

European Scrutiny Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

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From: Sir William Cash MP

2 July 2020

Nigel Huddleston MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
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COM(20) 550 and C(20) 3251: Travel and tourism

The Committee have asked me to thank you for your Explanatory Memorandum on the two above listed EU documents dated 4 June 2020.

Taken together, these EU documents speak to the implications of the current pandemic for the tourism industry and the long road ahead towards its recovery. The Commission's Communications helpfully detail the actions that the EU is taking in the sector and its role in coordinating the responses of Member States.

We refer you to the Prime Minister's statement to the House of 23 June 2020 that most hospitality establishments will be permitted to reopen as of 4 July 2020. Against the Commission's guidance, we request further information on the measures that the Government has put in place—or is planning to put in place—to ensure that tourists and hospitality workers are safe as lockdown measures are eased. We are interested, in particular, in the specific guidance and support that you have provided to hospitality venues such as hotels.

The Committee notes the Commission's invitation for Member States to contribute data to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on the national transmission of COVID-19 to enable the creation of a European transmission map. Under the UK/EU Withdrawal Agreement, the UK is not precluded from participating in the work of EU agencies and bodies during the transition period.¹ We therefore request further information on the Government's engagement with the European Centre for Disease Prevention

¹ Depending on the EU agency or body, this may be by request or invitation, however, the UK is not permitted to be involved in any related decision-making during the transition period.

and Control, in particular, whether it has, or plans to, provide data for the development of a European COVID-19 transmissions map.

The Commission's Communications highlight the severe financial difficulties that the tourism sector is facing during the current crisis. Indeed, the cash flow problems encountered by some operators are predicted to continue for some time. The Commission details EU-led actions designed to combat these problems and we would like to hear the steps Government is taking to ease liquidity problems in the sector and any activities it has initiated to promote tourism as the crisis eases.

We request a response to this letter within 10 days.

I am copying this letter to Lord Kinnoull and Christopher Johnson in the Lords; Julian Knight MP, Chairman of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee; Jeremy Hunt MP, Chairman of the Health and Social Care Committee; Les Saunders at the Cabinet Office; and to James Ainsworth, Departmental Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

CHAIR