economies where tourism accounts for a significant share of GDP.

Newest EU members States, such as Croatia and Slovenia, have shown to be prepared and responsible during the COVID-19 pandemic, thus taking necessary measures to protect public health and stop the virus spread. Consequently, both in Croatia and Slovenia, epidemiological situations are among the best in Europe.

While most European countries are opening their borders in compliance with Commission's recommendations, other have decided to go round it. The Austrian Government has stated that it will not open its borders to countries that do not yet control the coronavirus situation, adding that borders will be open to certain European countries as from mid-June. However, neither Croatia nor Slovenia are on the list.

This is not the first crisis that Europe is facing; the migrant crisis, the terrorist attacks, the great economic crisis and today COVID-19. They have all posed huge challenges for the EU testing

our unity and strength. However, no crisis so far has succeeded to undermine the stability and security of Member States.

This is why we sincerely hope that the Commission will react to those announcements, which are inconsistent with the European COVID-19 recovery plan and EU fundamental values.

Measures undertaken by certain European leaders undermine our solidarity, weaken citizens' trust in EU institutions and make room to unilateral decisions to the detriment of the Union's stability. Alike, they foment nationalist tensions and push part of European countries into isolation.

Therefore, once again, we call on you to preserve the solidarity the European Union is based upon.

COVID-19 will have long-term consequences for the EU and the world, but we shall not allow actions that can undeservedly increase negative consequences for our countries and pave the way for violations of the European idea of solidarity and unity.

Sincerely,

Members of the European Parliament

Valter Flego

Irena Joveva

Klemen Grošelj