

CEEP Newsflash - 20 May 2020

France and Germany issue a joint proposal for the EU Recovery Plan

On Monday 18 May, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel put forward a joint proposal for the EU Recovery Plan. The Franco-German initiative calls for strongly reinforcing the capacity of Europe to act collectively to face the unprecedented challenges imposed by the COVID-19 and to accomplish long-term priorities such as climate neutrality. You can read more about the proposals [here](#).

Some of the key elements address the establishment of strategic digital and health sovereignties, the adaptation of the EU current industrial strategy to build further resilience, the promotion of a fair taxation framework that enhances competitiveness, the revision of state aid rules to better support Member States throughout the Green transition and the deepening of our markets' integration.

The two countries aim to materialize those policy guidelines with a financial support at the European level of a €500bn Recovery Fund, to be established within the next MFF's framework, allowing the European Commission to finance such recovery support by borrowing on markets on behalf of the EU, and providing EU budgetary expenditure for the most affected sectors and regions in line with the EU priorities.

European Spring Semester Package 2020 and the Country-Specific Recommendations

The European Commission proposed on 20 May its [country-specific recommendations](#) (CSRs) providing economic policy guidance to all EU Member States in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, focused on the most urgent challenges brought about by the pandemic and on relaunching sustainable growth. The recommendations are structured around two objectives: in the short-term, mitigating the coronavirus pandemic's severe negative socio-economic consequences; and achieving sustainable and inclusive growth to facilitate the green transition and the digital transformation.

The recommendations cover areas such as investing in public health and resilience of the health sector, preserving employment through income support for affected workers, investing in people and skills, and taking action against aggressive tax planning and money laundering.

The fiscal CSRs this year are qualitative, departing from the budgetary requirements that would normally apply. They reflect the activation of the general escape clause, recommending that Member States take all necessary measures to effectively address the pandemic, sustain the economy and support the ensuing recovery.

Start of the European Commission's second public consultation on State aid

The European Commission published an updated proposal to exempt from prior Commission scrutiny under EU State aid rules aid granted through national funds for projects supported under certain EU centrally managed programmes. The Commission carried out a first public consultation in 2019 on a targeted review of the General

Block Exemption Regulation (GBER). In response to the first consultation, the Commission published on 11 May 2020 an updated proposal for a second public consultation. In particular, the changes in the proposal aim to improve clarity and to further align the rules with the relevant EU funding rules. Those changes are explained in the [Explanatory note](#) accompanying the updated proposal. Feedback can be submitted to the European Commission until 6 July 2020. The Public Service Board will focus on the updated proposal in the coming weeks. The draft amending Regulation and all details about the public consultation are available at [here](#).

European Commission puts forward its EU Biodiversity Strategy

The European Commission published on 20 May its “EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 - Bringing nature back into our lives”. Initially expected for March, the adoption of the Strategy has been postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The new 2030 Biodiversity Strategy is a comprehensive, systemic and ambitious long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems. With an objective to put Europe's biodiversity to recovery by 2030, the Strategy sets out new ways to implement existing legislation more effectively, new commitments, measures, targets and governance mechanisms.

It is a key pillar of the European Green Deal and of EU leadership on international action for global public goods and sustainable development goals, and proposes a new growth strategy to drive the recovery from the crisis, whilst bringing economic benefits and strengthening our resilience. You can consult the proposal of the European Commission [here](#).

European Commission's DG ENV publishes its study to support the Commission in establishing guidelines for separate collection of waste

On 14 May, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) published its [study on establishing guidelines for separate collection of waste](#). The examples in the study are based on a good practice for collection basis and will support the Commission in its process of preparing guidelines for Member States in the waste management sector for separating the collection of hazardous waste fractions produced by households. The next steps for the Commission on other waste streams and waste collection are guided by the new ambitions set out in the European Green Deal and the new Circular Economy Action Plan. The Commission has committed to assess the feasibility of setting an EU reference model harmonising separate waste collection and related issues and will use this report as one of the building blocks.

The Commission is expected to publish various consultations over the next months. The CEEP Environment Task Force will be keeping its members updated on this subject and will also take this study into account when developing the CEEP position paper on the Circular Economy Action Plan.

LABOUR INT 2: 3rd Steering Committee Meeting on 20 May 2020

On Wednesday 20 May 2020, CEEP attended the [LABOUR-INT 2 Project](#) - Labour Market Integration of Migrants: A Multi-Stakeholder Approach - 3rd Enlarged Steering Committee Online Meeting. The meeting was the opportunity to update the project partners on the state of play of the national pilot actions in Italy, Greece and Austria, following the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the integration activities.

The LABOUR INT 2 project has been affected by the pandemic and the activities slowed down, which is why an extension will be asked to DG HOME in order to prolong it until April 2021. The dissemination events planned for November and December 2020 in Ljubljana and Brussels will therefore be rescheduled to early 2021, with new dates to be communicated soon.

CEEP is also pleased to share the guide published by LABOUR-INT 2 partner IOM "Migration and the 2030 Agenda: A Guide for Practitioners", available [here](#) (in multiple languages). CEDEFOP, another supporting organisation of the LABOUR-INT 2 Project also published an article in light of the current COVID19 crisis: [Will the human capital potential of refugees be better used and acknowledged after Covid-19?](#)

For more information regarding the project, please contact CEEP Project Manager, [Carlotta Astori](#).

Next Meetings:

- Transport Task Force: Monday 25 May, 10:00-13:00 (videoconference)
- Public Services Board: Wednesday 27 May, 14:00-17:00 (videoconference)
- Energy Task Force: Thursday 28 May, 10:00-13:00 (videoconference)
- Macro-economic Task Force: Friday 29 May