



**Packaging needs to be recognised by EU and national governments as an essential part of the continued flow of goods during the COVID-19 pandemic**

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**Brussels, 20 March 2020 - The members of EUROPEN, the European Organisation for Packaging and the Environment, are doing their utmost to maintain the necessary supply of food and hygiene products as well as medicines to citizens throughout Europe during the COVID-19 pandemic. To guarantee the continued uninterrupted flow of (packaged) goods, the Commission needs to recognise packaging and its raw materials as essential and to open the designated priority lanes, the “green lanes” for their intra-EU transport.**

EUROPEN supports the prompt and decisive measures taken by national governments and the European Commission to contain the spread of COVID-19. EUROPEN members have been taking all necessary measures for the health and safety of their employees and consumers. They are also actively monitoring developments and reviewing the effectiveness of these implemented measures. We call on the Commission and EU governments to ensure that the production facilities essential to packaging supply-chains can continue operating as needed, while making sure that the necessary specific COVID-19 health, safety and security measures for the workforce are in place.

Packaging is an essential component of the product groups which have been identified from the Commission as critical, such as “health-related and perishable goods, notably foodstuffs”. To support the self-isolation measures encouraged by national governments and the Commission, a well-functioning packaging supply chain is particularly critical to ensure uninterrupted delivery of pre-packed goods safely from factories, through retail and e-commerce, to consumers. EUROPEN and its members are committed to, and engaged in, providing the continuous supply needed to deliver these essential goods without interruption. This is only possible if goods can circulate freely.

We welcome the recent Commission guidance on border management to establish a coordinated EU response and urge Member States to observe it. However, delays and disruption at country borders have been observed for the delivery of (packaged) products and packaging materials. As a matter of priority, we call on the Commission to lead on securing the enabling conditions necessary for continuity of essential product and service supply chains by creating ‘green lanes’ for free-movement of essential goods, vehicles and their drivers, as well as essential engineers.

EUROPEN and its members are fully engaged to help in these difficult times and remain at the disposal of the European Commission and EU governments to support their efforts in every way we can.

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**Notes for Editors:**

**About EUROPEN**

**EUROPEN** - The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment - is a cross-industry organization presenting the opinion of the packaging supply chain (i.e. raw material producers, converters and brand owners plus national packaging organizations) in Europe on topics related to packaging, packaging waste and the environment, independent of specific packaging materials or systems. [www.europen-packaging.eu](http://www.europen-packaging.eu)