

Ms Sanna Marin
Prime Minister of Finland
Snellmaninkatu 1 A, Helsinki
PO Box 23, FI-00023 Government
Finland

Dear Ms Sanna Marin,

We are writing on behalf of the Estonian Employers' Confederation regarding the suspension of passenger traffic between Estonia and Finland.

Firstly, the Estonian Employers' Confederation welcomes and appreciates the continuing freight transport between Estonia and Finland. This is extremely important for Estonia since our economy is highly dependent on export and freely functioning supply chains.

On this occasion, Estonian Employers' Confederation would like to draw your attention to the temporary restrictions for the cross-border movements of workers. The industrial, service, and construction sectors are most affected by this decision. Estonia has experience with cross-border movements of workers with Latvia. The agreement, that was made on March 20, 2020 between the two governments, allows workers to cross the border for purpose of employment, and removes the need for the workers to remain in quarantine for two weeks after crossing the border due to employment related travel. The statistics have shown that following all restrictions and precautionary measures, the free movement of workers has not raised the COVID-19 cases in the border cities. Estonia has followed all the restrictions measurements, similarly to Finland, and the level of COVID-19 cases are decreasing.

Following this positive example, we are proposing Finland to consider easing the restrictions for border crossing and allowing the free movement of workers between Estonia and Finland.

Finland is one of the most important economic partners for Estonia. In addition to goods, specialists also move between Finland and Estonia, and the tourism sector, which is most affected by the COVID-19 virus, largely depends on Finnish tourists. As countries are moving towards the Exit Plans, we would be grateful for allowing the shipping companies to start operating again as soon as possible. The shipping companies and the tourism sector are prepared to comply with extremely strict hygiene requirements and to initially limit ship occupancy and are ready to negotiate any additional requirements for the traveling workers and tourist, in order to minimise the risks. Finland and Estonia should be a single economic space, where traffic between the two countries would be free for the citizens of both countries.

We have every confidence that the cooperation between Estonia and Finland will continue.

Yours sincerely,

Kai Realo
President
Estonian Employers' Confederation

Arto Aas
Managing Director
Estonian Employers' Confederation