



Overview of the spread of the Coronavirus and measures taken by EU Member States

Updated on 07.05.2020 at 20:00

DG COMMUNICATION

C – Representation and Communication in Member States

C2 – Political and Economic Intelligence



Brussels, 07 May 2020

Internal document

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS:

AUSTRIA: Chancellor Sebastian Kurz (ÖVP/EPP) held a **videoconference with countries that have been successful in dealing with the Covid-19 crisis**. The alliance includes Australia, New Zealand, Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Israel, Norway and Singapore. Among others, reopening trade and tourism among "safe countries" were discussed. Kurz argued in favour of restricting cross-border travel only to "safe countries" and mentioned Germany and Czechia in this respect.

BELGIUM: The National Crisis Centre warned today that **despite the positive trend and a record decrease in ICU COVID patients in the past 24h, the number of confirmed infected people in Belgium is still increasing**. The Crisis Centre also stressed that while the number of new hospitalisations continues to stabilize, the total number of hospitalised people remains quite high.

BULGARIA: The Bulgarian Government has granted €328,000 in humanitarian aid to 12 partner countries from the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership and the EU's southern neighbourhood.

CROATIA: Croatian scientist Ivica Đikić and his team at the Institute of Biochemistry II (IBC2) in Frankfurt have discovered a **potential weak spot of the novel coronavirus**, which might enable a two-pronged therapeutic strategy - stemming the spread of the virus and boosting the immunological response, a step towards finding the cure.

CZECHIA: The highest incidence of infections was reported in large cities with local outbreaks in regions bordering with Germany. Hence, the national strategy moves to localised outbreaks and focuses on **smart quarantine** (using CZ mobile app eRouška and location-sharing via Mapy.cz to create "memory maps", voluntary provision of data from mobile operators and banks and establishment of a call centre).

DENMARK: The Government is currently negotiating with all parties in Parliament the next steps in the **gradual reopening of society**. The current measures are applicable until Sunday 10 May. An agreement is currently expected tomorrow (8 May) at the latest. In the meantime, a panel of prominent economists set up recently by the Government has tabled its recommendations on the way forward to **gradually open up the Danish economy**.

ESTONIA: MEP Marina Kaljurand (S&D) stated in her speech to the Estonian Parliament that the beginning of the crisis will go to history as a discredit of the EU. European Commission failed in its role of a coordinator and safeguarding the freedoms of the EU, in particular the free movement of goods. She also criticised the invisibility of Estonia's own Commissioner – Kadri Simson.

FINLAND: Experienced **Finnish economists call for extensive fiscal policy measures and increased solidarity to revive crisis-stricken economies in Europe**. At the same time, they warn against leaving Italy alone to wrestle with its economic problems, calling help for Italy an act of 'enlightened selfishness'.

FRANCE: Prime Minister Edouard Philippe has confirmed, this afternoon, that **France will experience a progressive de-containment from Monday onwards**. Yet, Ile-de-France, Hauts-de-France, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, Grand-Est stay in red (it means that, in these areas, vigilance must remain high: parks and gardens will stay close and secondary schools will not reopen).

GERMANY: **Twelve members of the Bundestag and of the European Parliament have called on Federal Interior Minister Horst Seehofer to put an immediate end to the controls at Germany's borders**. The statement was signed by former leader of the CDU/CSU (EPP) parliamentary group Volker Kauder and the group's vice president Andreas Jung.

GREECE: Minister for Tourism Harry Theocharis said that **if it is not possible to reach an agreement on a European health protocol, individual countries could move forward at their own risk**. In this case, bilateral agreements will be the rule. He said that without a pan-European solution, there would be no significant recovery of the tourism sector in the long-term.

HUNGARY: As of 7 May, **citizens of neighbouring countries working in the agricultural sectors can enter Hungary**. Those who are citizens of non-EEA countries must be in possession of a work contract.

IRELAND: A virtual citizens' dialogue organised by the Representation in conjunction with the Institute for International and European Affairs with **Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan** attracted more than 700 participants on the Zoom platform. Commissioner Hogan's arguments on the benefits of international trade for both the EU and Ireland make the headlines in the media as well.

ITALY: Experts agree that the **virus is becoming less aggressive**. Hospital in Padova has created a "bank" to collect plasma from healed people. For the first time, healed people are more than positive people. Shortage of masks in pharmacies: special Commissioner for Coronavirus Arcuri menaces to use tobacconists to distribute masks to avoid possible speculations by pharmacies.

LATVIA: The Government has decided today that the extraordinary situation will be extended until 9 June, with some easing measures.

LITHUANIA: Prominent economists question **Commission's Spring Economic Forecast**, say **predictions for Lithuania are too pessimistic in comparison to Latvia and Estonia**. Farmers and Agriculture Minister unhappy with Commission's proposal to help agriculture. Parliament approves €1 billion social package.

NETHERLANDS: A **steep increase in the number of tests and contact tracing** will come along the planned gradual reopening. The Government announced to have tests available for everybody with Covid-19 symptoms in June, possibly as of 1 June.

POLAND: PiS leader Kaczyński and Alliance leader Gowin (both parties belong to the United Right coalition) reached an **agreement regarding the rescheduling the presidential election** in the context of the Covid crisis, which originally was to take place on 10 May. Their agreement assumes that the elections will take place in July, and that the President is to be elected via postal voting.

PORTUGAL: The **social security system is facing a heavy strain** and the Government continues to be under fire for not having met companies' and workers' expectations for getting the emergency financial support requested early last month.


ROMANIA: The Constitutional Court admitted a complaint of the Ombudsman and **ruled as unconstitutional the Government emergency ordinance that gave the authorities the possibility to issue fines during the state of emergency**, for people who do not comply with the movement restrictions. Most of the fines issued (290,000 fines totalling some €120m until now) can thus be challenged in court and cancelled. Going one step forward, the opposition (PSD, Pro Romania and ALDE) initiated today a bill by which the fines would be simply cancelled.

SLOVAKIA: A group of Czech and Slovak luminaries sent an open letter to both countries' Prime Ministers and **demand the speeding up of removing border restrictions**.

SLOVENIA: The **number of hospitalised COVID-19 patients halved** from the peak in early April. The number of patients in intensive care dropped even more by almost two thirds.

SPAIN: As the number of daily deaths decreases and that of recoveries increases, the country is on a very positive trend. Health practitioners continue to be the worst hit group, more than 1,100 new cases are reported yesterday.

SWEDEN: The Rep discovered a **fraudulent web site claiming they have a fund raising activity for Corona research on behalf of the Commission,** Unicef and WHO (<https://www.coronahjalpen.eu/>). The Rep contacted the SPP as well as the owner of the site in order to fight this disinformation. They then removed the European Commission and our logo from the web site.

Member State	Input from EC Representations in the Member States																						
 AT	<p>15,665 cases, 609 deaths (7/5) 15.633 cases, 608 deaths (6/5) 15,579 cases, 606 deaths (5/5)</p> <p>KEY DATA AND FIGURES</p> <p>Date of the first case registered: 25 February Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 32 / 15,665/ 1,760 Number tests done (absolute/per million): 292,894 / 32,909 Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 360 / 92 Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 15,075/ 1,010 Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 1 / 609 Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 59 / 13,698</p> <p>ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE</p> <p>The Representation, in collaboration with all EU institutions in Vienna, organised on 7 May a festive event on the occasion of Europe Day, with speeches of the Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen (independent) and EP Vice-President Othmar Karas (ÖVP/EPP). In his speech, the President criticised the lack of European spirit at the beginning of the Corona-crisis. However, the reconstruction of Europe could be best achieved by "using our strengths and resources together, with and for each other". This would also help from a global perspective to be able to achieve world relevance and global political capability. The event was live streamed via Facebook and the private TV channel "Puls24". Several newspaper reported about the speech. A summary of the speech was broadcasted by public TV ORF. The first results after 30 minutes are impressive (reach 2500, engagement 260 on Facebook).</p> <p>HEALTH</p> <p>According to a recent study, the fear among the population of the Corona virus is declining. Only 8% of the surveyed believe that the Corona virus is "extremely dangerous"; 3 weeks ago it was still 18% and beginning of April even 23% who shared this view. 14% do not feel threatened by the virus. (market, 4-5 May, n=1000)</p> <div data-bbox="389 1350 1115 1814"> <p>Bedrohung durch Coronavirus Umfrage: „Virus ist sehr bedrohlich“, in Prozent</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Kalenderwoche</th> <th>Prozent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>10 (Anfang März)</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>~10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>~15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>~18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>~15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>~12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>~10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19 (4./5. Mai)</td> <td>8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1.000 Befragte (Woche 19)</p> </div> <p>CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES</p> <p>In a press conference, Minister of Education Heinz Fassmann (ÖVP/EPP) informed that the admission exam for medical studies will be postponed until summer (August) or even beyond (September/October). Distance learning will continue until the end of the semester, exceptions apply however for courses, which require presence teaching</p>	Kalenderwoche	Prozent	10 (Anfang März)	5	11	~10	12	~15	13	~18	14	23	15	~15	16	18	17	~12	18	~10	19 (4./5. Mai)	8
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(e.g. laboratories, etc). There will be no suspension of tuition fees, but students will continue to receive family benefits without the need to prove their study progress in this semester.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The Ministry of Finance presented to the Austrian Parliament a technical **update of the stability programme 2019-2021**. The report predicts a 5.2% decline in economic output in 2020 and also expects a net financing deficit of 8% and an increase in the debt ratio to 81.4%. Also for 2021, a clearly negative Maastricht balance is still expected, although it should be significantly better than in 2020. On the basis of the latest estimates, the debt ratio will in turn fall back below 80% of GDP. Private consumption will decline by 2.9% in 2020 and only grow again by 3.1% in 2021. However, the household savings ratio will rise, as the government's measures will largely compensate for the loss of income and purchasing power will also be boosted by the lower inflation rate of 0.9%. Gross fixed capital formation will fall by 8.7% in 2020 and rise again in 2021 (+4.5%).

As concerns the future fate of specific companies, the **Austrian Airlines AUA** (100%-subsidiary) remains the only one to make part of the public discussion. After the drumbeat of the request of € 767b and the immediate negotiations of the top of the Lufthansa management with the Austrian Government the company presents a plan for restructuring (notably, by 2023, 1100 of the 7000 jobs are to be cut and salaries are to be cut by 13%).

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Chancellor **Sebastian Kurz** (ÖVP/EPP) reported about a second **videoconference with countries that have been successfully dealing with Covid-19**. The alliance includes **Australia, New Zealand, Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Israel, Norway** and **Singapore**. Kurz praised the valuable exchange of experiences on the reopening of economies following the lockdown. Among also reopening trade and tourism among "safe countries" were discussed. Kurz said an outbreak of new hotspots and a second lockdown was to be avoided by any means. Kurz argued therefore in favour of restricting cross-border travel only to "safe countries" and mentioned Germany and Czechia in this respect.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

The Representation organised a **videoconference with the network of the Austrian EU Councillors and Mayors**. The councillors reported from their constituencies that in their view, the **EU is barely visible on the ground** and being perceived as passive, and that constituents regret the return of national egoism, referring to the closed borders to all neighbouring countries, and to a delivery of protective masks that were withheld by the German authorities in April. This applies particularly to communities in regions close to the German and Swiss borders. Communities in Southern Austria suffer from the breakdown of tourism and hope that border controls will be lifted soon.

On the occasion of Europe Day 2020, the Representation organised, in collaboration with the Austrian Society for European Politics (ÖGFE), every day live-streamed **online discussions** with regard to the corona crisis. In the last 24 hours, our live discussion with Commissioner **Thierry Breton** and Minister of Economy **Margarete Schramböck** (ÖVP/EPP), we reached 15k viewers via our social media. A live expert's discussion with **Ewald Nowotny** (former Governor of the Austrian National Bank) had 12.9k views and a reach of 25.3k on Facebook.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): 22 March
Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 75% (Market, 1000 surveyed, 6 April)

	<p>Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): lack of protective equipment Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): partially Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened):yes Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): yes, mainly concerns care takers for elderly and harvesters from Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechia External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): yes Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): partially: - shops smaller than 400m2, DIY and garden centres reopened on 14 April - all other shops, massage studios and hairdresser can reopen on 2 May Schools closed/reopened/partially): reopen in a step-by-step approach starting from 4 May</p> <p>2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): - 9% (UniCredit Bank Austria, 15 April) / -7% (IMF, 14 April) / -5,25% to - 7,5% (WIFO, 23 April) 2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): 6.6%of GDP (Fiscal Council, 17 April) Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 12.8%, 4 May, Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)</p>
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BE

51,420 cases, 8,415 deaths (07/05)
50,781 cases, 8,339 deaths (06/05)
50,509 cases, 8,016 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 03/02/2020 (person repatriated from Wuhan)

Cases of infections (daily increase/absolute/per million): +639 / 51.420 / 4.486 per million

Number of tests done (absolute/per million): 493.325 / 43.099 per million

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 2.688 / 538

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): ICU beds available for corona patients only: 1864; total number of hospital beds: 52.565

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): +80 / 8.415

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): +244 / 12.980

Note on the death rate: The current counting method, which is very complete and possibly more accurate than in other countries, has been pushing Belgium high up in international mortality rankings.

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

The National Security Council will meet in the week of 11 May (exact date TBC) to evaluate the transition to phase 2 (18 May).

HEALTH

The National Crisis Centre warned today that despite the positive trend and a record decrease in ICU COVID patients in the past 24h, **the number of confirmed infected people in Belgium is still increasing**. The Crisis Centre also stressed that while the number of new hospitalisations continues to stabilize, the total number of hospitalised people remains quite high.

On 7 May BE virologist Peter Piot has been appointed as special adviser to President von der Leyen. Piot was already a member of the scientific committee that advises the EC on how to deal with the pandemic. In his new capacity, Piot will work out a strategy for future epidemics.

The **Flemish Research Foundation (FWO) and the Flemish Supercomputer Centre (VSC) will offer extra computing power for COVID-19 research** in cooperation with universities, researchers, strategic research centres and companies (to e.g. simulate the spread of the virus in a virtual population or make predictions about the usefulness of social distancing measures). According to Flemish Science Minister Crevits (CD&V/EPP), a high-quality research infrastructure is crucial for strong scientific research and "our need for such high-performance infrastructure has now been proven more than ever". The Flanders' Department of Economy, Science & Innovation and the Research Foundation have joined forces to provide an overview of the funded research infrastructure in Flanders through a publication which is said to "profile Flanders as an attractive research environment and help attract international top talent". On 5 May the same Department also published [an overview of Innovation in Flanders to combat COVID-19 highlighting various pan-EU and EU-funded scientific and industry projects.](#)

Medical equipment

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

According to Flemish business organisation VOKA, **companies' export has decreased by 1/3**. One in four companies sees their export activities fall by 75% or more, mainly due to shortage of international demand. Half of the exporting companies believe that exports will not return to normal until the fall. Based on these numbers and corresponding to the Belgian Federation of Enterprises (VBO/FEB)'s continued plea to the EC, VOKA director Hans Maertens pleads for "Europe to take measures to ensure that the free movement of persons is again guaranteed, so we can deliver services and goods abroad. We really need a strategy, an action plan, to safeguard our exports."

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Several experts and opinion-makers doubt the overall feasibility of the eased social contact measures (the new "rule of 4") as the Government counts on people's "common

sense" and does not intend to step up enforcement. Koen Lowet, chairman of the BE Federation of Psychologists does not believe that "common sense" is the right motivator for people to adjust their behaviour in the long-run. Deputy Prime Minister Alexander De Croo (Open VLD/RE) rebutted the criticism on public radio and said to be very confident about citizens' respecting the rules. De Croo also blamed the press for "tricking people" by excessively focussing on the perceived gaps in the rules.

Whereas the Security Council had indicated earlier that trips to the coast would be allowed as of mid-May, yesterday's decision postponed this perspective to 8 June at the earliest. Ostend mayor Bart Tommelein (Open VLD/RE) was vocally disappointed and warned that local police would not be able to do anything against people not respecting this decision. On 11 May Flemish Tourism Minister Demir (NVA/ECR) will meet with all coastal town mayors to discuss coastal tourism. The Minister also announced to come up with an **overarching tourism plan** soon.

As of 11 May, the local police's so-called "corona checks" will be part of normal police operations. The local police umbrella organisation says "not to want to control society" and "to count on people's common sense". The police will shift focus to the ban on gathering, the wearing of masks on public transport and the rules regarding the reopening of the shops.

Police trade union VSOA complains that the Brussels police is unable to take sufficient action against young people who ignore the ban on gathering. According to the Union, "There have been riots in Brussels for some time now, which have been anxiously silenced. We cannot remain silent: our controls are being slowed down by certain politicians." The VSOA complaints have been **widely used and supported by far-right by Vlaams Belang (ID) on social media**.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Belgian Farmers' Union Boerenbond reports that due to the corona measures, fruit and vegetable growers may have to look for 20.000 seasonal workers in May. According to Boerenbond, some of the seasonal workers coming to Belgium by car are allowed to cross the border while others are not. Workers are also stopped at the RO and PL borders. While Boerenbond highly welcomes the EC's recommendation for seasonal workers, the Farmers' Union complains about "interferences on the line" in various countries.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

The [overview of Innovation in Flanders to combat COVID-19](#) by the Flemish Department for Economy, Science and Innovation could be envisaged as a basis for good stories or testimonials about the role of the EU and its added value in research.

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 58% (results from Motivation Barometer by Ghent University, 5 May; no national survey available)

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): yes

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): yes

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): yes

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): yes

Schools (closed/reopened/partially): closed

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): - 7.2% (EC Spring Forecast 2020, 6/5)

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): Public debt estimated to 113.8 % of GDP (EC Spring Forecast 2020, 6/5)

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 7% (EC Spring Forecast 2020, 6/5)



1,829 cases, 84 deaths (07/05)
1,776 cases, 84 deaths (06/05)
1,704 cases, 80 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 08 March 2020
Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 3.0% / 1829 / 263
Number tests done (absolute/per million): 52,931 / 7,614
Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 355 / 43
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 7,473 / 1,347
Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 0.0% / 84
Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 6.7% / 384
Quarantined people (total so far/currently): 118,753 / 22,879

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

The draft amendments to the Healthcare Act, which set out key measures after the end of the state of emergency on 13 May, were approved on a first reading by the Legal Committee of the parliament. Deputy Chairman of BSP Krum Zarkov (S&D) questioned the constitutionality of the amendments, which empower the Minister of Healthcare to declare an epidemic state of emergency at the suggestion of the Chief Health Inspector.

If more than 100 new COVID-19 infected patients are registered a day, the country will go back to previous restrictions, said Prime Minister Boyko Borissov (GERB/EPP).

HEALTH

Scientists from the Institute of Biology and Immunology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences have found a connection between the severe symptoms of Covid-19 and the overreaction of a molecular complex. This is a protein complex which activates not only in the immune system, but also in the respiratory tract and the blood vessel cells. The scientists found that it causes severe respiratory failure in some Covid-19 patients, because it is also activated in the alveolar cells of the lung.

One million facemask which Bulgarian government bought from a Chinese company are not suitable for medical personnel, media investigation claims. The masks - RZ95B, equivalent of FFP2 standard, were procured from Anhui RYZUR Medical Equipment Manufacturing Co., Ltd. According to US National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory tests, those masks provide less than half of the declared protection. **A Bulgarian truck driver died of Covid-19 as he was crossing Romania in transit**, after having been admitted in critical condition with bronchopneumonia in an emergency hospital in Arad County.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

The distribution of the first 244 packs of chloroquine produced by the state company "Bul Bio" will start today. The quantity is sufficient for the treatment of 2,500 people. The Military Medical Academy has already received the necessary quantities, announced its director who is also head of the National Crisis Management Staff. In his words, the production of the medicine is a success and gives the country independence from its import.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

The operation of the paid parking zones in Sofia was restored today. Schedules of public transport will gradually return to normal, first for trams and

trolleybuses passing through the city centre and, as of Monday, for the metro and the rest of the public transport. **The estimated loss of revenue from transportation and parking ticket sales in the capital was BGN 6.3mn in March and a little over 12 mn in April.**

More anti-pandemic measures have been introduced in the Roma neighbourhood in the city of Yambol with a decision of the regional medical council. The neighbourhood is under quarantine since 4 May. The new COVID-19 confirmed cases in the city are 20, their total number reaches 35. Traffic is allowed within the neighbourhood for the purchase of medicines and food. People who should go to work or are in need of medical care are allowed to exit the neighbourhood. It is mandatory to wear a mask or scarf inside the neighbourhood.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The government approved the transfer of around BGN 31mn from the "Science and Education for Intelligent Growth" Operational Programme (OP) to support social and economic measures dealing with the consequences of COVID-19. Close to BGN 29mn go to the "Human Resources" OP to help finance temporary employment schemes. BGN 2.15mn are transferred to the "Innovation and Competitiveness" OP to provide working capital and liquidity to SMEs. **The program will also receive BGN 134mn as a result of a redistribution between the Cohesion Funds and the ERDF.** On 11 May, a BGN 173mn programme for micro-enterprises will be launched with the support of this funding. The government is also developing a grant programme for larger enterprises with an estimated budget of over BGN 100 million, announced the Minister of Economy today.

Unemployment in 11 Bulgarian regions exceeded 10% in March, compared to an average level of 6.7% country-wide, data from the Employment Agency shows. The highest level was in Vidin (14.9%) percent, and the lowest – in Sofia-city (2.3%). There are 7 unemployed people per one job vacancy on average. 17.1% of the registered unemployed have higher education.

57% of Bulgarians have pessimistic expectations about the economic development over the next year, a survey by Trend shows. 31% think it will take more than a year to return to a normal lifestyle, and 9% say people this this would never happen. 68% of people would be worried to visit places where many people gather; 57% are reluctant to go to a restaurant or a cafe. 64% are worried about traveling abroad. At the same time, 59% say they are not worried about going to work and 48% are not worried to go to the sea this summer.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

73 Bulgarians, most of whom seasonal workers, who have been blocked at Charles de Gaulle Airport since 5 May, are on their way home. Despite having job contracts and accommodation addresses, they were denied entry by French authorities as they had no permanent residence in France, a requirement under current rules.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

The government approved BGN 2.4mn for research competitions for projects related to the diagnosis, prevention, treatment of COVID-19 patients, as well as forecasting, monitoring and prevention of its spread.

The Bulgarian government has granted EUR 328,000 in humanitarian aid to 12 partner countries from the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership and

the EU's southern neighbourhood. Part of the money will be used to buy medical supplies. The aid also includes packages of Bulgarian non-perishable foodstuffs.

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): From 13 March to 13 May

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 71% Alpha Research; 77%, Gallup; 73% Trend

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): yes

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): partially

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): partially

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): workers need a document to travel between cities

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): partially

Schools closed/reopened/partially): Closed

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -3% (Ministry of Finance, 31.03); -3.7% (World Bank, 09.04); -4.0% (IMF, 14.04); -7.8% (Unicredit Bulbank, 21.04); -5.1% (Fitch Ratings, 24.04); -7.2 (European Economic Forecast, Spring 2020, 06.05)

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -2.9% (Ministry of Finance, 31.03); -2.8 (European Economic Forecast, Spring 2020)

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): Current: 6.7% (Labour Agency, 15.04); Forecast end 2020: 6,2% (Ministry of Finance, 31.03); 8% (IMF, 14.04); 9% (Unicredit Bulbank, 21.04); 7% (European Economic Forecast, Spring 2020)



CY

997 cases, 19 deaths (07/05)
 991 cases, 19 deaths (06/05)
 986 cases, 19 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

A) TOTAL FOR THE WHOLE ISLAND

Note: As there are no official, verifiable data on the population of the Non-Government-Controlled Areas (see below), we cannot add the figures for (B) and (C) and calculate a "per million" figure for the whole island.

Date of the first case registered: 9 March 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): +6/997/...

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 93,992/...

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 20/5

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): *See separate reports for RoC and the NGCAs below.*

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 0/19

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 4/209

B) REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS *Population: 864 236*

Date of the first case registered: 9 March 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 6/889/1,028

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 76,206/88,177

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 19/5

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 114 beds in ICUs (data April 2020). A new ICU with 28 beds to become operational this week.

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 0/15

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 4/106

N.B. According to the method used in the Republic of Cyprus, deaths of patients positive to COVID-19 but who died of other causes are not included in the number of deaths from the virus. Thus, from a total of 21 patients who died and had tested positive to COVID-19 (with one more death recorded on 5 May 2020), 15 are determined to have died from this disease.

C) NON-GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AREAS (NGCAs)

The figure for the population in the NGCAs, 374,299, is based on data published by the "ministry of interior" in March 2019. This figure cannot be verified officially, and is given only for information purposes.

Date of the first case registered: 10 March 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 108 (-/108/288)

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 17,786/47,518

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 1/0

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 173 beds/54 ICU beds

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 0/4

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): -/103

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

The Ministers of Communication and of Tourism are working on finding ways of safely reopening the national airports, and on strategies to support tourism after the lift of the confinement measures.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

Upon the release of the European Commission Spring Forecast, the Finance Minister made statements that it is up to Cyprus to prove wrong the large recession that the Commission projects (7.4% in 2020 and a rebound of 6.1% in 2021). On 7 May, the government approved the National Reform Programme and the Stability Programme for Cyprus. These forecast a recession of 7% in 2020 (with an adverse scenario of around 13%) and there is no projection for 2021. This package includes also an amended version of the government guarantee measure to ease lending (of 3 months to 6 years), including amounts earmarked for very small enterprises and the self-employed, and additional amounts for SMEs and for large businesses. Moreover, a small support package of €5 million to the agricultural sector was adopted today, in response to Covid19 crisis.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

The Head of Representation have a radio interview on 6 May, on the EU's actions during the COVID-19 crisis, highlighting the "stronger together" message.

Following its first very successful TV and Radio campaign in mid-April, the Representation, in cooperation with the EPLO, launched a second awareness-raising campaign, to run between 6-15 May. The campaign consists of two TV spots: the first 30" spot focuses on what the EU is currently doing to address the COVID-19 crisis, ending with the two-fold message of *EU Solidarity* and *Together we are Stronger*. The second 24" TV spot is a 'Thank You' message, honouring the everyday heroes of the COVID-19 crisis. The Representation has also produced a 25" "thank you" radio spot. The two TV spots will be broadcast in total 215 times on all seven national TV channels. The Radio spot will be broadcast on the eight major island-wide radio channels including the top-ranking state radio broadcaster, in total, 413 times.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

A) Republic of Cyprus

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): No state of emergency, restrictions of movement in place.

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 74% support (source: poll published 3/5/2020), while 15% disagree and 4% "absolutely disagree".

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): No pending issue. Cyprus has been receiving medical supplies from third countries (e.g. China, United Arab Emirates).

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): Partially.

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): N/A. Commercial flights suspended since 21 March 2020.

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): N/A. Crossing points between the Republic of Cyprus and the Non-Government-Controlled Areas closed.

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): No.

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): Shops open, restaurants open only for delivery.

Schools closed/reopened/partially: Closed.

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -7.0%, 07 May 2020, Stability Programme Cyprus 2020-2023

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -4.3%, 07 May 2020, Stability Programme Cyprus 2020-2023

2020 Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication): 9.0%, 07 May 2020, National Reform Programme Cyprus 2020

B) Non-Government-Controlled Areas (NGCAs)

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): No state of emergency, restrictions of movement in place.

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): N/A. Media and social media indicates high support though.

	<p>Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): 54 ventilators available, 105 more will arrive in May and June. Turkey and the EU via the Aid Programme are providing medical equipment. Around 8000 tests kits are available.</p> <p>Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): Partially.</p> <p>Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): Yes, all commercial and charter flights are suspended at least until 15 May.</p> <p>Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): N/A. Crossing points between the Republic of Cyprus and the Non-Government-Controlled Areas closed</p> <p>External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): No</p> <p>Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): Partially.</p> <p>Schools closed/reopened/partially): Closed</p>
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7,979 cases, 263 deaths (07/05)
7,899 cases, 258 deaths (06/05)
7,841 cases, 252 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 1 March 2020
Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 80/7,979/745
Number tests done (absolute/per million): 286,821/26,008
Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 275/52
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 99,503/4,481
Deaths (including in old-age institutions): 263
Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 197/4,214

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

The Government is discussing how to legally implement the exit strategy (planned until 25/5) without declared state of emergency (approved by the Parliament only until 17/5) as the court recently clarified that large restrictions to freedoms can only be done in the state of emergency.

HEALTH

The highest incidence of infections reported in large cities with local outbreaks in regions bordering with Germany. Hence, **the national strategy moves to localized outbreaks and focuses on smart quarantine** (using CZ mobile app eRouška and location-sharing via Mapy.cz to create "memory maps", voluntary provision of data from mobile operators and banks and establishment of a call centre).

The Minister of Health Vojtěch (ANO-RE) announced 2nd fase of smart quarantine.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

As per our previous reports

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Health Minister supposes **obligation to wear facemasks to be lifted in mid-June** if the epidemic situation allows.

As of 25 May, **visits to hospitals and care homes are permitted** if hygiene rules maintained.

Health Ministry considers allowing **mass events with up to 500 people as of 25 May**.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The lower house of Parliament agreed to

- extend the suspension of the EET online sales-reporting system until the end of this year for all businesses;
- a subsidy for micro-companies ("limited liability") for the period of March 12 to June 8.. The fiscal cost is estimated at up to EUR 0,7 bn.
- allowing organizers of cultural events to postpone refunds of ticket sales until the end of next year, similar to the conditions for refunds of travel packages.

Companies complain about significant paperwork related to the Antivirus (Kurzarbeit) program.

According to a survey by the Czech School Inspection, about 15% of pupils and students of primary and lower-secondary schools are not involved in distance learning, and the share goes up to 20 % for students of upper-secondary schools without maturita school-leaving exams (mainly apprentice/VET schools).

The prolonged school lockdown affects women more than men and is likely to contribute to further widening the gender inequalities in the labour market - typically mothers who stay at home with children, often to the detriment of their careers. Moreover, the pandemic has hit mainly sectors with higher employment of women (hotel receptionists, tourist guides, hairdressers or physiotherapists). Finally, women returning from the parental leave often accept atypical short-term contracts which have

until recently not been covered by compensation measures. Single parents, usually women, are particularly vulnerable as the care benefit typically falls short of their normal net income.

Major banks posted 16-55 % lower net profit in the first quarter compared to a year ago. Česká spořitelna -20%, Komerční banka - 16.3%, UniCredit CZ/SK -54.5%.

Detailed data on April unemployment show that the increase (from 3 to 3.4%) is driven mainly by the hospitality and tourism sector and long-distance transport. The number of vacancies dropped by 9500 in April but still remains at 333 000 far above the number of unemployed (254 000). New demand has emerged for people working in agriculture, forestry, construction, logistics, e-commerce, drivers and software developers.

The Czech National Bank cut its main policy rate from 1 % to 0,25 %. The CNB will also issue its macreconomic forecast later today.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Czech and Slovak personalities called on the CZ and SK Governments in a letter to jointly open the borders between the two countries.

PM Babiš participated in a video call of 8 PMs organized by Sebastian Kurz on the topic of exit strategy, reopening of the economy and smart quarantine.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

- a) Local opportunities and possible missing messages
 - Critics of CZ effort to develop vaccine say the country should be more active in international cooperation (e.g. EU pledging conference) instead of isolated approach
 - Wide coverage of the results of nation-wide COVID testing.
- b) Positive stories, notably on intra-EU solidarity or good practices in communication
 - HOSPODARSKE daily, compares the support measures for business in CZ and DE, headlining „No extra burocracy. Germany really helps.“
- c) Critical or false narratives linked to EU
 - N/A

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): since 11 March until 17 May

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 83%, STEM public poll for Seznam Zpravy.cz, exit strategy 72%, Median for Czech Radio

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): NO

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): NO

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): REOPENED with conditions

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): Restrictions for business linked to measures on movement of persons that were eased but conditions remain.

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): Aligned with the EU rules.

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): PARTIALLY

Schools closed/reopened/partially): CLOSED

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -5.1 % GDP (Convergence Programme, 30.4.2020);

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 3.4% in April (registered unemployment, national sources, compared to 3% in March, published 4.5.2020); 2% in March (Eurostat, compared to 1.9 % in Feb 2020, published 30.4.2020)



DE

166.901 cases, 7,119 deaths (07/05)

164.807 cases, 6,996 deaths (06/05)

163,860 cases, 6,831 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 27 January 2020

Cases of infection: 166,091 (+1,284 from yesterday); 2,001 per million inhabitants

Number tests done: 2,815,000 (as of 30 April); 33,915 per million inhabitants

Hospitalisations: As of May 7 (DIVI Intensive care register) 1.791 patients in intensive medical care. Of these, 1.219 are ventilated (68.1%).

Hospital beds/ICU beds available: In total, there are 32.804 intensive care beds in Germany, 20,373 of which are occupied at the moment.

Deaths, including in old-age institutions: 7119 (+123 from yesterday)

Recoveries: 139,900 (+2,500 from yesterday; estimate of RKI)

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

Twelve members of the Bundestag and of the European Parliament have called on Federal Interior Minister Horst Seehofer to put an immediate end to the controls at Germany's borders. "... [T]here must be an end to barricade fences and barriers in the heart of Europe," according to the statement signed by former leader of the CDU/CSU (EPP) parliamentary group Volker Kauder and the group's vice president Andreas Jung. Borders to Switzerland, France and Luxembourg should be re-opened by 15 May the latest and Commission President von der Leyen should not extend the exemption for border controls beyond 15 May. This call comes against the background of articles in yesterday's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Handelsblatt* about **rising tensions at the Franco-German border**, which however do not mention any concrete incident.

According to media reports, **the Grand Coalition is considering changes to the electoral law to include the option of a pure postal vote.** This should allow the general elections to take place in autumn 2021 despite possible new waves of Covid-19 infections.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES:

Saskia Esken, co-chair of the SPD (S&D) – the junior partner in the governing coalition – **called yesterday's de-confinement decisions a "fatal signal to families"**, claiming, "there is willingness to present a concrete concept for the football league, but not for the education and care of children". Opposition parties criticize yesterday's decisions as well. The Greens (G-EFA) stressed the dangers of diverging rules across the Länder and called the debate a "vanity contest of Minister Presidents", **demanding a more uniform implementation of measures across the federal states.** Die Linke (GUE-NGL) warned that the easing of restrictive measures would lead to a second wave. The party also sharply argued against financial support for the automotive industry at this occasion. FDP (RE) states that the easing of measures comes too late and that the Government lacks a clear roadmap for economic recovery.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURE

Production in the manufacturing sector in March crashed by 9.2% compared with the previous month (-11.6% compared with March 2019). This is the strongest decline in industrial production since the beginning of the time series in January 1991. Particularly sharp was the slowdown in the automobile sector: -31.1% month-on-month. Also expectations for the next three months among producers, as measured by the ifo barometer, fell to their lowest value since reunification (-51.4 points in April).

The Ministry of Economic Affairs is working on a new instrument (*Härtefallfonds* or "hardship fund") to support sectors particularly hard hit by the crisis, such as travel agencies, trade fair operators, carnies, restaurateurs, cultural entities, etc. The fund targets companies with 10-250 employees, turnover losses of over 40% of the average turnover of the previous month and more than 60% of employees in short-time work. The grants from the fund should cover operational fixed costs according to a progressive scale: 25% of operational costs to be covered when turnover losses are between 40% and 60%, 50% of costs when losses are between 60% and 80% and 75% of costs when losses are more than 80%. Preliminary estimations pin the costs for the *Härtefallfonds* at EUR 15 billion.

Many consumers plan to change their behaviour after the pandemic abates, according to a representative survey by McKinsey. As long as there is no vaccine against the Corona virus, about one third of respondents plan to go less often to the cinema or concerts (26% even not at all), to travel less (29%) or not at all (27%) and to avoid public transport (40%). Almost 30% said they would spend less money on luxury products and 25% have become more price-sensitive because of the crisis. Accordingly, the German Hotel and Restaurant Association DEHOGA expects a drop in sales in the first few months after the lockdown due to the special conditions and restrictions.

A group of prominent economists from IW Cologne, DIW, Institute for Macroeconomics and Economic Research and Uni Mannheim are calling for a government investment programme to encourage digitisation and decarbonisation and expand the education system to cope with demographic change. The authors call for a corporate tax reform, fiscal support for municipalities, additional investment in healthcare and transportation, but are against tax increases.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

(a) *Local opportunities and possible missing messages*

(b) *Positive stories, notably on intra-EU solidarity or good practices in communication*

The German Federal Constitutional Court ruling regarding the Public Sector Purchase Programme continues to attract high media attention. While the first media reactions welcomed the ruling and framed it as "Karlsruhe pulling the emergency brake", reports are more differentiated now. Several media criticize the "frontal attack against the Court of Justice". They warn of immense political risks and regard the "unnecessarily sharp criticism as a steep template for populists".

(c) *Critical narratives about EU policies*

Negative reporting on Hungary being a major recipient of CRII continues, especially in social media.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other: No

Public support for the restrictions: A representative survey of the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (28 April) shows high support for travel restrictions (93% of respondents) and events cancellation (88%), while support for the closure of schools and day-care centres is diminishing (76% versus 94% end-March).

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): No

Movement restricted: partially (according to federal state)

Borders closed citizens: partially. Controls at internal borders remain until 15 May.

Internal border restrictions for business: No restrictions, borders remain open for the transport of goods and people, including delivery of services and commuting.

External border restrictions for business: In accordance with the decision of the European Council of 17 March 2020, no restrictions for business, borders remain open for the transport of goods and people, including delivery of services and commuting.

Shops, restaurants closed: as of 6.5. all shops are allowed to reopen under strict hygiene conditions; each Bundesland can decide on the exact date and specific conditions for the reopening of restaurants/catering/hotels.

Schools closed: Partially open

2020 GDP growth forecast: -6.3%, projections of the Federal Government from 29.4.2020

2020 deficit forecast: -7¼% of GDP, Stability Programme from 22.4.2020

Unemployment rate: 5.2% in March (Federal Employment Agency definition), 5.8% in the projection of the Federal Government from 29.4.2020

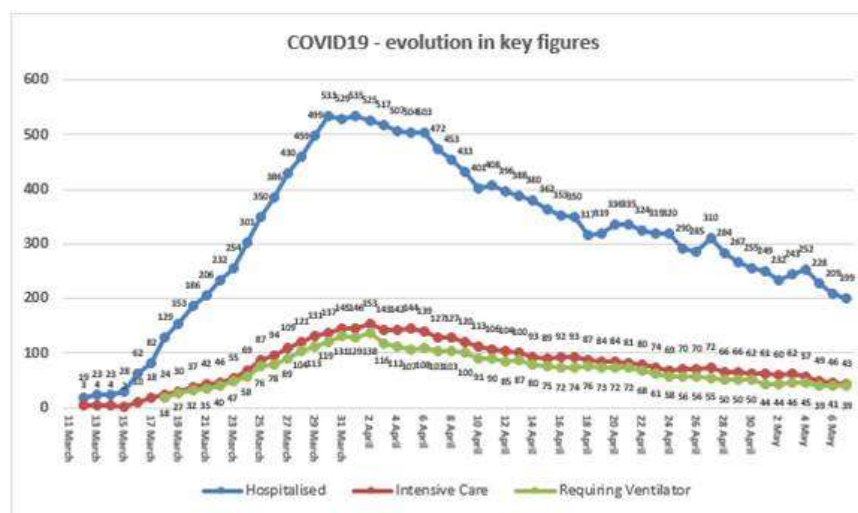


10,083 cases, 514 deaths (07/05)
 9 938 cases, 506 deaths (06/05)
 9 821 cases, 503 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 27 February 2020
Cases of infection (absolute/per million): 10 083 / 1 738
Number tests done (absolute/per million): 284 480 / 49 048
Hospitalisations (absolute/per million): 199 / 34
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 1 242 (20 March)
Deaths (including in old-age institutions): 514
Recoveries: 7 711

While the numbers of infected persons and fatalities continue to rise, the number of infected persons hospitalised has fallen again. The number of persons in intensive care and requiring respiratory assistance have also fallen. At 14.00 on 7 May: 10 083 infected (**up from 9 938 yesterday**), with 199 hospitalised (**down from 209 yesterday – the lowest level since 20 March**), of which 43 in intensive care (**down from 46 yesterday**). Of those, 39 are in need of respiratory support (**down from 41 yesterday**). The number of fatalities has risen to 514 (**up from 506 yesterday**). A total of 7 711 (**up from 7 493 yesterday**) have recovered from COVID19, with recovery defined as the absence of hospitalisation or death 14 days after confirmed infection. A total of 284 480 persons have now been tested (excluding tests still being analysed and inconclusive tests), **up from 270 680 yesterday**. In the Faroe Islands, 187 people have been found to be infected (**no new infections for weeks**), from among a total of 8 317 tested, and 185 have recovered (**same as yesterday**). In Greenland, the total number of infected is 11 (**same for weeks**), from among 1 362 tested, **all of whom have recovered**.



Source: National Health Authority

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

The Government is currently negotiating with all parties in Parliament the next steps in the gradual reopening of society. The current measures are applicable until Sunday 10 May. An agreement is currently expected tomorrow (8 May) at the latest. In the meantime, **a panel of prominent economists set up recently by the Government has tabled its recommendations on the way forward to gradually open up the Danish economy.** The recommendations come amid a tsunami of recommendations from business leaders and their organisations and will feed into the ongoing discussions in the Parliament between the Government and all the other parties. Already from the outset, the group stresses the importance of finding the right balance between the protection of human health and economic development.

The first perspective recommends opening up areas where the risk of contagion is the smallest. From the second perspective, the focus should be on opening up areas where the economic impact would be the greatest. Bluntly stated, the biggest effect on the (domestic services) economy happens to be those sectors where the risk of social proximity is the greatest. On the other side, opening up Danish travel restrictions will not per se have major economic effects, as long as other borders are closed. The same goes for exporting producers that depend on the opening up of export markets (and the functioning of the single market). Hence the need to closely coordinate with other countries. The group recommends that the Government open up subject to a principle of precaution – with a clear indication of the next steps if the development is positive. The conclusion from an economic point of view is that major shopping centres, restaurants and cafés should be next in line for opening, jointly with re-opening of schools and universities. This is also the official position of the Prime Minister in her ongoing discussions with the other parties.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The prominent think tank Kraka has jointly with its partner Deloitte (under the heading Small Great Nation) analysed the effects of the lockdown on the economies, as ripples on the water. The open Danish economy is particularly vulnerable to any trade barriers or lockdowns on its export markets, be it in the hugely important neighbouring countries or further overseas. In turn, the end-manufacturers depend on suppliers, which often are located across another border. Hence, any rebound of Danish manufacturing will depend to a great deal on the gradual opening up of the supply chains and customer supplies in other countries, within and outside the single market. The think tank also adds that the current lockdown – with a gradual opening-up currently under way – will have behavioural effects – the Danes can be expected to come back only gradually to the consumerism prevailing before the corona outbreak. Hence, the return of the economy to where it was only three months ago is to a great extent dependable on actions take abroad.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): Partial lockdown, until 10 May

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 71% (4 April, Epinion for Altinget)

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): No

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): No

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): Yes

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): No

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): No

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): Yes - restaurants, cafés, shopping centres. Some liberal professions have been allowed to work again since 20 April (hairdressers, tattoo parlours, driving schools).

Schools (closed/reopened/partially): First five grades of primary school and final year of high school have been returning to school since 15 April

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): between -3% and -9% in Government scenarios (6 May)

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): between 6% and 8% in Government scenarios (6 May)

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 3.7% in 2019, forecast to rise to between 4.6% and 5.4% in Government scenarios (6 May)



EE

1720 cases, 56 deaths (07/05)
1713 cases, 55 deaths (06/05)
1711 cases, 55 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES:

Date of the first case registered: 26 February 2020

Cases of infection: 1720 (+7) / 1295 per million

Number tests done: 60 530 (+1583) / 45 567 per million

Hospitalisations: 61 (-9) / 4 (0) ICU

Hospital beds/ICU beds available: 6850/350 ICU

Deaths: 56 (+1)

Recoveries: N/A (273 (+9) cases terminated)

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

To mark the passing of 75 years from the end of the II World War the presidents of the three Baltic States recall that the end of the war did not mark freedom to the nations of Central and Eastern Europe but replaced one totalitarian regime by another. They strongly condemn the falsifying interpretation of historical events and reject the concept of spheres of influence.

Estonia holds on to these messages also tomorrow, in the dedicated discussion within the UN Security Council held under the Estonian Presidency. Already 70 countries have signed up for the event, which will tackle the lessons of the post-war world, future challenges, current security situation and conflicts in Europe.

HEALTH

Number of hospitalised declined by 9 in the last 24h (currently 61 people), number of people needing ventilation stayed the same as yesterday (4). Compared to yesterday, 7 new COVID-19 cases were detected (0.4% of the 1583 performed tests), six in Tallinn and one in southeast Estonia. One person died.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

MEP Marina Kaljurand (Social Democratic Party, S&D) stated in her speech to the Estonian Parliament that the beginning of the crisis will go to history as a discredit of the EU. European Commission failed in its role of a coordinator and safeguarding the freedoms of the EU, in particular the free movement of goods. She also criticised the invisibility of Estonia's own Commissioner – Kadri Simson – in explaining the Commission's activities and discussions to fight the crisis. The real execution of the Commission's exit and recovery measures, as well as what remains of the EU's values such as solidarity, rule of law, democracy and human rights will show if the EU has managed to pull itself together or not.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

More than 2500 people have registered their residency on the Estonian islands since 13 March to gain travel rights to these regions, otherwise closed during the quarantine. According to Prime Minister Ratas (Centre Party, RE) this sudden though legal increase has made the Government's decision to open the islands first to residents (as of 4 May) and then to everyone else (as of 18 May) derisory, and thus the Government will discuss today the possibility to open the islands earlier than envisaged.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The number of foreign tourists staying in Estonian accommodation establishments decreased by 64% in March compared to March 2019 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the emergency situation the Estonian government declared mid-March. The largest share of foreign tourists, 35% came from Finland, 21% came from Russia and 9% from Latvia. In March, 908 accommodation establishments were available for tourists. The average cost of a guest night was 33 euros. Compared to March 2019, the cost was three euros lower.

The Estonian **Ministry of Finance issued €375 million worth of government bonds with a negative yield**. The treasury auctioned bonds worth €150 million for six months and €225 million for 12 months. The average yield to maturity on the former was -0,177% and on the latter -0,141%. LHV Bank purchased government bonds for

€200 million. The government bonds are eligible as collateral for the European Central Bank, thus guaranteeing high liquidity for the bank. The first short-term bonds were issued in spring 2019, current issuance was the fourth for Estonia.

Estonian **Chamber of Commerce calls for more flexible aid measures for small businesses.** According to the information available to the Chamber, no business organizations were involved in the design of the measures. The organization has turned to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications and Enterprise Estonia with regard to state support for partially covering losses of small entrepreneurs and businesses in the tourism sector. The Chamber also called for a more targeted and flexible aid measure for small entrepreneurs. With the target group of the measure being very large and the amount of support only totalling 10 million euros, the funds should above all be made available to businesses that are hit hardest by the crisis. The Chamber proposes that in order to be eligible for state support, a business should meet two out of the following three conditions - the size of revenue, the decrease during the crisis, and labour taxes paid to the state.

The sale of new cars dropped by 68% in April compared to April 2019. This negative outcome is comparable to the situation right after the last financial crisis in 2009.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Reinsalu (Pro Patria, EPP) said that Finland and Poland could also be included soon in the common free movement area of the Baltic countries agreed by the Baltic Prime Ministers yesterday. However, according to the Minister, Finland's view point at the moment is that, with the exception of labour migration, no further decisions regarding lifting of mobility restrictions will be made in the coming weeks. Labour migration between Estonia and Finland will resume from 14 May.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

ESO discussed yesterday's spring economic forecast in *radio Kuku* morning programme – which countries have been most hit by the pandemics, how is the situation in Estonia, when the recovery is expected. The forecast was factually covered in several newspapers today and was one of the main items of the evening news in the public news broadcasting and TV3 last night.

DG Hololei debated transport's role in the post-crisis world in *radio Kuku*. He stressed the fact that for tourism to regain its strength, transport, especially aviation is basically a precondition.

EDIC in Ida-Viru county published a special insert at today's local newspaper *Põhjarannik* about Europe day 2020, an interview with HoR about the Green Deal and the Just Transition Fund's conditions for Estonia and interview with two Estonian MEPs (Urmas Paet and Riho Terras, both in RE) how the Just Transition Fund could help Ida-Viru county and what are the problems with green transition in the region.

The Representation has done active work with the newspapers to draw attention to the Europe Day. As a result, weekly newspaper *Maaleht* published an editorial about EU's current challenges and calls upon celebrating Europe day and Schuman declaration 70 this weekend. Weekly youth newspaper *Postimees Juunior* dedicates two pages to explain the meaning of Europe day and how it is marked in Estonia. National Public Broadcasting is promoting quiz based TV show "Estonian game. Europe special", financed by the Representation that will be broadcasted as of today until May 9 in prime time. The Commissioner, three MEPs and many cultural figures and artists take part. The Russian version of the show with known Russian speaking Europe minded public figures is broadcasted in Russian language ETV+ in the prime time.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES:

State of emergency, quarantine or other: since 12 March until 17 May 2020

Public support for the restrictions: 54% (-6), Turu-Uuringute AS (29 April)

Medical supplies: nothing new to report.

	<p>Movement restricted: partially (people are recommended to move max. in pairs and keep 2 meters distance; exception: families)</p> <p>Borders closed citizens: yes (border with Latvia will reopen on 15 May)</p> <p>Internal border restrictions for business: partially (islands are closed for non-residents until 17 May inclusive)</p> <p>External border restrictions for business: no</p> <p>Shops, restaurants closed: partially (shops and restaurants in shopping malls are closed, other remain open)</p> <p>Schools: closed (gradual opening as of 15 May)</p> <p>2020 growth forecast: -8% (2 April, Ministry of Finance); -6.9% (6 May, European Commission)</p> <p>2020 deficit forecast: -10.1% nominal; -5.5% structural (2 April, Ministry of Finance); -8.3% nominal; -5.8% structural (6 May, European Commission)</p> <p>Unemployment rate: 48,822 unemployed; 7.5% registered unemployment rate (04 May, national sources)</p>
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2,678 cases, 148 deaths (07/05)
2,663 cases, 147 deaths (06/05)
2,642 cases, 146 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 26/2
Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 15/2,678/247.9
Number of tests done (absolute/per million): 90,043/8,337
Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): No figures available; 33 are reported as intubated
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 1,017 ICU beds available
Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 1/148
Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): no recent data available; 85 have been discharged from ICUs

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): Lockdown measures started easing on 4/5 (they were in force since 23/3, they will be lifted in stages)
Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 90%, opinion poll published on 15/4
Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): No
Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): Partially
Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): Partially (closed with Albania, North Macedonia, Turkey)
Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): No
External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): No
Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): Partially
Schools (closed/reopened/partially): Closed

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -4.7% (baseline scenario) to -7.9% (adverse scenario), Stability programme released by Ministry of Finance on 3/5 / 9.7%, EC forecast on 6/5
2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -1.9% (baseline scenario) to -2.8% (adverse scenario) - primary deficit, Stability programme released by Ministry of Finance on 3/5/ -6.4% - general government balance, EC forecast on 6/5

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 16.1%, February 2020 (Hellenic Statistical Authority)

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

In a video-conference of the "Smart Covid Management Group" with counterparts from seven countries (Austria, Denmark, Norway, Czech Republic, Israel, Singapore and Australia) that have successfully contained the first wave of the epidemic, Prime Minister Mitsotakis stressed the importance of cooperation between these countries and proposed a more systematic discussion **aiming to create "safe corridors" that will allow travelling**, on the basis of jointly agreed rules.

Minister for Tourism Harry Theorcharis said that if it is not possible to reach an agreement on a European health protocol, individual countries can move forward at their own risk. In this case, bilateral agreements will be the rule. However, the Minister said that **without a pan-European solution, there will be no significant recovery of the tourism sector in the long-term.**

Yiannis Retsos, head of SETE, the Greek tourism confederation, estimated that it will be difficult to have a pan-European agreement on the health protocols that are necessary to revamp tourism; according to Retsos bilateral agreements are more likely. He added that Greece is already in talks with Cyprus and Israel.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

Alternate Foreign Minister for EU Affairs Miltiadis Varvitsiotis said that the EU must react convincingly and bravely to tackle the Covid-19 crisis. "Our response must be

swift, decisive and flexible," he said. He noted, however, that as seen in yesterday's teleconference on the Western Balkans, there is stagnation, with no convergence between the North and the South. There is still no legal tool in place on how the EU's financial aid will be paid, what form this will have and the resources that will be used, he said. He added that there is also no clarity on issues relating to air transport (health protocols, passenger compensation). However, he said it is certain that Greece will not accept visitors from third countries before 15 June, since the Commission is expected to extend the closure of its external borders.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

According to employment data from the ERGANI database managed by the Ministry of Employment, figures for April show that recruitment decreased by 82% (7,205 new jobs were created) while redundancies increased by 76% (171,286 redundancies) compared to April 2019.

The Minister of Culture, Lina Mendoni, announced the retroactive extension of a special compensation of €800 to artists and workers in the field of culture.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

According to a public opinion survey (Marlab Laboratory of the University of Macedonia, PAMAK) about half of Greeks are wary of incoming tourism and the opening of borders to all tourists. More specifically, 49.4% of respondents disagree with the opening of borders to all tourists. In terms of measures, there is strong support (93.7% in favour) of strict controls at the airport/borders while there is also strong support (74.2% in favour) of establishing a special certificate/health passport for Covid-19.



ES

221,447 cases, 26,070 deaths (07/05)
 220,325 cases, 25,857 deaths (06/05)
 219,329 cases, 25,613 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 31 January 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 754 / 221,447 / 4,711 (The figure reflects ONLY the cases checked with PCR tests).

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 1,035,522 / 1.03 (These are only the PCR tests. Source OCDE, 28/04/20); the Government now claims close to 2 million tests performed (03/05/20)

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 121,014 / 11,140 (These figures reflect ALL the cases that have required hospitalization. There are two regions (Madrid and Galicia) with different counting methods, so they are likely to be higher, particularly in Madrid).

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 157,572 / 4,627 (These are official figures in absolute terms before the crisis. ICU beds have been increased to approx. 8,100 via provisional and campaign hospitals (estimate, no official figures available)

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 213 / 26,070

Recoveries: 128,511

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

Ciudadanos' (RE) decision to support the Government in the extension of the state of alarm did not only make the headlines, but has unchained a series of reactions. First, within the liberal party with a number of resignations from members from the party's right wing side and at the same time the rejoicing of more centre-left members who could not understand why the party had repeatedly closed the doors to reaching agreements with the Socialists (S&D). Second, PSOE's (S&D) ally, Catalan separatist ERC (Greens) has threatened the Government with withdrawing its support if this understanding with Ciudadanos (RE) continues. Third, the decision is regarded with some concern by a number of regional governments, where there are coalition agreements between Ciudadanos (RE) and PP (EPP). First VP Calvo (S&D) has said that the Government can change of allies, since it is a "progressive" Government. Ciudadanos' (RE) leaders also explained that this is just a vote, not an investiture vote.

The loser of this political episode seems to be PP (EPP), whose failed attempt to increase pressure and cause some embarrassment to the Government ended up being nothing. The party's abstention was absolutely anecdotic and its ambiguity contrasts with the explicit rejection and direct confrontation showed by far-right VOX (ECR). The leadership in the opposition could be at stake in the near future.

HEALTH

The number of daily deaths decreases from 244 to 213. Cases diagnosed have increased by 0.34%, and despite the slight increase with respect to yesterday, the country continues a very positive trend. The total number of infected in Spain (including PCR and antibodies test) is 256,855. Madrid and Catalonia continue on the top. **Health practitioners continue to be the worst hit group**, more than 1,100 new cases are reported today, out of a total of 45,924 cases

The number of recoveries continues growing by over 2,000 per day.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Yesterday, regional governments presented their requests to the Government for the transition from phase 0 to phase 1 of de-confinement as of 11 May for those areas (health districts) that meet the health criteria and show capacity to contain a possible rebound. A majority of regions have asked to move to phase 1. Despite being at the top in number of cases, Madrid has asked to move on to the next phase, while Catalonia has opted to continue in phase cero for the majority of its territory.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

The President of Valencia region, Ximo Puig (S&D) is pleading for a "Common European Protocol" to certify "safe destinations" to attract international tourists. He will be meeting (virtually) VP Timmermans this week and he will most likely make this suggestion.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

While AIREF (the Independent Fiscal Authority) generally endorses the government's macroeconomic scenario presented in the Stability Plan (as reported yesterday), their President, Cristina Herrero, has expressed **concerns about the fiscal forecasts of the Stability Program**. She has signalled that the fiscal projections "do not seem fully consistent with the macroeconomic scenario" and the concerns relate in particular the revenue projections. In the Stability Programme, revenue is projected to amount to 41.2% of GDP in 2020, while AIREF forecast it to reach 39.5%/39.4% depending on the scenario. (Note: COM 39.6%). Moreover, she notes that the Government estimate VAT revenue to fall by 5.2%, while private consumption is expected to fall by 10.2%, and private income tax revenue is only set to fall by 2.4%.

IAG (International Airline Group), the owner of Iberia, Vueling and British Airways etc., has reported to the market regulator (CNMV) a **net loss of EUR 1.683 million in the first quarter** 2020. They have also announced a **reconstruction**. The bulk of this loss can be referred to the two last weeks of March and is linked to the corona crisis. The result can be compared with a EUR 70 million profit during the same period last year. While income fell by 13.4% in the first quarter, the main loss is linked to the fuel price and exchange rate hedges realised before the collapse of oil price (EUR 1.325 million). The group has embarked on a strategy of reducing operative costs and reducing investments. To ensure liquidity Iberia and Vueling have obtained EUR 1.010 million in credits guarantees from ICO. The group is also benefiting from support provided in the UK, while British Airways has already announced a reduction of the workforce by 12.000 persons.

According to Gerardo Cuerva, President for the Spanish Confederation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (Cepyme), **Spanish companies need additional short-term financing worth EUR 200.000 million**. The need for additional liquidity is generalized by differs markedly by sector. He stresses that the current package of guarantees of EUR 100.000 million is not sufficient and new complementary measures should be considered to support businesses. The viability of many firms depends on liquidity and without additional support their survival will be at risk, even in case of restructuring. He also urges to extend the validity of ERTes, to facilitate the reintegration of workers in line with reactivation; and additional measures such as tax deferrals, streamlining of VAT refunds etc. Finally, he considers it necessary provide automated ICO credits of around EUR 50.000 for SMEs in difficulty.

Funcas (Foundation of savings banks) forecast that the Spanish economy will not recover its pre-pandemic levels until 2023. More specifically, Raymond Torres, Director for macroeconomic analysis, expects the economy to contract by 20% in the first half of 2020, before recovering and translating into a **contraction of the economy by 7% for the full year. It will thereafter rebound by 5.4% in 2021**. The same path is forecast for unemployment, with the unemployment rate increasing to 19% in 2020 and to recovering very slowly in 2021 to 17%. According to Torres, policy action should to focus around three axis to minimize the impact of crisis and support economic recovery: First, a cascade closure of companies and small businesses should be avoided through liquidity support and tax moratoriums etc. Second, it is necessary to limit layoffs, buy promoting ERTes and other formulas to protect jobs. Third, boosting in public demand.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

All media are reporting on the negative outlook of the EU and Spanish economy for 2020 in the Commission spring forecast.

Interview by Commissioner Gentiloni in La Vanguardia (not managed by the Representation) on economic forecasts, recovery plan and much more:
<https://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20200506/481005397787/paolo-gentiloni-economia-coronavirus-crisis-europa-recuperacion.html>

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): 14 March / 23 May

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 46.5% of Spaniards with strong or reasonable confidence in the Government's crisis response, against 47.8% with little or no confidence (CIS survey, published 15/04)

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): yes, still in great need of PPE, tests and respiratory equipment

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): Yes. Since 2 May: a timetable establishes when adults (6-10.00h and 20-23.00h), one adult with up to three of his/her children (12-19.00h) and elderly (over 65 years) (10-12.00h and 19-20.00h) can go out.

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): yes

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): Partially. As of 4 May, shops up to 400 m2 can open. As of phase 1 (differentiated according to province/region), restaurants can open with a limit of 50% occupation rate.

Schools closed/reopened/partially): closed

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -9.2% (Government Stability Plan 1/05); -8% (IMF WEO 14/04); between -6.6% and -13.6% (Bank of Spain, 20/04); -8% (BBVA, 21/04); -7% (Funcas, savings bank think tank, 23/04); -8.9% AFI 05/05), -9.4% European Commission Spring Forecast

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -10.3% (Government Stability Plan 1/05); -9.5% (IMF WEO 14/04); -10.8% (BBVA, 21/04), -10.1% (Funcas, savings bank think tank, 23/04); -10% AFI (05/05), -10.1% European Commission Spring Forecast.

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 19% (Government Stability Plan 1/05); 20.8% (IMF WEO 14/04); 21% (Bank of Spain, 20/04), 20.5% (BBVA, 21/4), 18.9% European Commission Spring Forecast.



FI

5,673 cases, 255 deaths (07/05)

5,573 cases, 252 deaths (06/05)

5,412 cases, 246 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 29 January 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): **100/5 673/1**

023

Number tests done (absolute/per million): **112 100/20 223**

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): **174/44**

Hospital beds/of those ICU (absolute values): 11 000/450

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): **3/255**

Recoveries (absolute): around 3 500, not reported on a daily basis, latest report on 4.5.

HEALTH

There have been **much more drowning accidents this spring than usual**. This is believed to be a **consequence of the corona situation**, which has led to that more people have spent much more time outdoors and taken walks on bad ices.

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

The Opposition parties say that the Government's exit strategy is unclear.

They demand a more precise strategy, which is clearly explained to the people. It would be easier for the people to respect any restrictions, if the strategy and the objectives were clearly explained, they argue.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The terms of **restaurant and bar reopening from 1 June** are in the headlines. Restaurateurs are worried that continuing uncertainty has left the sector unable to plan a restart of services. The government has outlined €123 m support package for restaurant industry and workers **but the details of conditions for reopening are still left open.**

Experienced Finnish economists call for extensive fiscal policy measures and increased solidarity to revive crisis-stricken economies in Europe. At the same time, they **warn against leaving Italy alone to wrestle with its economic problems**. According to Dr. Antti Suvanto, a former adviser to the Board of the Bank of Finland, it is **useless to imagine that Finland would be safe if Italy collapsed**. If the EU disintegrates, then no one will pay anyone's debts and solidarity will be realized in such a way that everyone will lose a lot. Also Dr. Sixten Korkman, senior economist and former Director-General in the Council of the EU, points out that an acute debt crisis in Italy would lead to major problems throughout Europe. He calls helping Italy 'enlightened selfishness'.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

Finnish Broadcasting Company Yle runs an article asking the public to send questions to **Commissioner Urpilainen**, who **will be interviewed at Yle morning programme on Europe Day** about EU actions on corona crisis, economic implications of the crisis to the EU and situation in Africa.

CROSS BORDER ISSUES

Work related commuting will not have to be explained at the border from 14 May. Home quarantine of 14 days will still apply, but moving between the home and the workplace will be allowed.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): State of emergency since 13 March 2020

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 73 %, Kantar TNS Agri, 4 May 2020

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): restrictions on selling more than one month's consumption of salbutamol products

	<p>Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): not for the moment, but all citizens are strongly recommended not to travel, nor to go to their summer cottages in another region</p> <p>Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): yes, but work commuting allowed in the north between Finland and Sweden/Norway, work commuting over other borders from 14 May</p> <p>Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no</p> <p>External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no</p> <p>Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): restaurants closed (take-away possible) to end of May, reopening with restrictions from 1 June; shops open</p> <p>Schools (closed/reopened/partially): closed from 4th grade, distance education apply, all schools will reopen on 14 May, with some restrictions within the schools; secondary level education will most probably continue through distance learning</p> <p>2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): 1.5 %, ECFIN, December 2019</p> <p>2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): 5.5 %, Ministry of Finance, 16 April 2020; 6.3 %, EU Commission, 6 May 2020</p> <p>Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): forecast for 2020: 8 %, Ministry of Finance, 16 April 2020; 8.3 % EU Commission, 6 May 2020</p>
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137,150 cases, 25,809 deaths (06/05)
132,967 cases, 24,775 deaths (05/05)
131,863 cases, 25,201 deaths (04/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES (last update on 6 May), Source: www.gouvernement.fr

Date of the first case registered: **28 January 2020**

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): **+4183 / 137,150 / 2047 per million**

Number tests done (absolute/per million): according to the French Minister of Health, France performs 270,000 tests a week / roughly 4,029 per million. (38,571 tests per day, 575 per million people and per day). **The PM and Health Minister announced that from 11 May, 700,000 virological tests would be done each week.**

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): **23983 (-792)/ 3,147 (-283)**

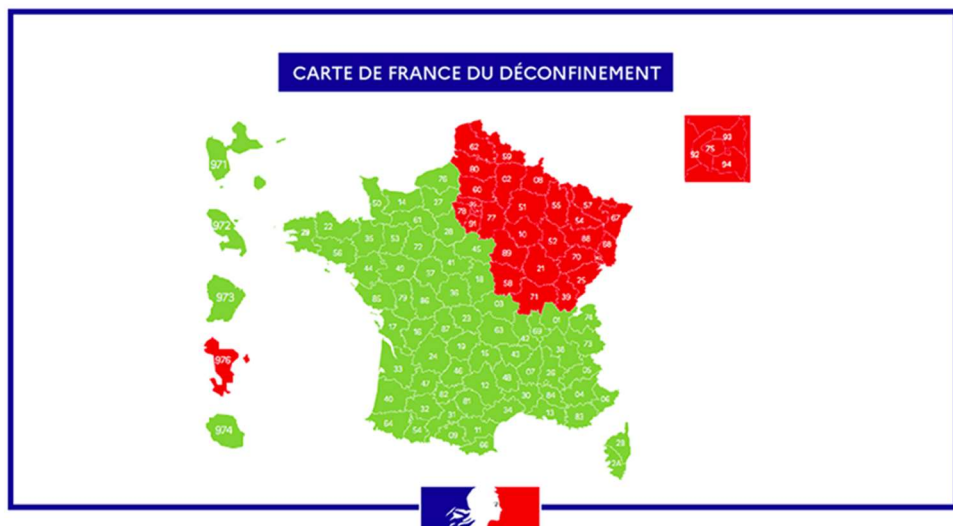
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): hospitals beds: source INSEE report 2019/data 2016: **404,248** for public and private hospitals together – ICU beds : source Santé Publique: are said to **have raised from 5,000 to 10,000, with the objective to get to 14,500 ICU**

Deaths (including in old-age institutions - daily increase/absolute): **+ 278/ 25,809**

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): **+ 1236/ 53,972**

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

PM Edouard Philippe has confirmed, this afternoon, that France will experience a progressive de-containment from Monday onwards. Yet, Ile-de-France, Hauts-de-France, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, Grand-Est stay in red (it means that, in these areas, vigilance must remain high : parks and gardens will stay closed and secondary schools will not reopen). De-confinement in Mayotte is delayed as the number of infected people is on a rising trend.



HEALTH

Olivier Veran, Minister for Health, confirmed that from next Monday 11 May, a massive testing campaign of all persons having COVID19 symptoms will be launched across the country with a volume of about 700.000 tests weekly.

A special bonus of 1000€ to 1500€ will be paid to all caring professionals working in homes for the elderly.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

The virtual events on the 9 May across the EU will be a good opportunity to stress the importance of solidarity between Europeans and show that the EU is with the people, businesses, researchers, health care professionals and also the tourism sector, so to create the best conditions for a new and safe start!

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

No certificate will be needed from 11th May to move except if the distance is more than 100 KM and the destination is in another department. In the later cases, moves will be authorized only for family emergency or professional reasons to be justified with a new certificate.

Green departments may consider other step such as the reopening of secondary schools from 18 May and, after 3 weeks from 11th May, possibly pubs and restaurants and other schools, if all necessary protection measures are met. Lockdown will not be compulsory for vulnerable people but is strongly encouraged. In the "green" departments, not only parks and garden will be open but on request by the mayor, the Préfet (State representative) can authorize the access to beaches and lakes if the necessary measures are met.

In Ile-De-France, all passengers of public transport will have to wear a mask, capacities of transport will be increase (RATP from 30 now to 75% on Monday) but with a maximum occupation rate at any time of from 6 to 15 % to preserve social distancing in the trains. Transports between regions will still remain limited to 20-30% of the capacities.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

B. Le Maire, Minister of Economy and Finances, announced today that on Monday, 400.000 businesses will reopen and 877.000 workers will go back to their workplaces.

M. Penicaud, Minister for labour, announced that new guidelines will be published to encourage telework in businesses where they don't yet use it, in particular in Ile-De-france where telework can decrease the pressure on public transports. All measures for getting back to work will be discussed with the social partners. Occupational training will also restart progressively. The Minister asked the employers to organise the working time in such a way that workers avoid using public transports during the high traffic periods.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

The current limitations to cross border movements with other Member States will remain until 15 June. Measures of quarantine will be possible but not applied for people coming from other EU member States.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

According to a survey carried out by Elabe, the European Union image in France appears a little more degraded by the crisis. Only 20% of French people think the EU has met the challenge of the crisis, and more than half of them call for sustainable border controls. The study also notes a very strong

desire to relocate production to France in the fields of health, food and technology.

There is still mounting polemic over Discovery, its usefulness, and the lack of cooperation. The results of the survey will be available within ten days.

Commission economic forecasts are depicted as rather gloomy which makes the recovery plan an urgency notably to tackle the asymmetry between Member States.

The humanitarian mission of Commissioner Lenarcic from Lyon to Bangui tomorrow will be well covered by French media, with the support of the Representation, and will be displayed during the 9th May virtual event dedicated to EU Solidarity.



HR

2,125 cases, 86 fatalities (7/05)

2,119 cases, 85 fatalities (6/05)

2,112 cases, 83 fatalities (5/05)

KEY DATA and FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 25 February 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): **+6 / 2,125 / 518 (or 97 if you exclude recovered and deceased)**

Number tests done (absolute/per million): **41,938 / 10,228**

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): **195 / 13**

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 14,460 / 795 (additional capacity can be created if necessary)

(including in old-age institutions - daily increase/absolute): not available

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): **+40 / 1,641**

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

After the virtual Zagreb Summit held on Wednesday, Prime Minister Plenković stated that the EU has sent a strong message to Western Balkan countries, namely that they have an unequivocal European perspective and that their future is in the EU.

MP Hrvoje Zekanović of the Croatian Sovereignists (ECR) questioned how Croatian expatriates would vote in the coming parliamentary elections if restrictions related to COVID-19 were to remain in force. He thus proposed the introduction of electronic or postal voting in order to keep elections fair

MP Anka Mrak Taritaš of the GLAS party (RE) criticised Minister of Culture Nina Obuljen Koržinek of failing to enable cultural workers to continue working given the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, wondering if she was the minister of culture or of religious affairs given her comments on why religious service can be attended while cultural institutions remain closed.

In anticipation of the dissolution of parliament and possible elections in July, opposition parties said they were prepared for the election but noted that the election would be fair and regular until such time that the freedom of movement and public assembly was allowed.

HEALTH

Stable trend of number of recovered significantly higher than the number of new cases.

Croatian scientist Ivica Đikić and his team at the Institute of Biochemistry II (IBC2) in Frankfurt have discovered a potential weak spot of the novel coronavirus which might enable a two-pronged therapeutic strategy - stemming the spread of the virus and boosting the immunological response.

Đikić noted that this discovery was a great step towards finding a cure against COVID-19.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Passenger rail transport will resume as of May 11 as part of the third phase of relaxation of restrictions imposed to stem the spread of COVID-19.

Children's ombudswoman Helenca Pirnat Dragičević recommended that the Education Ministry and the Education Agency consider a petition by parents asking that the decision to cancel all school competitions be withdrawn and alternative solutions for their organisation be found.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The Government is discussing budget revisions today. **Revenues will drop to around HRK 122 billion (EUR 16.5 billion) which will create a gap of around HRK 23-25 billion (EUR 3.1-3.3 billion). Finance Minister Marić noted that for the first time in history Croatia experienced negative tax revenues,** i.e. the state returned more taxes than it collected. However, Marić added that the Government has managed to keep expenditures as originally planned, among others with the help of the EU and the reallocation of projects from EU funds.

The government has endorsed the implementation of activities from the Action Plan for joining ERM II and the banking union, bringing Croatia one step further to joining the Eurozone. Prime Minister Plenković used the situation to state that countries that have the Euro are more resilient and better equipped to handle the current crisis.

The Croatian Chamber of Commerce (HGK) reported that it will take five years for the Croatian trade sector to recover from the crisis caused by COVID-19. HGK vice-president Josip Zaher noted that retail trade had dropped by 25% in April. Hardest hit were big shops.

Eurostat reports that, in March 2020, the introduced COVID-19 containment measures in Member States caused a sudden drop in retail trade across the EU. Croatia recorded a decrease of 8.5% and the volume of retail trade dropped 5.1% annually after a 3.4% rise in February 2020.

The business sector is calling for more support measures. The Voice of Entrepreneurs association (HUP) called for a moratorium of up to 18 months on leasing contracts for transport operators such as charter companies, rent-a-car outlets and travel agencies, stressing that they are on the brink of ruin due to the coronavirus crisis and costs of leasing. HUP also called on the government to suspend technical checks on vehicles for the duration of the epidemic and to extend its wage support measures for an additional three months and. The latter is also demanded by the association of hoteliers with the Croatian Chamber of Commerce (HGK). HGK also urges to open the country's borders. The tourism sector would be the country's biggest loser in the current crisis with the recovery taking up to a year if borders remain closed.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

(a) Local opportunities and possible missing messages

EC REP steps its proactive communication activities on social and traditional media.

(b) Positive stories, notably on intra-EU solidarity or good practices in communication

Extensive media follow-up on yesterday's publication of EC spring economic forecast, reporting that Croatia will be among the five EU member states whose economic activity is expected to return to the Q4 2019 levels by the end of next year and. A historic economic drop expects the bloc due to the coronavirus pandemic, media relayed Commissioner Gentiloni's statement, with a rebound of 6.1% in the EU and 6.3% expected in the Eurozone in 2021. How well countries emerge from this crisis will depend on how severely they have been hit by the pandemic, as well as the stringency of their containment measures, Commissioner said. It will also depend on their

openness and how much their economies rely on worst-hit industries. "The Croatian economy entered the Covid-19 crisis in a much better condition than in the 2008 crisis," says the Commission's report while noting that it should recover fast during 2021. According to the Commission's forecast, Croatian economy will grow 7.5% during 2021, while its public debt will rise from 73.2% to 88.6%. Croatian Minister of Finance Zdravko Marić said the Commission's forecast was very similar to the government's projections, adding that the recession will be reflected in Croatia's budget which has to make sure the economic recovery is as fast as possible.

(c) Critical narratives about EU policies

Commentary in business daily, Poslovni Dnevnik calls on the EU to take stronger action to protect milk and dairy producers which are facing reduced consumption due to the coronavirus crisis. Croatia faces a shortage of milk on the market and the Commission's financial support for stockpiling powdered milk, mostly used by other Member States, will depreciate the price of locally produced milk, worsening the impact of the pandemic on HR dairy producers. Therefore, the dairy committee of the Croatian Chamber of Agriculture has asked the relevant Ministry to reallocate funds meant for stockpiling dairy products towards primary dairy producers. It has also requested the ban on milk import until local quantities are bought.

Critical tones on the **Zagreb Declaration**, adopted at the **EU-Western Balkans Zagreb Summit**, not mentioning enlargement but rather talks about "affirming the European perspective of the region" and the six countries who are all hoping to join the EU, can still be heard in the media today. The declaration pledged mutual EU-Western Balkans support and solidarity during the Covid-19 crisis and its socio-economic consequences. "The Western Balkans belongs in the EU and for us, there is no question about it. This is why I believe the European Union has a special responsibility in assisting its partners in the region. This is particularly true regarding the impact of the coronavirus," media relayed President von der Leyen's statement. Meanwhile, Večernji list pointed out that Macedonians were extremely disappointed for not getting a date for the official opening of the enlargement negotiations. This will harm EU's public perception as they have done "everything" it was asked from them, in return they did not get what was promised.

Commentaries do not agree on whether the Summit was a success or not: On the one hand, some note that despite all the problems that happened during its EU presidency, it succeeded in its tasks of keeping Western Balkans in the EU's focus and reaffirming this region's European perspective. The latter was important as some Balkan countries started to turn its back to the uninterested Brussels, and the active involvement of the US was a signal for the EU to engage additionally. On the other hand, others argue that due to sceptical Member States are the greatest disappointment and the omission of the Council's positive decision on opening accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania was from the declaration.

A commentary in Globus **criticized Europe's lack of preparedness for the pandemic**. The author warns that a fundamental change is needed in the EU, which has become almost dependent on predictability, processes and procedures, as well as on global supply chains. **For years, the EU has been described as a "payer and not a player", and this needs to change**, reads the commentary.

(d) False narratives related to EU action

OTHER KEY DATA and FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): restricted movement and commercial operations gradually introduced since 16 March until 4 May

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 87% support for Government measures

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): no

	<p>Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): partially (restricted to place of residence)</p> <p>Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): partially</p> <p>Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): yes, closure of non-essential services; construction material retail shops open in Zagreb (following the earthquake)</p> <p>External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no</p> <p>Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): Shops (except those in shopping centres) and Pharmacies open, restaurants operating under restricted measures (delivery), open-air farmers and fish markets open under social distancing</p> <p>Schools closed/reopened/partially): closed</p> <p>2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): - 9.4% (National Reform Programme, 30 April) / -10.5% (UniCredit, 15 April) / -9% (IMF, 14 April)</p> <p>2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): 6.8% of GDP (National Reform Programme, 30 April) / 6.1% of GDP (UniCredit ZABA, 15 April)</p> <p>Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 8.6%, 20 April, Croatian Bureau of Statistics.</p>
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3150 cases, 383 deaths (07/05)
3111 cases, 373 deaths (06/05)
3065 cases, 363 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: **4 March**

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): **39/3150/328** (confirmed cases, Gov't underlines that actual number can be considerably higher)

Number tests done (absolute/per million): **94036/ 9795**

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): **968 / 50**

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): **66000** (50+% freed up for COVID patients) / **cca. 2000** (growing along with arriving supplies)

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): **10 / 383**

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute) **42/801**

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

PM Orbán had talks with US President Donald Trump yesterday about three main issues: border control, coronavirus prevention and tackling the impacts of the epidemic.

The opposition parties represented in Parliament decided to turn to the Constitutional Court for a constitutional review of a government decision to deprive municipalities of vehicle tax revenues which was taken under the emergency empowerment legislation.

State Secretary László György stated that the most important lesson of the coronavirus pandemic was the strengthening of the patriotic economic policy in Europe, which is beneficial from an economic perspective and very important in crisis time and which was hindered by the EU until the current pandemic.

HEALTH

The number of **new infections continues to decline** with still the majority of active infections and death in Budapest and Pest county.

A **US-based Hungarian immunologist has developed a medication** he says could prevent the cytokine storm, an overreaction of the immune system.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Phase 2 of containment measures entered into force on 4 May. Current restrictions remained in place in Budapest + Pest County but several restrictions lifted in the rest of the country. Schools to remain closed at least until 2 June. Higher education institutions outside Budapest and Pest County may start but most rectors decided to keep distant teaching.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

State Secretary László György in an interview clarified (in line with the HU Convergence Programme) that further details of economic support measures of close to 2% of GDP are expected in the (near) future. Importantly, as acknowledged by the state secretary, these prospective steps partly overlap with the refocus and use of the EU-funds not yet committed. That is, the Hungarian government also uses the flexibility provided for in the cohesion policy by the commission as a response to the corona virus pandemic.

According to information said at the Govt's weekly press point, the EUR 1.7 bn guarantee programme of the economic action plan was oversubscribed, hence that programme is likely to receive additional funding.

It was also said that more than 80% of the applications to the supported short term work schemes stem from the micro and small companies. So far 3000

companies received the support, which means 44000 jobs saved according to data cited at the Govt's weekly press point.

Minister of Agriculture asked the European Commissioner for Trade Phil Hogan for an urgent EC review of poultry import conditions from third countries in order to minimise the negative impact of the novel coronavirus epidemic in the sector.

According to newly released data of the Central Statistical Office (KSH), guest nights at commercial accommodations dropped by 64.6 percent year-on-year in March because of the lockdown. The tourism's sector recovery is expected in the middle of the summer mainly supported by domestic tourism.

At the same time, according to national statistics (KSH), retail sales grew by 4.4% (by 3.5% adjusted for calendar days effect) in March compared to 2019 March, slowing from a 10.9% increase in February.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Timeframe for international freight transit extended: allowed between 20h-12h as of this week.

Freight traffic is smooth, some congestions in direction to and from RO (1-2hrs)

Travel to HU is allowed as of 1 May for CZ, PL, DE, AT, SK and South Korean businesspeople without 14 days of quarantine. The measure also applies to HU citizens who have made business trips to the six countries listed if they are employees of domestic firms or of CZ, PL, Korean, DE, AT or SK companies with business ties with another company registered in at least one of those six states.

As of 7 May, citizens of neighbouring countries working in the agricultural sectors can also enter Hungary, in groups at designated BCPs (Government Decree 185/2020 (V.6)). Those who are citizens of non-EEA countries must be in possession of a work contract.

COMMUNICATION ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES

The REP's pro-active communication material on EU action and myth-busting is well-received in social media and by press sources. The Rep regularly gives interviews and holds media background discussions online to explain the EU's response to the crisis.

Government officials emphasise the need for official consultations before Commission presents new MFF proposal.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): **"state of danger" since 11 March, partial curfew since 28 March (both for indefinite periods), the latter eased outside Budapest and Pest County as of 4 May.**

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): **76%** (3 May, by pro-Government Nézőpont Intézet)

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): **Officially, there are no shortages** in medical supplies. Medical equipment (ventilators, masks, tests, protective clothing, drugs) is being continuously imported.

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): **partially (no restriction outside Budapest and Pest County as of 4 May)**

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): **partially (closed, except for HU and resident EEA citizens as well as regular cross-border commuters, businessmen from CZ, PL, DE, AT, SK South Korea and citizens of neighbouring countries working in the agricultural sector)**

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): **no**

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): **no** (export restriction on certain medications)

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): **partially** (non-essential shops closed after 3 PM, restaurants only open for takeaway - **but measures partially lifted outside Budapest and Pest County as of 4 May)**

Schools (closed/reopened/partially): **closed until 2 June** (municipalities obliged to provide again limited pre-school child care services as of 30 April).

	<p>2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -4.5% estimated by Finance Minister on 25 April, -3 % according to the Convergence Programme (May, 2020); -7% (Spring forecast)</p> <p>2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): deficit 3.8 % - Convergence Programme (May 2020), 5.2% (Spring forecast)</p> <p>Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT</p>
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22,248 cases, 1,375 deaths (06/05)
21,983 cases, 1,339 deaths (05/05)
21,772 cases, 1,319 deaths (04/05)

DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 29 February 2020

Cases of infection: **Daily increase - 265; Absolute - 22,248** [Data as at 6 May]

Number tests done: Absolute: 214,761 [Data as at 4 May]

Hospitalisations: **13% of cases, of which 13% required critical care (1.7% of total cases)** [Data as at 6 May]

Hospital beds/ICU beds available: 13,900 beds in total. **1,287 general hospital beds vacant; 144 critical care beds vacant; 82 critical care beds occupied by confirmed Covid-19 patients** [Data as at 6 May] **The number of critical care beds occupied by COVID-19 patients is the lowest since 28 March.**

Deaths, including in old-age institutions: **Daily increase - 37; Absolute - 1,375, of which 740 in Nursing Homes** [Data as at 6 May].

Recoveries: **17,110 (78%) of cases fully recovered from COVID-19 whilst in the community and a further 1,399 (6%) recovered having been admitted to hospital** [Data as of 5 May].

Cases of infection - Northern Ireland: **Daily increase - 53; Absolute - 3,934** [Data as at 6 May]

Deaths - Northern Ireland: Daily increase - **14; Absolute - 418** [Data as at 6 May]

Cases of infection - island of Ireland: Absolute - **26,182.**

Deaths - island of Ireland: Absolute - **1,793.**

HEALTH

Of the total deaths from COVID-19 notified to date, 85.5% were reported as having an underlying health condition.

An analysis of the patients who were admitted to ICU shows that the main underlying illnesses (not mutually exclusive) were chronic heart disease (50% of total); chronic respiratory disease (23% of total) diabetes (23% of total) and Body Mass Index of more than 40 (16% of total).

The Health Service Executive is concerned that people with illnesses other than COVID-19 are not seeking medical assistance. **It said the average number of patients with suspected breast, lung, prostate and skin cancer being referred to hospital clinics is now less than half the number being referred prior to the COVID-19 public health measures and it has urged people not to delay seeking medical advice.**

A school in Cork, which had been using its 27 three-dimensional printers to produce thousands of face visors for its local hospital has found a solution to modify 10,000 face masks which were supplied from China, but which couldn't be worn by hospital staff as the masks were causing eye and nose irritation.

The school has an impressive pedigree in innovation, having won the Irish Young Scientists' competition three times, as well as winning the European Young Scientist competition.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

In the context of a debate on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Irish tourist industry, the Minister of State at the Department of Tourism Brendan Griffin (Fine Gael/EPP) suggested that a time-limited VAT exemption (zero rating) on supplies in the hospitality sector would help the recovery.

Such an exemption would require an amendment to the EU VAT legislation which requires a proposal from the Commission with unanimous agreement of the Member States.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

A five-phase roadmap for reopening society and business was published on 1 May. Phase 1 begins on 18 May and Phase 5 on 10 August. A 5km travel limit is in place until 8 June and a 20km limit until 20 July.

In reply to the clamour from the public for hairdressers to be allowed to open before the beginning of phase 4, scheduled for 20 July, the Chief Medical Officer on 6 May appealed to hairdressers to refrain from offering services before they are allowed to do so.

Asked if he could see a relaxation in the timescale for the phases proposed by the government, the Chief Medical Officer said that there was still a persistent number of infections in the community, particularly among younger people - a level that is not falling as much as the Department of Health would like, so he currently saw no possibility of phase 1 starting earlier than 18 May.

Figures show that up to one third of passengers arriving at Dublin airport do not complete the form to indicate where they will be staying during their 14 day isolation period. The form was introduced on 24 April. Previously, arriving passengers were handed a sheet with instructions to self-isolate for 14 days.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

It has been announced that iconic Dublin café Bewley's in Grafton Street will not reopen after the crisis. The café had first opened in 1927.

Speaking on RTÉ radio on 7 May from Greece where he had been visiting his mother when the lockdown started, **Governor of the Irish Central Bank Gabriel Makhlouf said that a drop of 12% in GDP in 2020 is 'the most realistic'**. This comes on the day after the Commission forecast a drop of (only) 7.9%.

A survey on the impact of COVID-19 on living and working conditions to be published by Eurofound on 8 May found that 'optimism about the future among respondents in Ireland remained high in comparison to most other countries: 59% of respondents (compared with 45% in the EU overall) said that they were optimistic about their own future'.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

Positive stories, notably on intra-EU solidarity or good practices in communication

A virtual citizens' dialogue organised by the Representation in conjunction with the Institute for International and European Affairs with Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan attracted more than 700 participants on the Zoom platform. Commissioner Hogan's arguments on the benefits of international trade for both the EU and Ireland make the headlines in the media as well.

The Head of Representation has recorded an audio clip for local radio stations explaining the Commission's economic forecast. **He underlined the good news that despite the sharp decline foreseen for this year, the Commission also expects the economy to rebound strongly next year.**

Critical narratives about EU policies

Reports on the Spring Economic Forecast dominate the Irish media EU coverage. **There was a suggestion on RTÉ television by the economics correspondent that the Commission figures were more benign than warranted, given the starker forecasts from the Finance Minister last month.**

Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Leo Varadkar's (Fine Gael/EPP) statement in the Dáil (lower house of parliament) that the level of coordination across the EU to the pandemic at the start had been poor also gets coverage. Nevertheless, when speaking, he also acknowledged that public health was a national rather than a European, competence.

Media also highlight the Taoiseach's statement in the Dáil yesterday that the historic €500 billion EU aid package is made up of loans and will have to be repaid.

The Irish Times runs an editorial on the German constitutional court ruling arguing that it is bad news for Ireland. 'It is vital for Ireland that investors believe the ECB can do what is necessary, so we can continue to borrow money cheaply', the editorial explains.

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): Restrictions in place until 18 May (5km travel limit, over-70s permitted outside for exercise). Thereafter, a step-by-step easing of measures.

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 82% of respondents said that the government reaction to the coronavirus was appropriate [Department of Health commissioned survey, 4 May 2020]

Movement restricted: Yes

Borders closed citizens: No

Internal border restrictions for business: No

External border restrictions for business: No

Shops, restaurants closed: Yes. Only Supermarkets and pharmacies remain open. After 18 May, there will be a gradual reopening. Restaurants are due to reopen on 29 June and bars are due to reopen on 10 August.

Schools will be closed for the rest of the academic year.

2020 GDP growth forecast: **-7.9%** [Commission Spring economic forecast, 6 May 2020]

2020 deficit forecast: **5.6%** of GDP [Commission Spring economic forecast, 6 May 2020]

Unemployment rate: **7.4%** [Commission Spring economic forecast, 6 May 2020]



215,858 cases, 29,958 deaths (07/05)
214,457 cases, 29,684 deaths (06/05)
213,013 cases, 29,315 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES (7 May)

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million):+ 1.401/215.858/3.597
Number tests done (absolute/per million): 2.381.288/ 39.688
Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU):15.174/1.311
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 192.000/6.645
Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute):+274/29.958
Recoveries (daily increase/absolute):+ 3.031/96.276

Issues of political relevance

Tension is running high within the majority on the EUR 55 bn decree to be approved by this week, especially between PM Conte and Italia Viva's (IV - NO Meps) leader Renzi. There is **no agreement on many points**, namely on subsidies for families, on the 'emergency income' and on the regularization of illegal migrants. In an attempt to defuse tensions, this afternoon **PM Conte has summoned Renzi**, after saying that *'instability could produce serious damage on the eve of the recovery and would weaken our position in Europe in a decisive moment'*. The Democratic Party (PD-S&D) and the Five Star Movement (M5S-NA) side with him. The President of the Republic Mattarella is carefully following and some sources from Quirinale reveal that **in the event of a crisis, the President would choose to go to the polls**, even immediately after the summer, if necessary.

HEALTH

Experts agree that the virus is becoming less aggressive, infected people are in less critical conditions. Possibly, hot weather helps. **Hospital in Padova has created a "bank" to collect plasma from healed people**: already 140 donors have subscribed. The use of cloroquine is effective if used at the first stages of contagion. For the first time healed people are more than positive people (91.528). **Shortage of masks in pharmacies**: special Commissioner for Coronavirus Arcuri menaces to use tobacconists to distribute masks to avoid possible speculations by pharmacies

Lombardy Region

For the first time in Europe, the SARS-CoV-2 virus was photographed in kidney cells of a patient hospitalized in Bergamo, one of the COVID-19 hotspots in Lombardy. Scientists believe this discovery shows that a cure to COVID-19 shall take into account the impact of coronavirus on lungs and other organs, including kidneys.

COVID-19 FIGURES: The number of deaths in Lombardy in the last 24 hours dropped by almost 50% compared to yesterday. **Zero new patients in ICU in Lombardy**. The number of total cases in Lombardy reached 80,000 and daily increase is slightly higher than the national average.

What the EU/Commission could do?

Nothing new to report.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

National measures: (i) in a hearing before Parliament, **Minister of Economic Development mentioned that "some financial institutions are not collaborating as they should"**, referring to **delays in the provision of credit to companies**. He also announced that **Alitalia newco** will have a capital of at least EUR 3 bn; (ii) between 17 March and 6 May, the **Guarantee Fund for SMEs received 100 k + requests**, worth more than **EUR 6 bn**.

Economic and social impact: (i) new economic bulletin released by ISTAT. Preliminary data show drop of GDP in Q1 2020 of -4.7%. **In March, retail sales decreased by 20.5% in value and 21.3% in volume**, compared to February, driven by drop in sales of non-food products. In the first quarter, the drop amounts to almost 6% (in value and volume) compared to previous quarter. The **index** monitoring the **perception of economic situation on social media** revealed **increased pessimism in April**, with a slight improvement towards the end of the month; (ii)

trade unions announced 48h **strike of petrol stations** operating on highways since they were not allowed to reduce working hours despite a loss of income over 90% in the past two months.

Tourism - impact of corona crisis and national response / recovery

General data

According to the last economic scenario provided by ENIT (the Italian Agency for Tourism), the international tourism market will register a -64.8% between January and April in foreign arrivals by plane. In the summer season (June-August 2020) -68.5% reservations (407 thousand reservations) are envisaged. The drop in international arrivals with overnight stay is estimated between -44% and -72%(28-46 million visitors), compared with 2019 arrivals. In particular, arrivals from China registered -77.4%, and from the US -71.7%. Slightly less affected were arrivals from Russia -54.7. Arrivals with overnight stay will decrease of -108 million visitors compared to 2019. The loss in terms of international tourists' expenses is estimated in -21 billion EUR in 2020 compared to the level of 2019. Domestic flights will register -25%/-45% namely 13-23 billion guests. Domestic overnight stays will register -46 million guests.

Source:<http://enit.it/it/pressroomonline/comunicati-stampa/3210-bollettino-uno-enit-turismo-coronavirus-epidemia-mibact-estate-2020-idee.html>

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Latest developments: PM Conte signed the protocol that, starting from May 18, will allow catholic celebrations. Zaia, Governor of Veneto, declared to be ready for immediate reopening of all businesses and shops. Yesterday, 179,738 people were checked by police forces, 1937 sanctioned, while 16 were reported for false self-declaration.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

On 7 May the Representation co-organised a live chat for school students together with the EPLO and the Department for European Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The event was webstreamed on Skuola.net, the most important portal for students in Italy. Schools participating in the OpenCohesionSchool project, schools participating in the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme, as well as schools using the platform Europa=Noi managed by the Italian government took part in it and asked questions to 6 Italian MEPs, including on EU response to coronavirus. The recordings are available at <https://www.skuola.net/news/fun/festa-europa-live-chat.html>

OTHER KEY DATA

MEDICAL SUPPLIES TOTAL DISTRIBUTION (until 6 May):

Personal Protection Equipment

MASKS :	FFP2: 31,647,559 / FFP3: 843,410
Gloves:	18,767,180
Hygienic Gel:	196,554

VENTILATORS :

Compressed Air	2,945
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OTHER MEDICAL HOSPITAL SUPPLIES

Endotracheal tubes	121,080
Laryngoscopes	2,924
Multiparametric Monitors	2,781
Defibrillation Monitors	2,916
Vacuum cleaners	842

SWABS	3,850,842
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(SOURCE:<http://www.protezionecivile.gov.it/attivita-rischi/rischio-sanitario/emergenze/coronavirus/materiali-distribuiti-alle-regioni>*)*



1,433 cases, 49 deaths (07/05)
1,428 cases, 48 deaths (06/05)
1,423 cases, 48 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 28 February 2020
Cases of infection (absolute/per million): 1,433 / 511.8
Number tests done (absolute/per million): 164,088 / 58,603
Hospitalisations (absolute/per million): 82 / 29.3
Thereof in ICU: 12
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 12,892 / 665
Deaths (including in old-age institutions): 49
Recoveries: 739

POLITICAL ISSUES

Presidents of the three Baltic States issued joint statement to commemorate 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day marked tomorrow, 8 May. Presidents firmly reject attempts to divide Europe into spheres of influence. They recall that some countries falsified historical events of World War II and its aftermath trying to question foundation of international rules-based order.

President Nausėda took part in virtual Summit of EU and Western Balkans. Lithuania welcomes dialogue with Western Balkans, adhering to European values. Says full alignment with EU policies, especially in CFSP, should be precondition for further EU enlargement. Calls EU to stay committed to deepening political and economic relations with Eastern Partnership countries too.

Labour unions of police officers and other services call Government to pay attention to their situation, not only to medics, as they are also exposed to threats working at the frontlines. Christian Union (no EP affiliation), having two MPs in Seimas (Parliament), pledges its support to the Government; this is seen as a pre-electoral move.

HEALTH

During country-wide inspections of health facilities in Lithuania, investigators found that retirement home in Palanga was working illegally.

WHAT EU/EC COULD DO?

Lithuania pledges €100,000 for the EU Global Response initiative.

Prominent economists question Commission's Spring Economic Forecast, say predictions for Lithuania are too pessimistic in comparison to Latvia and Estonia.

Farmers and Agriculture Minister unhappy with Commission's proposal to help agriculture, symbolic protests already starting in some farms.

Former Foreign Affairs Minister Valionis says that despite corona-crisis the EU must not lose sight of other challenges like breaches of rule of law, rise of populism.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT, RECOVERY MEASURES

Parliament approves €1 billion social package. Opposition calls for 2020 budget revision. President says €200 payments need to reach target groups now, not in August.

Yesterday, Government updated economic stimulus plan. It includes factual adopted measures and some new planned ones, e.g. sectoral liquidity financing, notably €45 million for tourism sector, €52 million for agriculture, subsidies for micro-enterprises up to €100 million. Finance Ministry is preparing long-term recovery plan.

For tourism sector, €31 million is foreseen for zero interest loans to compensate clients for cancelled trips and emergency return travel. Another €14 million will be directed to marketing, e-business, innovation and transformation support for tourism businesses. It also foresees distribution of holiday vouchers to medical staff.

Prime Minister says pensions could go up 7-8% next year. Social Security and Labour Ministry says it is ready to change indexation formula to avoid freeze.

Tobacco industry warns of **steep rise in shadow economy**. Illegal tobacco market share is forecast to increase to 44% next year, similar to crisis year 2010.

Chief economist of *Swedbank Lithuania* says Lithuania's current unemployment rate of 11.3% is likely to be close to its peak. Jobless rate in hardest hit sectors can edge higher, however.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Short truck queues at LT-PL, LT-LV, LT-RU, and LT-BY borders. Border guards say number of people exiting Lithuania remains stable at 350 people/day, no spike despite lifting exit restriction on 4 May. Guards forecast more border crossings from 11 May (restriction lifted for Polish citizens to arrive to study, work, do business) and 15 May (restrictions lifted for Baltic citizens travelling among Baltic States).

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM, FALSE NARRATIVES

Commissioner Sinkevičius spoke on an economic panel and HoR delivered a presentation on EU response to COVID-19 during **Lithuanian business online forum** among other influential entrepreneurs, economists, and opinion-makers. The biggest ever in Lithuania online forum witnessed over 100 speakers and 3000 registered participants.

HoR discussed online with Lithuanian communities in Belgium and Luxembourg on EU response and exit strategy.

OTHER KEY DATA

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): quarantine from 16 March to 31 May, 2020

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 68% support easing quarantine if epidemiological situation stabilises, 32% against easing. *Baltijos tyrimai*, published 15-04-2020. Previous polls show around 66% of Lithuanians support Government's measures, including quarantine.

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): no major issues; surplus production of disinfectant

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): partially

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): partially

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): yes, inspections of truck, driver and passenger (if truck carries passengers) sometimes lead to congestion

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): yes, additional sanitary checks

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): partially

Schools (closed/reopened/partially): closed

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -7.9% in 2020, 7.4% in 2021, 06-05-2020, Spring Economic Forecast, European Commission.

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -6.9% in 2020, -2.7 in 2021 06-05-2020, Spring Economic Forecast, European Commission.

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 11.3% nominal, 01-05-2020, Public Employment Service.



3,859 cases, 100 deaths (07/05)

3,851 cases, 98 deaths (06/05)

3,840 cases, 96 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

	Total	+/-	Residents	Non-res.
Cases of infection:	3,859	+8 / +0 %	3,130	729
Number tests done:	51,883	+1,350	40,998	10,885
	Absolute		thereof ICU	
Hospitalisations:	118		26	
Hospital beds available:	3,000		300	
	Total		+/-	
Deaths:	100		+2	
Average age / median age	83 / 85			
Recoveries (hospital dep.):	860		+ 4	
Considered as healed:	3.505		+ 53	

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

Prime Minister Bettel (DP-RE) justified the crisis measures in Parliament today. Opposition parties expect more re-openings, more perspectives (opening dates and deadlines), more aid and more strategy explanations; but were not really convincing in their requests.

HEALTH

The green MP Stephanie Empain wants to know whether the 26-head LU delegation at the Military World Games that took place in **Wuhan in October 2019 had already symptoms similar to Corona**, as reported by some of them. Several members of the delegation got sick in Wuhan, and might have been the first LU Corona cases.

According to the Con-Vince study, the **replication ratio R_t is currently at 1.04** for LU. The **extrapolated prevalence results conclude that 1,449 persons** between 18 and 79 years in LU would have the virus without being reported. 1,9% of the 1,820 test participants had Corona antibodies.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

PM Bettel announced that **the press will obtain extraordinary aids** according to criteria close to those applying for regular financial support. Each publication can obtain EUR 5,000 per journalist that was not already covered by short-term work scheme, with a maximum of EUR 200,000 per publication. In addition, the government will do Corona advertisement campaigns in the written press.

The President of the employers' union UEL criticised the government for announcing every day small aid measures instead of announcing a complete package of measures.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

The elected mayors and counsellors of several LU and DE municipalities intend to protest at the border crossings on Europe Day against the border closures.
 The municipality of Echternach retracted after the police advised it that such a demonstration was not allowed.

The 6 LU MEPs together with 9 DE, BE and NL MEPs co-signed a letter initiated by MEP Christophe Hansen (CSV-EPP). They invite the **European Commission to lay out which scientific and legal arguments Member States are using to justify border closings and controls, and to explain which measures it will take to ensure that the fundamental rights of the citizens are restored.**

Date of the first case registered:	29 February 2020
State of emergency, quarantine or other:	Since 18/03/20
Public support for the restrictions:	High
Medical supplies:	No issue
Movement restricted:	Since 18/03/20
Borders closed citizens:	DE has closed borders, FR and BE restricted
Internal border restrictions for business:	None
External border restrictions for business:	Common EC restrictions
Shops, restaurants closed:	Since 18/03/20
Schools closed:	Since 16/03/20
2020 GDP growth forecast:	- 4,2%, or -6.8%, depending on character of shock impact (14/04/20, Fondation IDEA)
2020 public debt forecast:	up to 25% of GDP based on current announcements within the Corona Stabilisation Plan
Unemployment rate:	6.1% (+0.6%) (20/04/20, STATEC)



909 cases, 18 deaths (07/05)
900 cases, 17 deaths (06/05)
896 cases, 17 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 3 March
Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 9/909/469
Number tests done (absolute/per million): 71 069/35 743
Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 29/NA
Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 213, but up to 1000 in case of necessity
Deaths (daily increase/absolute): 1/18
Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): NA/464

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

The Government decided that the extraordinary situation will be extended till 9 June. Gathering of up to 25 people will be allowed always observing 2m distance. The kindergartens will be open to five-year-olds and six-year-olds who have to participate in compulsory pre-school education. Government has also decided on obligatory wearing of face masks when using public transport. The shopping malls will be open on the weekends. Places of recreation and entertainment including restaurants can be open till 24.00 (instead of 22.00).

HEALTH

The chief epidemiologist Jurijs Perevoščikovs stated that COVID-19 currently mainly spreads among members of the family, colleagues and friends. **This is the fifth week in a row that the testing is increasing but the number of the new positive cases is decreasing.** The data shows that the number of the people who are infected outside of separate outbreaks of the disease is also decreasing. That is proving the effectiveness of the measures taken so far. He stressed though that one has to understand that the illness can strike back. The chief infectologist Uga Dumpis has added that the outbreaks prove that not all positive cases are known and outbreaks can lead to sharp increases of the patients.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

The biggest online news portal Delfi in an investigative article questions the validity of the certificates for 900 000 facemasks and suitability of 80 000 respirators that were received in the end of March from China. The chief of National Health Service stresses that he has received no complaints so far from any of the 1500 institutions that received these masks and/or respirators. Minister for Health Ilze Viņķele (For Development/For!/RE) this morning though not directly referring to the article, expressed her discouragement with the situation: "The result has been achieved. The biggest deficit item in the EU is medical gowns and overalls. Also in LV. In the procurement, 3 out of 4 offers have been withdrawn, because merchants do not want to be insulted for being thieves. Procurement officials are paralyzed in the decision-making for the same reason." Nevertheless, **Minister for Interior Sandis Ģirģens (KPV LV/no EP affiliation) today has tasked the State police to investigate this procurement due to floating information on absence of certificates for facemasks and respirators not meeting necessary requirements.**

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

Several changes to the lame **downtime benefits scheme** were made today: June 30 is set as the end of the downtime period; downtime benefits should be applied for only for the current month and not for the past months; parents on childcare leave would be eligible for downtime benefit up to €700 after the childcare leave expires; small economic operators would also become eligible for the benefit. The downtime benefits are a short-term solution to provide means of subsistence to persons, including self-employed persons, who have lost income due to COVID-19. The State Revenue Service had paid out €10,011,592 in downtime benefits to 31,488 employees of 5,479 companies and €618,530 to 2,068 self-employed persons out of €102 million originally allocated for this purpose. The Parliament changed Labour legislation, allowing employers **to pay 70% of the salary during the idle time** but not less than minimum salary of €430.

Around **3,000 guest workers left Latvia throughout April, but about 400 have returned**. The employees of Latvian companies are travelling mainly to Sweden and through Sweden to other Scandinavian countries, or to Germany.

Latvia's Development Finance Institution Altum (Altum) will contribute **€20 million to the Three Seas Initiative Investment Fund**. It is a new financial instrument to support transport, energy and digitalization infrastructure projects in 12 countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The protocol of intent on the fund's creation was signed in September 2018 in Bucharest by the heads of the development finance institutions of six Central and Eastern European countries, including Altum. The Three Seas Initiative Investment Fund plans to make €3 to 5 billion available for infrastructure projects of its 12 member states.

The EC Executive Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis was quoted by the news agency LETA in relation to Spring 2020 forecast. He pointed out that **the economic decline in Latvia this year will be smaller than in the EU as a whole, which is projected at -7.4% while in Latvia at -7% of GDP**. "This forecast is subject to considerable uncertainty, as it is based on the assumption that the restrictive measures of the COVID-19 pandemic will be concentrated in the first half of the year and, with the gradual easing of these restrictions, the economy will recover in the second half of the year". According to him, the Latvian economy will be mainly affected by the decline in investment and exports, which is caused by the restrictions and uncertainty related to the spread of the virus, as well as the relatively high share of exports in the economy. "Relatively cautious measures to control the virus in Latvia mean that household consumption in Latvia will be more sustainable than in other countries. It is projected that the economic downturn this year will be followed by a relatively rapid recovery next year - economic growth in Latvia next year is forecast at 6.4% percent, but in the EU as a whole - 6.1%," said Dombrovskis.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

Several activities leading to Europe Day have started by the Rep today all under the common headline "Europe Day 2020 – in the sign of solidarity and 70 years since Schuman Declaration". **The solidarity of the EU has been in focus of the interview of the Acting Head of Rep Andris Kužnieks for the TV Riga 24 today and the daily "Latvijas Avīze" to be published tomorrow as well as several social media activities.**

A survey by the research company SKDS ordered by the Latvian TV shows that 68.5% of the respondents consider the restrictions related to pandemics as appropriate, 15.2% consider them too soft, not enough and 10.2% as too strict.

Other Key Data and Figures

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): Since 12 March until 12 May

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 68.5% support the restrictions to fight the pandemics (SKDS)

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): no

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): partially

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): yes

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): partially

Schools (closed/reopened/partially): closed

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -7% (April 24, Ministry of Finance), -7% (EC Spring forecast)

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -9.4% (April 24, Ministry of Finance), -7% (EC Spring forecast)

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures): 7.3% (April 23, Latvia's Central Statistical Bureau)



MT

486 cases, 5 deaths (07/05)

484 cases, 5 deaths (06/05)

482 cases, 5 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 7 March 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 2/486

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 39,366

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 11/0

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 710/55 as at 28.04.2020

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute):1/5

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 6/413

HEALTH

Health authorities are conducting tests at Mater Dei laboratories on positive cases as well as random samples of blood to determine how much of the population has actually been affected by the virus. This comes after France discovered a swab test from November that was positive, indicating that the virus hit Europe before the outbreak at the end of January. The Superintendent for Public Health said the antibody tests on the market are not reliable enough as of yet.

Health Authorities are also offering to carry out tests on people in factories or other places with a large number of staff.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

Former prime minister Joseph Muscat has prepared a report, that was represented to Cabinet, to map the way out of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as a projection of the possible evolution of the Maltese economy in 2020 and 2021. The document gives a wide range of scenarios - as bad as a loss of 16.1% in gross value added in 2020, to as much as a bumper 10% growth in 2021. In all scenarios tourism is bound to be worst hit due to global travel bans that may be extended over a prolonged period of time. Muscat's projections anticipate a loss in gross value added of between 6.1% and 16.1% for 2020, a contraction similar to all economies globally. He refers to the Maltese economy as better performing than its economic peers and anticipates a return to positive territory in 2021. Muscat's projections expect retail to bounce back rapidly as it is best placed to adapt quickly to new protocols, but had less positive news for professional services such as legal, accounting, rental, leasing and consultancy, saying firms will cut down on this sort of spending after a downturn.

Family Minister Michael Falzon announced that to date a total of €7.35 million have been paid out in social benefits schemes related to COVID-19. The amount covers the benefits paid under four schemes that help people who are unable to report for work or work from home due to medical conditions or disabilities that make them vulnerable to COVID-19, as well as people who stopped working in order to care for their children. Currently 9,670 applications have been received, of which a total of 266 have now returned to work and a further 136 stopped their unemployment benefit as they had found a job.

Figures released by the National Statistics Office revealed that tourism expenditure stood at €43.6 million in March 2020, a decrease of roughly 62% or €72,900,000 when compared with the same month in 2019. The sector is the worst hit by the pandemic with thousands of people now living off a government wage supplement to help deal with the crisis. It remains to be seen how long the crisis in the tourism sector will go on, as flight closures will likely be one of the last measures to be lifted, thus providing little hope for tourists to return in significant numbers.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

The media has picked up on the Spring Economic Forecasts portraying Malta as one of the countries that is predicted to be less hardly hit than other European Member States by the crisis.

Since Europe Day is being celebrated in the midst of social distancing this year, the Rep has chosen to replace the usual events with increased online communication. We are communicating through a popular app called Freehour that is widely used by students aged 16 and over. The app is providing students with an engaging history lesson about Europe.

KEY DATA AND FIGURES (cont...)

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): Quarantine for vulnerable people and elderly from 26 March 2020, indefinite.

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): According to a Maltatoday (local newspaper) survey dated 20/04/2020, 73.6% believe that the current restrictions are just right. The survey was held before Health Minister cautiously suggested some of the restrictions may start to be lifted in the coming weeks.

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): Supplies are still expected to be delivered. Some procurement issues may still be outstanding.

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): Movement between the two islands permitted but only a controlled number of passengers which is not the same number as before Covid-19 will be allowed on board.

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): Repatriation trips, both incoming and outgoing, are continuing.

Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): Travel between the two islands is permitted, in controlled numbers.

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): No

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): Shops are open except for beauty salons, hairdressers and restaurants.

Schools closed/reopened/partially): Closed

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication):

(Real growth) -5.8%, European Commission, Spring Forecast, 6 May 2020

(Real growth) -5.4%, Ministry for Finance, NRP & SP, 29 April 2020

(Real growth) -2.8%, IMF World Economic Outlook April 2020, 6 April 2020

(Real growth) -5.9%, Fitch, 17 April 2020

(Real growth) -3.8%, Moody's, 17 April 2020

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication):

(Deficit) -6.7% of GDP, European Commission, Spring Forecast, 6 May 2020

(Deficit) -7.5% of GDP, Ministry for Finance, SP, 29 April 2020

(Deficit) -8.2% of GDP, Fitch, 17 April 2020

Unemployment rate (nominal/relative terms, date of publication, national sources or ESTAT figures):

(March 2020): 3.5%, Eurostat (SA), 30 April 2020

2020 (annual forecast): 5.9%, European Commission, Spring Forecast, 6 May 2020

2020 (annual forecast): 5.4%, Ministry for Finance, SP, 30 April 2020

2020 (annual forecast): 5%, IMF World Economic Outlook April 2020, 6 April 2020

2020 (annual forecast): 6.1%, Fitch, April 2020



41,774 cases, 5,288 deaths (07/05)
41,319 cases, 5,204 deaths (06/05)
41,087 cases, 5,168 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered : 27 February 2020 (there are indications that the virus has arrived earlier)

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): +455 / 41,774 / 2,400

Number of tests done (absolute/per million): 249,655 / 14,350

Hospitalisations (absolute): 11,192 (accumulated number since outbreak)

ICU Covid-19 patients (daily increase/absolute): -16 / 628*, including 23 in German hospitals

Total amount of hospital beds/thereof ICU: 37,753**/ 2,400 (1,900 dedicated for Covid-19 patients)

Confirmed Covid-19 Deaths (daily increase/absolute): +84 / 5,288

Total Covid-19 deaths (including non-tested cases, i.a. in old-age institutions): Unknown, mortality statistics hint at a number twice the confirmed cases

Recoveries: At the end of April, more than 6,000 patients that have been hospitalised with Covid-19 have been released from hospital (out of around 9,000).

* The number of ICU patients is published late afternoon; hence, the number is usually one day behind other figures mentioned.

** amount per April 2019 (more recent amount not available)

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

The **Government presented a roadmap for relieving measures**. The basic recommendations (social distancing, working from home, etc.) will remain in place until further notice. The Government will implement the following relieving measures if the progress in fighting Covid-10 continues. The Government has been very clear that changes to this roadmap can happen at any time if the situation requires:

11 May: primary schools partially open; outdoor sports allowed under conditions; most people in contact-based roles will be allowed to perform their jobs again but under conditions. This includes driving instructors, medical and paramedical professionals, hair and beauty professionals and alternative medicine practitioners (acupuncturists, homeopaths, etc.).

1 June: non-medical face mask obligatory in public transport; secondary schools reopen; cafés and restaurants may reopen outdoor seating areas as long as people can stay 1.5 metres apart; cinemas, restaurants, cafés and cultural institutions (such as concert venues and theatres) will reopen, subject to conditions: 1) a maximum of 30 people (including staff). People must be able to stay 1.5 metres apart, 2) visitors must reserve beforehand, 3) the owner will discuss with customers beforehand whether their visit entails risks; museums and heritage sites will reopen. Visitors must buy tickets beforehand, to ensure people can stay 1.5 metres apart; secondary schools reopen.

15 June: secondary vocational education (MBO) schools reopen for exams and practical training.

1 July: shared toilets and shower blocks at campsites and holiday parks reopen; the maximum number of visitors to cinemas, restaurants, cafés and cultural institutions increases to 100. This increase would also apply to the maximum number of participants at organised gatherings, such as church services, weddings, rehearsals and funerals.

1 September: gyms, saunas, health spas, club canteens, cannabis cafés, casinos and sex establishments will reopen. People of all ages will be allowed to take part in contact sports and indoor sports. Sports events, including professional football matches, can take place without spectators.

The Government will take a decision regarding mass spectator events such as festivals and major concerts before 1 September. It has however indicated that such events can only take place once a vaccination is available.

A steep increase in the number of tests and contact tracing will come along the gradual reopening. **The Government announced to have tests available for everybody with Covid-19 symptoms in June, possibly as of 1 June.**

Recent surveys indicate that people favour a gradual loosening of the restrictions combined with more targeted measures.

HEALTH

On 7 May in Parliament, Government advisor Jaap van Dissel of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) stated that the introduction of (non-medical) face masks in public transport is a political choice, which is not based on scientific evidence. Van Dissel has no principal objection against face masks in public transport, but warned that they will only prevent 5 to 10% of new contaminations.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The organisation of Dutch hospitals estimates the financial damaged to be EUR 5 bn and asks the Government for compensation.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Another repatriation flight arrived from Morocco.

DAILY LIFE

Targeted lockdown (since/until): 15 March until 20 May (decision-making on prolongation expected in the week of 11 May)

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 76% supports the Government's measures to combat the spread of the coronavirus, compared to 81% on 25 March (Source: Ipsos, announced in news program Nieuwsuur on 28 April). According to a representative poll published on 1 May, 57% of respondents would favour a further relaxation of measures.

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): According to a Government letter to Parliament of 6 May, the availability of aprons and insulating jackets is limited.

Movement restricted: Partially

Borders citizens: BE authorities halt NL citizens lacking a necessity to enter BE; NL citizens entering DE have to quarantine (with exceptions)

Internal border restrictions for business: NO

External border restrictions for business: NO

Shops, restaurants: Shops are open; restaurants, bars are closed

Schools: Closed. Primary schools will open part time on 11 May.

ECONOMY AND NATIONAL BUDGET

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): -6.8% (6 May, source: EC Spring Forecast)

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -6.3% (6 May, EC Spring Forecast)

Unemployment rate February 2020: 2.9% in March (16 April, source Statistics Netherlands). Expected unemployment rate for 2020: 5.9% (6 May, source: EC Spring Forecast)



PL

14,898 cases, 737 deaths (07/05)

14,647 cases, 723 deaths (06/05)

14,242 cases, 683 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Cases of infection (absolute/per million): 14,898/ 388 (251 new cases)

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 425,994/ 11,094

Number tests done in last 24 h (absolute): over 15, 500

Hospitalisations (absolute/per million): 2711/ 71 (decrease by 49)

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values):

- 660 hospital beds per 100,000
- 10,450 beds available at infectious diseases wards/ 1 400 equipped with ventilators
- 140 patients treated with the use of ventilators
- 7,000 ICU beds available
- 10,100 ventilator equipped beds available (in total)

Deaths (including in old-age institutions): 737 (14 new deaths)

Recoveries: 4862(207 new recoveries)

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE:

PiS leader Kaczyński and Alliance leader Gowin (both parties belong to the United Right coalition) reached an agreement regarding rescheduling the presidential election, which originally were to take place on 10 May. Their agreement assumes that the elections will take place in July, and that the president is to be elected via postal voting. The draft law on postal voting was re-adopted today by the Sejm, thus rejecting the position of the Senate. The upper chamber of the parliament rejected the draft yesterday after a month long proceedings closed by a conclusion that it violates the election law and the constitution. For several weeks, Gowin's party has opposed the draft and until yesterday everything seemed to suggest that a significant number of that party MPs, including its leader, would vote against the draft law sponsored by the government they officially support. According to the Gowin-Kaczyński agreement, the draft law enabling vote by mail would be immediately amended in order to replace the state postal service with the National Electoral Committee (PKW) as the entity responsible for the preparation of elections. Still – the amendment, even if adopted very fast, would have to be proceeded by the Senate who, again, would have 30 days to conclude legislative works. That would leave only one month for the PKW to prepare universal presidential elections conducted solely via mail – a challenge unprecedented in modern democracy.

HEALTH:

According to the data provided by the Ministry of Health, Silesian Voivodeship (southern Poland, border with Czechia) has become an epicentre of COVID-19 pandemic with more than one hundred new cases recorded day by day (yesterday 157, today until 10.a.m.- 78). The virus spreads among miners and their families. Experts indicate that due to the nature of mining operations, social distancing is impossible to observe, and, therefore the number of patients may double in the upcoming days

EDUCATION:

National Education Minister Piontkowski stated today that the decision on school students' return to schools might be taken by mid-May He stated that resuming school activity would depend on the epidemiological situation.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES:

The Government is planning to reopen restaurants as of 18 May; however, with some restrictions remaining in place regarding the arrangement of the reopened establishments and personnel serving the clients. Self-service establishments are to remain closed.

As of 4 May a number of restrictions have been lifted:

- hotels and accommodation places resumed business (bars, restaurants and fitness centres continue to be closed)

- shopping centres resumed operations: restriction to 1 person per 15 sq meters per 1 shop sales area (excluding corridors). Recreational and sport space as well as food courts remain closed.
- Medical rehabilitation services are re-launched
- Culture institutions, such as libraries, museums and art galleries can be open, depending on their size and space

As 06 May: nurseries and kindergartens might be open. Final decisions will be made on case-by-case basis by responsible local authorities. The facilities will need to follow the Health Ministers' guidelines where conditions and necessary requirements will be stated. Many local authorities ruled out opening the early care facilities as they see the Ministry of Health recommendation to open them as premature.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES:

Relevant Schengen or single market related freedoms:

- Border control at the internal border is extended until 13 May 13. The border with Germany, Czechia, Slovakia and Lithuania can be crossed at designated places only. Controls at sea ports and airports are continued. Restrictions for foreigners entering Poland are also maintained.
- Non-EU borders waiting time: at the border with Ukraine: Korczowa- 14h.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES:

- Communication of code of conduct on disinformation from Ccsr, Breton's
- Communication of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan
- communication of medical equipment purchased by PL regional authorities using structural funds (after clearance with SPP)
- HoR Marek Prawda's speech and Q&A session at the Jagiellonian University (Kraków) devoted to the current affairs and future of the EU
- Promotion of Citizens Dialogue with HoR Marek Prawda on 8 May

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES :

National recovery measures/plans or discussion on related proposals:

The Polish Government adopted on 18 March the economic assistance package (Economic and Social Anti-Crisis Shield for Entrepreneurs' and Employees' Safety) worth around PLN 210 billion (EUR 46.2 bn, 9.2% of GDP) in order to mitigate negative effects of the crisis. This huge amount consists of a government contribution of PLN 66 bn (EUR 14.5 bn), government liquidity component of PLN 74.5 bn (EUR 16.3 bn) and the National Bank of Poland liquidity package of PLN 70 bn (EUR 15.4 bn). **The package covers five areas:**

a) Employee safety - PLN 30 bn (EUR 6.6 bn); b) Enterprise financing - PLN 73.2 bn (EUR 16.1. bn); c) Healthcare - PLN 7.5 bn (EUR 1.6 bn); d) Strengthening the Financial System - PLN 70.3 bn (EUR 15.5 bn); e) Public Investment Program - PLN 30 bn (EUR 6.6. bn)

The anti-crisis shield has been amended twice so far (mid-April, end of April). The opposition parties, social partners and experts have not been entirely satisfied neither with the forms of the support nor the timing of legislative preparations. The scope of financial support and financial resources are perceived as insufficient for all sectors affected negatively by the pandemic.

2020 annual update of the Convergence Programme:

2020 GDP forecast: -3.4% (29 April)

2020 inflation rate: 2.8%

2020 deficit forecast: 8.4% GDP

2020 public debt forecast: 55.2% GDP

2020 export: -7.0%

2020 import: -9.7%

Unemployment rate: 5.5% registered unemployment in March; **9-10%** forecast for the end 2020 (1 April, Min. of Labour)

1). Personnel Service, the agency employing workers from Ukraine, estimates that a significant drop of almost 500 thousand seasonal workers coming to Poland to work in agriculture is expected in months to come. **2)** Polish Teachers' Union conducted a survey on remuneration for working time during the COVID-19 pandemic at the beginning of May. Around 4.5 thousand teachers has taken part in the survey. Over 62% of respondents pointed that due to the distance learning their salaries were reduced, especially the overtime remuneration (88.5%) and allowance for working conditions (17%). According to the Union, teachers work longer preparing e-learning than during the teaching in schools due to meeting requirements related to the use of new technologies and preparing lessons in new forms. **3)** The government is negotiating the special mechanism support for LOT Polish Airlines with the Polish Development Fund and National Economy Bank.



PT

26,715 cases, 1,105 deaths (07/05)
 26,182 cases, 1,089 deaths (06/05)
 25,702 cases, 1,074 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES 07 May 2020

Date of the first case registered: **2nd March 2020**

Cases of infection: **26,715- 2598 per million**

Number tests done: 471,000 – **45,800 per million**

Hospitalisations: 874 – **85 per million**

Hospital beds/ICU beds available: **21,294 beds: ICU 652**(figures may vary as some other hospital services were adapted as ICU)

Deaths (including in old-age institutions): **1105**

Recoveries: **2258**

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency: In place between 19 March and 3 May. **From 4 May onwards, state of calamity, allowing for a gradual exit of the confinement measures.**

Public support for the restrictions: The most recent opinion pool on PM Costa's executive handling of the crisis sees its approval rate at 74% (60% in the previous month). President Marcelo's performance also goes up to 87%.

Medical supplies: The number of **ventilators** has been up to the needs, and apparently there isn't any more a shortage of **protection equipment**.

Movement restricted: A civic duty to remain at home needs to be observed, while those infected and in official quarantine need to be in strict lockdown.

Borders closed citizens: The **borders are still closed for citizens** (except for repatriations of Portuguese or foreign citizens)

Internal border restrictions for business: **NO**

External border restrictions for business: **NO**

Shops, restaurants closed: Gradual opening starting with small shops, followed by medium-size and large shops and restaurants (with reduced capacity) and the mandatory use of masks in closed spaces.

Schools: Schooling in the third term (from 14th April to 26th June) for the 1st to 10th grade will remain entirely based on distance learning. The 11th and 12th grade will reopen on 18th May, followed by nurseries in 1st June.

2020 GDP growth forecast: EC Spring forecasts - **GDP will decrease by 6.8% in 2020** (and expand 5.8% in 2021)

2020 deficit forecast: EC Spring forecasts - from a small surplus in 2019, to a deficit of 6.5% in 2020, improving to -1.8% in 2021.

Unemployment rate: EC Spring forecasts - **9.7% unemployment in 2020**, and 7.4 % in 2021 (6.5% in 2019).

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

Today's Council of Ministers will discuss the extension of financial support to "micro-companies" and managing partners (a claim that dates back to the beginning of the pandemic). It is meant to mitigate the impact of the crisis on single owners with or without employees, and to independent workers without social security contributions

over the last year. The announcement was noteworthy of a tweet by the PM, though there are uncertainties over whether or this measure respects the terms of the Constitution.

As noted in previous reports, **the social security system is facing a heavy strain and the government continues to be under fire for not having met companies' and workers' expectations for getting the emergency financial support requested early last month.** The Economy Minister had already admitted this delay last week, but yesterday PM Costa felt compelled to come up in defence of the Minister for Labour declaring it would have taken up to 187 years for Social Security to process all the requests that have arrived in the last six weeks, a powerful image of the pressure the services are under.

HEALTH

The first serological test (in the Algarve region) conducted by the Champalimaud Foundation has concluded that contact with the virus is much higher than the number of confirmed cases: 2.8% of people analysed has already developed antibodies. This is an infection rate 14 times higher than that detected by diagnostic tests used alone.

Charities continue to warn about the increase of food aid requests, which in some institutions have gone up by 40% since the beginning of the pandemic.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The employed population in Portugal decreased 0.3% in Q1 2020 vis-à-vis Q1 2019 - the first year-on-year decline since 2013, according to the National Statistics Institute.

Portugal's sovereign debt interest rates have been steadily rising for four consecutive trading days. The 10-year interest rate benchmark increased by 3.2 basis points, bringing it back to the 1% threshold of April 27.

Due to a higher domestic demand, Portuguese entrepreneurs and investors have started offering certain products and services that otherwise would have not been produced locally. In just one-months' time some goods previously imported (from e.g. China) have started to be produced in domestic supply chains.



RO

14,499 cases, 876 deaths (07/05)

14,107 cases, 858 deaths (06/05)

13,837 cases, 827 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

(based on resident population of 19.4 mil (2019))

Date of the first case registered: 26 February 2020

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): +392/ 14499/ 747

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 226613/ 11681

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 234 ICU

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 119.559 / 2.653 ICU beds

Deaths, including in old-age institutions (daily increase/absolute): 22/876

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 356 /6144

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

The Constitutional Court admitted a complaint of the Ombudsman and ruled as unconstitutional the Government emergency ordinance that gave the authorities the possibility to issue fines during the state of emergency, for people who don't comply with the movement restrictions. Most of the fines issued (290k fines totalling some 120 mill euro until now) can thus be challenged in court and cancelled. Going one step forward, the opposition (PSD, Pro Romania and ALDE) initiated today a bill by which the fines would be simply cancelled.

Interior Minister Vela recognised that there have been some abuses in issuing fines by the police and advised those who felt mistreated to challenge the fines in court. In addition, the General Prosecutor warned that the judiciary would most likely face a "huge wave of complaints," after the state of emergency ends, which will put a high pressure on the capacity of the institutions to deal with complaints.

Nevertheless, the Head of the Emergency Situations Department, Mr Raed Arafat warned that the Constitutional Court decision might leave authorities with a lack of tools to discourage those who do not want to follow the rules, in the middle of a battle in which compliance with the rules is a fundamental condition to prevent a large-scale public health catastrophe. This creates the risk of losing the good results obtained in fighting the pandemics during the last two months.

HEALTH

Health Minister Tataru stated that Romania could reach the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic towards the end of this week, given that over the past week there were signs of having already reached a plateau (with relatively constant number of cases).

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Lack of clarity continues on certain relaxation measures after 15 May, in particular on free circulation between localities; the full package of exit measures is not yet adopted.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

Despite negative figures presented in the COM forecast, Minister Citu said that RO managed to address the negative shock of the pandemic crisis better than expected. He presented figures on consumption for the month of March, as being 8% higher than in the same month of 2019. He also mentioned a measure not very visible yet, namely the tax authority digitalisation, which was finalised mid-April and gave immediate positive results in terms of tax collection, according to the Minister. In addition, he estimates that finalising to make cash registers functional could bring minimum 2 pp. to the budget revenues.

The PM announced that the payment of technical unemployment will be done until 1 June. After that it will continue only for those economic domains where

restrictions will be kept (e.g. tourism). For all other economic activities where the restrictions will be lifted, the government is currently preparing a package with active measures for reviving the work force who benefitted of technical unemployment.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

Positive stories, notably on intra-EU solidarity or good practices in communication:

- REP partnership with leading radio station Europa FM on EU examples of solidarity, part of a collaborative project with the Representation.
Subject: [EU help in the agriculture sector](#)
- REP In-house [graphic animation of timeline of EU actions during the pandemic](#)

Critical narratives about EU policies:

- [An op-ed](#) from Libertatea daily on seasonal workers maintains that both national authorities and the **EU turn a blind eye to abuse and actually condone it**, as the use of cheap labour force trumps other rights.

FURTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): State of emergency for 60 days (16 March – 14 May) **to be followed by a state of alert, with fewer restrictions.**

Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): **67% of Romanians agree with restrictions during the state of emergency (Avangarde survey, 22 April)**

Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): -

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): partially (full quarantine of two infection areas)

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): borders closed for foreign citizens.

External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): [the export ban on cereals during the state of emergency was lifted.](#)

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): yes

Schools closed/reopened/partially): **closed until 15 September (terminal years follow two weeks of school and final exams in June)**

2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication)): **-6.0% (Commission forecast)**; -1.8% (Minister of Finance, 15 April); **-5%** (IMF forecast); **-5.9%** (Fitch forecast);

2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): **-9.2% of GDP (Commission forecast)**; 6.7% (Ministry of Finance, 15 April), **8%** (Fitch, 17 April);

Unemployment rate: **6.5% for 2020 (Commission forecast)**; 915237 tech



SE

24,623 cases, 3,040 deaths (07/05)

23,918 cases, 2,941 deaths (06/05)

23,216 cases, 2,854 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 31 January 2020

Cases of infection (absolute/per million): 24 623, 2462 per million (+705)

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 148 500, 148 50 per million (+29 000 in a week, reported weekly)

Hospitalisations (absolute/per million): 1826 hospitalizations, 182 per million (7 May), 505 in ICU, 50 per million at the moment.

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): 2 per 1000 (hospital beds, January 2020)/1060 (ICU beds (7 May 2020) There are no updated figures of numbers of hospital beds, only the steadily increasing number of ICU beds.

Deaths (including in old-age institutions): 3040 (+99)

Recoveries: no reliable information available

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

HEALTH

There is a discussion of **whether to recommend face masks or not**. So far, the Public Health Authority has not recommended the public to use face masks. The argument is that people feel falsely safe when using face masks and thereby behave less responsibly. Today, the Authority said they would look into the recommendation and see if it needs to be reconsidered.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

To combat fraud with the different support schemes set up in the corona crisis, the Government **appoints a special investigator to review the schemes**, such as aid to companies for lost turnover and funding of shorter working time, with a view to identify fraud. "An anti-fraud general to alert the Government," says Justice Minister Johansson (S-S&D). The investigator will report monthly and produce a final report by end-December.

The sales of **clothing giant H&M fell by 57% in March and April**, compared to the same period last year. In the same period, however, **online sales increased by 32%**. The H&M share rose in today's early trading on news that the company will be allowed to open stores in Germany.

Sources say the Government and its two support parties (Centre Party and Liberals, both RE) have **agreed to raise the ceiling in the unemployment insurance scheme** to EUR 95 per day also after 100 days of unemployment. The changes are temporary, and will apply until January 2021. In addition, the State will **cover the costs for sickness allowances until end-July**, thus prolonging the scope of the measure, which previously went to end-May.

Statistics Sweden say unemployment in the first quarter increased to 7.6%, from 7.2% in the corresponding period last year. However, these figures do not cover the dramatic developments on the labour market after 29 March.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

The Rep **discovered a fraudulent web site claiming they have a fund raising** activity for Corona research on behalf of the Commission, Unicef and WHO (<https://www.coronahjalpen.eu/>). The Rep contacted the SPP as well as the owner of the site in order to fight this disinformation. They then removed the European Commission and our logo from the web site. We have put a **warning** on our FB and twitter accounts and reported it to the police.

The Rep continues to promote our **Digital Europe Day** in all our channels.

Tomorrow, the Swedish Television will broadcast the three Europe Day seminars and we will web stream on our FB and web.

On Saturday 9 May we will promote the **President's video** with Swedish translated subtitles and we will highlight digital Europe Day events and activities all our Sweden, organised by our EDICs. Furthermore, we have prepared **several European solidarity posts** (material provided in English by the different DGs) and we will **flag for the French Europe Day Music Festival**.

	<p>State of emergency, quarantine or other (since/until/no): No</p> <p>Public support for the restrictions (% , if available, source): 77% of the public has confidence in the Government's and the Public Health Authority's chosen Corona strategy (Kantar/Sifo 4 May).</p> <p>Medical supplies (pending issues yes/no): partial shortage, some regions critical</p> <p>Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): partial (max 50 persons)</p> <p>Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): partial (implementing EU rules on bans on non-necessary travels to the EU for non-EU citizens, extended on 16/4 for an additional 30 days)</p> <p>Internal border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no</p> <p>External border restrictions for business (if yes, specify in brief): no</p> <p>Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): no, but some restrictions for restaurants</p> <p>Schools closed/reopened/partially): elementary schools are open</p> <p>2020 GDP growth forecast (% , date of publication): - 7-9 % (28 April, Riksbank)</p> <p>2020 deficit forecast (% of GDP, date of publication): -3.8 % of GDP (15 April)</p> <p>Unemployment rate: 8.1% (27 April, Public Employment Service) Forecast for 2020: 11 % (Ministry of Finance on 24 April)</p>
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SI

1449 cases, 99 deaths (06/05)

1448 cases, 99 deaths (05/05)

1445 cases, 98 deaths (04/05)

Date of the first case registered: 4/3/2020

Cases of infection (absolute/per million): 1449, 690/million (1 new cases)

Number tests done (absolute/per million): 59.978 tests, 28.561/million

Hospitalisations (absolute/per million): 52 (24,8/million), 13 at intensive care (6,2/million)

Hospital beds/ICU beds available: 539 hospital beds for covid-19, 200 ICU beds.

Deaths: 99 (47,1/million)

Recoveries (released from the hospitals): 247

ISSUES OF POLITICAL RELEVANCE

To reject media and political allegation about irregular purchases of protective medical equipment, the Government published 80+ pages long report on purchases which among other blames the previous Government for not taking the coming COVID-19 pandemics seriously, for leaving no stocks of concerned equipment and for purchasing protective medical equipment at even higher average prices despite pre-pandemics lower demand. The Government submitted the report to the Police and invited the Court of Auditors to audit purchases. The opposition commented the report does not objectively portrait events.

HEALTH

The number of hospitalised COVID-19 patients halved from the peak in early April. The number of patients in intensive care dropped even more by almost two thirds.

WHAT THE EU/COMMISSION COULD DO?

The Minister of Economic Development and Technology reiterated requests for joint EU (regional) opening of borders, joint EU standards for providers of hospitality services and EU assistance for the tourist industry. At the EU – Western Balkans Summit PM Janša (EPP) advocated an immediate continuation of enlargement process to the Western Balkans region in spite of the pandemics. Through a key role of the European Commission and the HRVP Borrell the EU should be actively engaged and well-coordinated, despite all challenges, and create favourable conditions for youth in the region.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Public transport will gradually open on 11 May with mandatory distances between a driver and passengers and among passengers of 1.5 meters. International airports (Ljubljana, Maribor and Portorož) could reopen from 11 May onwards, but actual flights depend on arrangements with carriers.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

The Ministry of Infrastructure estimates a backlog of ready-to-make partially EU co-financed investments in transport and energy to EUR 630 million and expects that stricter conditions for involvement of NGOs, which now dispute them, will facilitate their implementation and contribute to GDP growth. The Government will support the tourist industry with a scheme for shorter working hours, extended payments of social contributions for employees, liquidity loans and EUR 16m of grants. The Government Office for Cohesion Policy will relocate EUR 280m of cohesion funds for measures in support of jobs and the health system.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVE

The government COVID-19 speaker starts daily press conferences with a presentation of decisions discussed at the EU level. Media report widely about the national Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development's forecast that is even more pessimistic than the Commission spring economic forecast. With respect to

the Western Balkans Summit, a coverage of the EU's support package to the Western Balkans to fight the coronavirus and its consequences is neutral with commentaries on a lack of a clear accession perspective for the region, a slow pace of reforms, and concerns over influence by third countries in the Balkans. Op-ed by Commissioner Ferreira is published in Večer daily.

BORDERS

Passengers can enter / leave Slovenia through 12 open border crossings to Austria, 7 open border crossings to Italy, 4 open border crossings to Hungary and 32 open border crossings to Croatia.

MIGRATIONS

Slovenia received 608 asylum applications in 2020, that is 48% less than in 2019.

OTHER

A survey done on a sample of 1500 people shows declining worries about COVID-19. At the start of May, 27% of people worried about the pandemics, which is less than 51% at the end of March and less than 35% in April. Downloading of data increased by 30% and mobile calls by 40% during the pandemics.

State of emergency, quarantine or other: Slovenia declared an epidemic on the basis of Article 7 of the Communicable Diseases Act on 12 March 2020.

Public support for the restrictions: 57,7% support to the imposed government measures, (Mediana for Pop TV, 27/4/2020 https://www.24ur.com/novice/slovenija/mediana_2.html)

Medical supplies: After empty warehouses at the start of the pandemics, reserves of medical protection materials and equipment are currently sufficient. The Commodity Reserves have open orders for protection equipment and materials worth around EUR 260 million. A disaggregation of pending and concluded orders is available at the website <https://www.dbr.si/objava/status-narocil-zascitnih-sredstev-na-dan-8-12-in-19-4-ter-nadalje-vsak-delovni-dan/>. Ordering of protection materials is challenging. Attempts to breach public procurement rules are high. Some delivered shipments don't comply with orders for various reasons (e.g. certificates are missing, packed goods don't correspond with declared goods, wrong declarations, low manufactured quality). The Government expects that the Commodity Reserves Authority will have to keep at least a few tenths masks per citizen in stocks in the years to come.

Movement restricted: Partially - temporary prohibition of public gathering at public meetings and public events and other events in public places, closure of most public institutions (but libraries, bookshops, museums and galleries), no movement restrictions with regards to distance or timing, **public transport gradually opened from 11 May**

Borders closed citizens: Partially - upon arrival from abroad, all healthy persons are required to remain in 7 days quarantine due to a possible infection with the new coronavirus. Persons with signs of COVID-19 infection must be isolated. A quarantine does not apply to persons who travel through Slovenia in a single day, persons who possess diplomatic passports, persons providing urgent services, members of rescue and protection services, health workers, police officers, firefighters and persons participating in humanitarian convoys.

Internal border restrictions for business: No - partially closed borders (quarantine for 7 days) do not apply to cross-border daily and weekly migrant workers, drivers of cargo vehicles who transport goods to and from Slovenia or across Slovenia, citizens of Slovenia, Austria, Italy and Hungary who own or lease land plots located on both sides of the border and who perform agricultural work on such land.

External Schengen border restrictions for business: No - partially closed borders for the citizens (quarantine for 7 days) do not apply to cross-border daily and weekly migrant workers, drivers of cargo vehicles who transport goods to and from Slovenia or across Slovenia, citizens of Slovenia and Croatia who own or lease land plots located on both sides of the border and who perform agricultural work on such land.

Shops, restaurants: partially closed, shops large than 400m² and shops in shopping malls are closed, bars and restaurants are allowed to open terraces, certain services directly for consumers are still prohibited (e.g. tourist accommodations)

Schools, kindergartens and faculties: closed, foreseen to gradually re-open from 18 May onwards

	<p>2020 GDP growth forecast: -8.1% (Stability Programme https://www.gov.si/novice/2020-04-30-vlada-sprejela-program-stabilnosti-2020-in-nacionalni-reformni-program-2020/)</p> <p>2020 deficit forecast: 8,1%, Public debt at 82,4% (Stability Programme https://www.gov.si/novice/2020-04-30-vlada-sprejela-program-stabilnosti-2020-in-nacionalni-reformni-program-2020/)</p> <p>Unemployment rate: 46.000 / 4,4% in March 2020 (Eurostat https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/10294732/3-30042020-CP-EN.pdf/05df809c-7eb8-10c7-efcf-35325c84f56e2/)</p>
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SK

1,445 cases, 26 deaths (07/05)

1,429 cases, 25 deaths (06/05)

1,421 cases, 25 deaths (05/05)

KEY DATA AND FIGURES

Date of the first case registered: 6 March

Cases of infection (daily increase/absolute/per million): 16/1445/265

Number tests done (daily/absolute/per million): 5161/109767/20141

Hospitalisations (absolute/of those ICU): 162 hospitalizations/35 hospitalizations of Covid patients/4 patients ICU/1 on lung ventilation

Hospital beds/ICU beds available (absolute values): (2018) 31382/1181

Deaths (daily increase/absolute): **1/26**

Recoveries (daily increase/absolute): 44/806

HEALTH

There seems to be some uncertainty concerning testing on Covid-19 prior to a medical operation. Some patients were asked to have their tests done at their own expense. However, the Health Minister denied that such tests before operations are compulsory and if a hospital requires them it should also cover the expenses. Moreover, many patients are currently on long waiting lists for surgeries, as reportedly hospitals decreased the number of operations by 40-60% during the crisis.

CONSTRAINTS ON PUBLIC LIFE AND POSSIBLE EXIT MEASURES

Pupils could go back to school by end-May or 1 June according to Education Minister Branislav Gröhling (SaS/RE). Ministry claims nothing is set in stone, as the Minister is supposed to discuss this with epidemiologists next week. Kindergartens should open predominantly for children of healthcare workers. First to fifth graders should also return to school. Health Minister Krajčí (OĽaNO) replies that one can ponder the earlier opening of schools and educational facilities, but he wishes to consult the experts first.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT AND RECOVERY MEASURES

On May 6, the Debt and Liquidity Management Agency (ARDAL) successfully sold 5-year bonds worth €2 billion and 12-year bonds worth €2 billion (with interest rates of 0,350 % and 1,056 %) and recorded high interest of the investor community with a total demand of more than €15 billion. The transaction, worth a total of €4 billion, represents the largest sale of government bonds issued by the Slovak Republic and also in the CEE region in history.

According to the commentary of VUB Banka analysts, although the Slovak households are twice as burdened with debt as they were in the crisis ten years ago, due to the falling interest rates and cheap mortgages, their interest payments are less oppressive. The share of people in debt may approach 42%, and the debt-to-income ratio of households has risen from 35% to 70% of the annual income. Due to the fact that most debts are formed by low-interest mortgages, household debt service is lower than it was ten years ago. From this point of view, young people with smaller assets (or singles) face higher risk, as they pay from their monthly income to repay loans more than is usual in other countries.

CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

Czechia and Slovakia are among the most successful member states in terms of combatting the coronavirus. The epidemic in both states is under control according to government representatives and qualified experts. That is why a group of Czech and Slovak luminaries sent an open letter to both countries' Prime Ministers and demand the speeding up of removing border restrictions: "It would be most appropriate, due to long-time historic, economic, cultural and people-to-people bonds between, if Czechia and Slovakia are the first in the EU to open their bilateral border".

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD STORIES, CRITICISM AND FALSE NARRATIVES

HoR gave an interview for evening news of the national TV Markíza on the Mondays' pledging event and its results.

Economic daily HN Online published two articles on the Europe Day with the facts on the EU, advantage of the membership, the EU measures during the Coronacrisis and with the statement of the HoR.

ESO Livia Vašáková gave interviews on the Spring 2020 Economic Forecast for national daily Denník N, public TV RTVS and all new TV TA3. She discussed how will the covid outbreak affect the economy and promoted the new forecast.

MEP Miriam Lexmann (KDH/EPP) pointed out, that one of the Slovak mobile network provider wants to increase roaming fees for Slovaks who remain abroad even during the coronacrisis.

OTHER KEY DATA AND FIGURES

State of emergency, quarantine or other: emergency since 6 March/ongoing

Public support for the restrictions: 65–94% - depending on the measure / 29 March

Focus

Medical supplies: in progress

Movement restricted (yes/no/partially): yes: (public) gathering restriction, limited public transportation, mobile phone tracking

Borders closed citizens (yes/no/partially/reopened): yes: temporary border checks are in place. Borders are closed for foreigners, mandatory Covid-19 test required for all people (Slovaks and residents) returning to Slovakia from abroad, mandatory quarantine until tested negative – there are exemptions for cross-border workers and social and health workers. No international public transport.

Shops, restaurants closed (yes/no/partially): partially: larger shops and pharmacies open, restaurants opened partially (only outside seating), hairdressers, manicure, pedicure and massage facilities can start their operation. Museums, galleries and libraries can open as well.

Schools closed/reopened/partially): closed

2020 GDP growth forecast: **-6,7% of GDP (May 6, 2020; EC Spring forecast)**

2020 general government deficit forecast: **-8,5% of GDP (May 6, 2020; EC Spring forecast)**

Unemployment rate: **8.8% (May 6, 2020; EC Spring forecast)**

