



# Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on ports and maritime transport in the Mediterranean Region.

*Actions taken at the EU level*

**UfMS Webinar**

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# COVID-19 response by the EU

- **Relief measures:** immediate support for the economic operators (March – May 2020)
  - ✓ To maintain the flow of freight, preserve the supply chains, protect crews and relieve current financial pressures on economic operators (solvency issues);
- **Recovery measures:** medium and long term aid
  - ✓ to address economic recovery and ensure the sustainable development of the EU industry over the years to come.

# Horizontal measures

- **Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative** (CRII and CRII+) to flexibly use the EU Structural Funds cash reserves in responding to the emerging needs of the stakeholders (frontloading of €37 billion, not yet allocated);
- **Temporary Framework for State Aid** to enable Member States to use the full flexibility foreseen under State aid rules: direct grants, selective tax advantages, advance payments, state guarantees, public loans etc.;
- Activation of the general escape clause under **the Stability and Growth Pact**: departing from the budgetary requirements that would normally apply under the European fiscal framework;
- New instrument for temporary **Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency** (SURE) supporting Member States in alleviating the employment impact for individuals;

# Horizontal measures

- Dedicated programmes launched by the **European Central Bank, European Investment Bank Group and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development,**
- Variety of **expenditure and tax related actions undertaken by the Member States;**
- Connecting Europe Facility: **using the maximum flexibility** to prevent from penalising beneficiaries due to delays caused directly or indirectly by the pandemic;
- Availability of relevant financing programmes under the **CEF framework,** EFSI and EIB own risk financing (e.g. CEF grants, CEF TBF, GSGP, FM, NER 300 etc.)

# Transport/maritime specific measures

- Guidelines for **border management measures to protect health and ensure the availability of goods and essential services;**
- Communication from the Commission **on the implementation of the Green Lanes** under the Guidelines for border management measures to protect health and ensure the availability of goods and essential services;
- Guidelines on **protection of health, repatriation and travel arrangements for seafarers;**
- Proposal for the **amendment to the Ports Services Regulation (EU)2017/352**, to give to Member States and port authorities additional flexibility to waive, reduce, suspend or defer port infrastructure charges due for the period from **1 March 2020 to 31 December 2020.**

# Transport/maritime specific measures

- **Interpretative guidelines concerning passenger rights** on how certain provisions of the EU passenger rights legislation should be applied in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak;
- Proposal for a Regulation laying down specific and temporary measures in view of COVID-19 outbreak and concerning **the validity of certain certificates, licences and authorisations and the postponement of certain periodic checks and training in certain areas of transport legislation**;
- A network of **national transport contact points to reinforce cooperation and coordination** on the issues related to transport, and set up a website ([https://ec.europa.eu/transport/coronavirus-response\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/coronavirus-response_en) ), which provides an **overview of national transport measures** by country.

# Exit strategy

- **Tourism and Transport Package**, to gradually lift travel restrictions on **13 May**, with guidelines of general principles for the gradual resumption of passenger transport and detailed recommendations for measures in the maritime sector:
  - ✓ An overall strategy towards recovery in 2020 and beyond;
  - ✓ A common approach to restoring free movement and lifting restrictions at EU internal borders in a gradual and coordinated way;
  - ✓ A framework to support the gradual re-establishment of transport whilst ensuring the safety of passengers and personnel;
  - ✓ A recommendation which aims to make travel vouchers an attractive alternative to cash reimbursement for consumers;
  - ✓ Criteria for restoring tourism activities safely and gradually and for developing health protocols for hospitality establishments such as hotels

# Recovery package

- 13 May: President von der Leyen speech at the European Parliament Plenary;
- The planned recovery instrument: under the MFF 2021 – 2027;
- Priorities: the European Green Deal, digitalization and resilience;
- The recovery funds to be channelled through EU programmes;
- Possible pillars:
  - ✓ supporting Member States to recover, repair and come out stronger from the crisis.
  - ✓ kick-starting the economy and helping private investment to get moving again
  - ✓ learning the most immediate lessons of the crisis



# Other relevant initiatives

- A new **Fuel EU Maritime initiative** to support the uptake of alternative fuels for maritime, to accelerate the use of electrification of short distance shipping and to pave the way for decarbonisation of marine fuels.
- **Sustainable Finance strategy and the Taxonomy Regulation** as a possible support to the transition towards a sustainable recovery and a basis to assess the environmental sustainability of economic activities and investments.

# Thank you



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