

PRES/007/20E

Mr Thierry BRETON
European Commissioner for Internal Market
EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 BRUXELLES

Brussels, 19th May 2020

Dear Commissioner Breton,

On behalf of the European food and drink industry, we would like to thank you for your time during our recent meeting. We enjoyed and appreciated the frank and open discussion we had with you, and we have already followed up on some of the issues we discussed, with colleagues in your Cabinet and in DG GROW.

As you know, we recently wrote to President U. von der Leyen thanking the Commission for its support during this Covid-19 crisis; we particularly appreciated your commitment to continue to react quickly when industry flags up a problem in the food chain. Thanks to your intervention, mobility of goods and of workers has certainly improved, even if it remains problematic in certain cases (movement of seasonal workers and movements across certain borders, for example).

In our letter to the President we point to the fact that, even if we may have been more resilient than others, many food and drink companies have taken a considerable financial hit due to Covid-19, and in particular our SMEs. We ask that the Commission intervene to encourage a coordinated exit strategy across Member States, thus avoiding the challenges businesses and workers had to face at the start of the Covid-19 crisis. The Single Market is of the utmost importance to the sustainability of our sector, not only economically, but also socially and environmentally.

We take this opportunity to inform you of our joint statement (with our Social partners EFFAT, and the Hospitality sectors HOTREC and FoodServiceEurope) concerning out-of-home consumption, which is a very important outlet for many food and drink companies:
https://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/uploads/statements_documents/Joint_Statement_Food_Industry_and_Hospitality_COVID-19_2020_05_12.pdf

Finally, we look forward to keeping in touch, and we are at your disposal to provide you and your services with any additional information about our sector, as required.

Yours sincerely,

