



International Association for Soaps,  
Detergents and Maintenance Products

20 March 2020

**Object : European Cleaning and Hygiene Products Industry call to address the public health crisis - coronavirus**

Dear President von der Leyen, Dear Commissioner Kyriakides,

Dear Commissioner Breton,

A.I.S.E., the Association representing the European Cleaning and Hygiene Products Industry wishes to propose its help in the management of the current public health crisis. Our companies manufacture cleaning and hygiene products in a wide variety and for different purposes. As such, our sector notably produces disinfectants with viricidal efficacy for product-type 1 (disinfectants for human hygiene purposes), product-type 2 (general disinfectants), and product-type 4 (disinfectants for food and feed areas).

A.I.S.E. calls upon the Commission to take a leadership role in the coordination and information sharing among the EU member states authorities, and at global level. We urge the European Commission to drive all activities and harmonise to the extent possible the decisions taken across the EU-27. Our products are essential in the current context. In order to ensure continuous supply of products, our industry would require the following:

1. **Confirm our industry as a “strategic sector”.** We understand that EU member states may have different views on which sectors are considered essential, and therefore which can continue to operate, and have priority access to raw materials. We ask that the Commission coordinates an EU-wide interpretation, and that our activities and industry – along with its suppliers and value-chain partners - be considered critical. Raw materials and packaging availability for the manufacture of products is a must. Priority and access to ingredients should be given to industries that will help solve the ongoing public health crisis. This “strategic sector” status should allow cross border movement of maintenance crews, operators, products and industrial waste streams.
2. **EU support to maintain plants and warehouses/logistic centres open.** Confronted with decisions of governments to lockdown their borders and limit professional and social activities to the absolute minimum, it is critical that our sector is allowed to continue its activities. Keeping production going, chemicals and finished products moving through the supply chain, and the ability to remove waste (including chemical waste) from the sites in order to stay operational, is essential. The situation varies greatly country per country, therefore EU coordination is needed to ensure consistency. Our facilities are accustomed to operate at the highest levels of hygiene and cleanliness and the industry is taking the utmost precautions to protect the health and safety of its plant works and employees. To maintain continuous supply of hygiene products and disinfectants it is essential that plants (and other business units) of our industry continue to operate, while partnering with national governments and workers unions.
3. **Improve the transports/logistics situation in Europe.** In order to avoid shortages and avoid that the social and economic difficulties worsen, maintaining the functioning of the Single Market is key. Member States should therefore not undertake measures that jeopardise the integrity of the Single Market for goods, in particular of supply chains. We welcome the European Commission “Guidelines for border management measures to protect health and ensure the



availability of goods and essential services<sup>1</sup>” and hope these can be sufficient in addressing export limitations and accessibility, notably via so-called ‘green lanes’. It is imperative that the logistics force of our industry is given access to these green lanes with minimal red tape.

It is fundamental to protect the health of the population whilst avoiding disruptions to the free movement of persons (for health care professionals and strategic industries), and the delivery of goods and essential services across Europe. Soaps and disinfectants provide essential benefits in the current crisis. We are here to support the ongoing efforts of national governments and EU decision-makers anyway we can. We count on policymakers and regulatory agencies to find flexible solutions in transport/logistics but also in the production of disinfectants.

Yours sincerely,

Susanne Zänker  
A.I.S.E. Director General



Arndt Scheidgen  
A.I.S.E. President



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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20200316\\_covid-19-guidelines-for-border-management.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20200316_covid-19-guidelines-for-border-management.pdf)