



# Statement

## Call for pro-active engagement with the Private Security Sector on the COVID-19 situation

Brussels, 14 April 2020

The Confederation of European Security Services (CoESS) published on 26 March 2020 a first statement with "[Observations and Recommendations on the COVID-19 Situation](#)". Based on this statement, CoESS urges the competent authorities in Europe to pro-actively cooperate with private security trade associations to address the following, most urgent, matters:

### 1. Recognition of private security as “essential services” / “critical occupation”

Governments must recognise private security as “essential services”. Failing such recognition makes it difficult for companies to respond to the growing demand for the protection of critical infrastructures, warehouses and supply chains, supermarkets and hospitals. A number of countries, including Belgium, Spain, and the UK have already done so. The European Commission lists private security guards as “workers exercising critical occupations” in its [Communication concerning the exercise of the free movement of workers during COVID-19 outbreak \(2020/C 102 I/03\)](#).

### 2. Solidarity with struggling businesses

CoESS recognises the European Union and Member States’ immense efforts to provide financial support to businesses suffering from the COVID-19 situation. In the private security industry, many service segments came to a stand-still, such as airport and event security services. Competent authorities must now engage with responsible trade associations to find quick, sector-specific, solutions to guarantee the liquidity and cashflow of affected private security businesses. This also includes actions to address bad contracting practices of both public and private buyers.

### 3. Public-private partnerships and information exchange

To ensure an undisturbed provision of private security services that is able to respond to the demand, an ongoing dialogue between competent authorities and national trade associations is needed to address sector-specific challenges, such as availability of personal protective equipment, interrupted licensing and training of guards, and labour shortages among public and private security forces.

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