

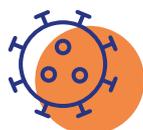


EUROPEAN SEMESTER 2020

European Semester Spring Package

The European Union is experiencing an unprecedented economic shock resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. The European Semester is being refocused to reflect this.

The Commission has structured the country-specific recommendations to reflect the new socio-economic reality of the coronavirus crisis and encourage Member States to implement measures designed to:



Mitigate the immediate health and socio-economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic



Restore growth while supporting the green and digital transitions in the Single Market

Competitive sustainability

The Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy focuses on promoting “competitive sustainability” to build an economy that works for people and the planet. With the coronavirus crisis this remains of utmost importance.

The country-specific recommendations issued to Member States focus on the four dimensions of competitive sustainability: economic stability, social fairness, environmental sustainability and productivity and competitiveness, with a special emphasis on health.

The pandemic underlines the interconnectedness of the economic, social and environmental spheres and the need for a holistic recovery strategy. In this context, the integration of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals in the European Semester remains important.



Economic stability



The recommendations reflect the activation of the general escape clause, allowing Member States to temporarily depart from budgetary requirements in order to preserve jobs, help companies and support a robust recovery.

A supportive fiscal stance is currently warranted in all Member States to facilitate the recovery of consumption, investment and growth.

Social fairness



It is of utmost importance to preserve jobs, provide adequate unemployment benefits and income replacement to all workers. As people return to their workplace, ensuring occupational health and safety is also key. Guaranteeing people the right to develop their skills, in particular digital ones, will be a top priority. Our collective efforts must also focus on tackling inequalities and poverty, and protecting vulnerable groups.

Green Deal



Investing for the recovery creates the opportunity to reshape the EU economy and set it firmly on a sustainable footing. National authorities should identify projects that can boost climate neutrality, especially in the industrial and transport sectors. The European Green Deal and the implementation of the National Energy and Climate Plans should guide investments.

Productivity



Stronger productivity growth and a smooth functioning of the Single Market are crucial to securing a robust recovery. Policies should promote innovation, investment in digitalisation, education, skills and training, a supportive investment environment and well-functioning labour markets.

Next steps

The Commission calls on the Council to endorse these country-specific recommendations and on Member States to implement them fully and in a timely manner.