

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Albania**

**Last update: 10 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The government adopted two support packages in 2020 for people and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic of a combined size of Lek 45 billion (2.8 percent of GDP) consisting of budget spending, sovereign guarantees and tax deferrals. The first package adopted on March 19, 2020 through a normative act had support measures of Lek 23bn (1.4 percent of GDP) through a combination of spending reallocations, spending increases and sovereign guarantees to support affected businesses. (source: imf.org)
- The government has adopted tax deferral measures allowing all large companies (except banks, telecommunication, public enterprises and other essential businesses) to defer payment of profit tax for the second and third quarter of 2020 in 2021. Tourism, active processing and call centers can defer payments of 2020 to 2021. Small businesses with turnover below Lk14m will not pay profit tax for the remainder of 2021.
- The 2021 budget adopted by parliament on Nov 16, allocated Lk14.2bn (0.8 percent of GDP) in COVID-19 related spending. These include Lk7.2bn for COVID-19 treatment, Lk4.5bn for wage increases for doctors and nurses, and Lk2.5bn for a temporary increase in the payments for social assistance and unemployment benefits. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The Government of Albania approved a second "Sovereign Guarantee Fund" of 150 million US\$ as a collateral for the banks in support of the big businesses getting bank for investment in their companies. The interest rate will be covered by the Government of Albania.
- IMF approved 190.5 million US\$ financial assistance for Albania under the Rapid Financing Instrument to balance its urgent balance of payment need.
- On July 17, 2020, the Bank of Albania announced it had set up a €400 million repo line with the ECB. On February 4th, the ECB announced a nine-month extension until March 2022.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Government launched an employment promotion program, that aims to cover part of reemployment costs of those who lost their jobs during the lockdown. For formal sector employees the government will cover half of the wages (at the legal minimum level) and the full employers' share of social contributions for the duration of the program (4 or 8 months). Informal sector employees who lost their jobs during the lockdown, will have the full cost of social contributions (employees and employers share) covered for one year if they formalize.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Ministry of Tourism and Environment in collaboration with Sustainable Rural Development (SRD) - which is a program implemented by GIZ, funded by BMZ (German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development), with the aim of diversifying the rural economy, especially sustainable tourism development and growth of competition in the agricultural sector has been trying to identify issues being faced by businesses and companies in the tourism industry related to the COVID-19 pandemic and emergency situation in Albania, has developed a questionnaire for this purpose. Considering that tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the crisis caused by COVID-19, through this questionnaire, it is intended to understand the current situation of accommodation structures to enable their support.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Albania has lifted all Covid-19 related travel restrictions



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Andorra**

**Last update: 10 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Key above-the-line measures in 2020, amounting to 2.7 percent of 2020 GDP (EUR 68.9 million), include: (i) additional healthcare-related spending (EUR 15.2 million); (ii) payment of 75 percent of the salary to workers under temporary suspension of contract (EUR 31.7 million); (iii) social security contributions for workers who were temporarily laid off due to the pandemic (EUR 3.4 million); (iv) extraordinary benefit for self-employed workers affected by economic activity suspension (EUR 8.6 million); (v) rent/mortgage payment support to the sectors most affected by the pandemic (nightclubs, indoor recreation parks, travel agencies, and recreational and arcade game rooms), with the benefit per establishment capped at EUR 2,000 per month and varying depending on extent of the restrictions imposed to each sector (EUR 0.9 million); (vi) 30-percent reduction in the advance payment of the corporate tax and deferment or installment payments of tax debts without generating late payment interest (EUR 9.1 million). The government also relaxed the requirements to access unemployment benefits and rental housing aid for individuals whose economic and social situation worsened due to the health crisis. (source: imf.org)
- On December 4th, 2020, the authorities approved a new package of measures, which came into force on January 1st, 2021, aimed at supporting the reactivation of the economy. This package extends for up to six months many of the measures already in place, and in some cases, it refines the conditions under which the measures are applicable to adapt to the health and economic circumstances. In addition, on December 16th, the government created a new temporary and exceptional involuntary unemployment benefit to support Andorran workers directly affected by the delayed opening of the ski stations. The benefit will remain in place until the affected companies are able to resume their normal activities in the 2020-21 ski season.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- In 2020, the government provided two packages of government guarantees for new bank loans to businesses, in which the government also takes on the interest payments. The first package, amounting EUR 130 million (5 percent of GDP), to cover operating costs (EUR 60 million) or to service existing debts with Andorran banks (EUR 70 million). The second package, amounting EUR 100 million (4 percent of GDP), to cover: (i) the service of existing debts with Andorran banks; (ii) the payment of the share of benefits associated with the temporary suspension of contracts; and (iii) investments needed to abide with the new health and social distancing protocols. Most of the second package is still available to use in 2021 and the government has relaxed the conditions to access it, incorporating additional purposes for requesting the guaranteed loans, which now include: the payment of rent and utility bills, leasing operations, fuel expenses for transportation, and the corporate contributions to job retention schemes. In addition, to facilitate repayment of the loans, the authorities approved a six-month extension of the maturity date of all the loans formalized in 2020 under the guarantee program, counting from the maturity date stated in the contract. (source: imf.org)



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- An exhaustive monitoring of seasonal workers has been carried out to guarantee a correct dismissal and facilitate the return to their countries of origin (mainly Argentina and Chile).
- The Andorran Government is approving an Omnibus law to help companies and workers. The objectives are mainly two: a) guarantee the wages of workers; b) establish economic aid for companies related to labor, tax, banking, rent, etc.
- on December 16th, the government created a new temporary and exceptional involuntary unemployment benefit to support Andorran workers directly affected by the delayed opening of the ski stations; 65 applications were received, amounting to €45,515 in December. The benefit will remain in place until the affected companies are able to resume their normal activities in the 2020-21 ski season.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The Government held two daily press conferences and an information banner continuously updated, with recommendations and decrees, most recently on the closing of construction and other sectors including tourist and leisure centres, ski resorts.
- Andorra Tourism has halted all communications.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- Andorra, like most countries in the region, has applied a series of protocols for people visiting the country during the winter season. Tourists who spend three or more nights in the country, and who are aged over 6 years, are asked to provide a diagnostic test (PCR or TMA) carried out at most 72 hours before their arrival in Andorra. Visitors coming from France, Spain and Portugal are exempt from submitting a test due to the health agreements between Andorra and these countries. Similarly exempt are tourists coming from countries considered to be in the 'green zone', i.e. countries where more than 5,000 tests per 100,000 inhabitants per week are performed or where less than 9% of the total number of tests are positive.
- When it comes to international connections, it is important to remember that both France and Spain continue to have travel restrictions in force.
- In the case of Catalonia, travel is allowed between Andorra and the Alt Urgell region.
- In France, from 1 March onwards, travel is allowed between Andorra, Ariège and the Pyrénées-Orientales. Therefore, residents in these regions who wish to travel to Andorra may do so without having to undergo a test before returning to France, provided they stay less than 24 hours. The measure likewise applies to residents of Andorra.
- The rest of the restrictions remain in force, so whether entering or leaving France, it is now mandatory for everyone aged over 11 years to present a negative viral test from within the last 72 hours to enter French territory from any European Union or assimilated country, such as the Principality. French citizens wishing to come to Andorra can have a diagnostic test done in Andorra and request a report of the results.
- In Andorra, everyone aged over 8 years must wear a mask and follow the restrictions in place to prevent infection. (source: <https://www.govern.ad/covid19/en/>)

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Armenia**

**Last update: 10 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The Ministry of Finance created a treasury account to support measures aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19 in Armenia.
  - An emergency package of approximately AMD 25 billion funds will go to support businesses.
  - Another package of 25 billion AMD will be designated for social assistance programs.
  - Approximately AMD 80 billion will be placed in a foundation, which will be aimed at restructuring the economy in accordance with the post-crisis situation.
  - The plan is to create "financial cushions" to support businesses through times of irregular consumption in order to mitigate potential losses. A number of credit programs have been designed, that include:
    - Co-financing of credit;
    - Refinancing of credit;
    - Interest rate subsidization.
- This will allow businesses to remain in a "holding position," not be weighed down by interest payments, navigate currency fluctuation risks, keep their employees and be able to take care of utility expenses.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Five programs have been designed with specific monetary measures each:

- First program:
    - Any private commercial organization or individual entrepreneur who has a good borrower's and taxpayer's record, having at least one business activity in the Republic of Armenia for at least the past one year, has the opportunity to benefit from 3 forms of government assistance: co-financing, refinancing or subsidizing targeted loans.
    - Assistance is applicable to the following six areas: payroll, payment of taxes and duties, purchase or import of raw materials, import of equipment and supplies, payment of services, import of food.
    - Each entity shall be provided up to AMD 500 million under one support instrument in the form of a loan, while the maximum amount of co-financing or refinancing is AMD 250 million. The maximum actual annual interest rate on loans will range from 0% to 6% depending on the instrument used.
  - Second program:
    - Zero interest rates shall be applicable to loans and agricultural leases in all agricultural programs and for all entities.
  - Third program:
    - Will provide assistance to those entrepreneurs operating in the processing industry, accommodation and public catering, fleets and warehousing, tourism, and other services, with annual turnover of 24-500 million drams.
    - Support will be made available with the personal guarantee provided by another person or entities participating in the management of the organization. Beneficiaries will be filtered and selected by the Investment Support Center in a simplified procedure.
    - Supportive lending shall be provided for eligible expenses for a period of up to 36 months, the interest rate being 0% in the first two years and 12% per annum in the third year.
  - Fourth program:
    - Will provide support to families with young children facing social problems as a result of labor market difficulties. Support is provided at the minimum monthly salary (AMD 68,000) for each minor child.
  - Fifth program: refers to jobs support (see under III. "Jobs and Skills")
- Generally, borrowers with financial difficulties can delay repayment of mortgage loans for six months. The repayments of loans for loans under the National Mortgage Company CJSC and "Housing for Young Families" CJSC can be delayed for up to 6 months, that is, until September.
- Co-financing, refinancing or interest rate subsidizing of targeted loans/leasing provided to business entities, particularly those in agricultural sectors, by licensed banks or credit organizations operating in the country
  - Targeted loans provided by financial institutions with low interest rates (no interest for the first 2 years and 12% for the 3rd year) to SMEs in sectors including manufacturing, transportation and storage economy, tourism, other service sectors, and healthcare.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

• In collaboration with the Business Support Office and the Investment Support Center, the Ministry of Economy is trying to identify issues being faced by businesses and companies related to the COVID-19 pandemic and emergency situation in Armenia. A questionnaire was developed for this purpose.



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



#### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



#### IX. OTHER

- The Government has launched a platform (<https://covid19.gov.am/hy/v1>), where updated information about coronavirus developments, decisions by the Special Commission, and travel restrictions will be regularly posted. A mobile app will be provided to allow citizens to contact health authorities.
- The Government established quarantine in effect until July 11, 2021, requiring incoming travelers to have negative PCR tests taken within 72 hours prior to crossing border. As of mid-February, all restrictions on holding public events are removed.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Austria

Last update: 15 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

The government's economic support measures included the following tax-related facilitations:

- For all economic sectors, tax deferrals are made available: includes deferrals or instalments (e.g. income tax, corporate tax), suspension of fees, extension of deadlines, etc.
- In order to support the tourism and leisure industry as well as the cultural sector, VAT was reduced to 5% until the end of 2021.
- The reduced VAT rate of 5% applies particularly for income from the sale of food, beverages and overnights.
- Moreover, the reduced VAT rate of 5% applies for tickets for theaters, zoos, museums, circus or cinemas as well as expositions.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

The Austrian government released support measures for all economic sectors including tourism:

1. COVID-19-Recovery Package (50 billion euros):

- Guarantees of up to 100% for loans and direct grants to cover a maximum of 75% of fixed costs incurred during a limited period of three months. The fixed cost subsidy has been extended until June 2021 and was adapted to the circumstances of the sectors heavily affected, such as tourism.
- Lockdown support: Enterprises closed during lockdown from November 2020 on receive between 80% (e.g. accommodation, gastronomy) and 20% (retail) of their turnover of the same period last year (December 2020 up to 50%; from January 2021 onwards new combined model to cover up to 30%). Special "March bonus" of up to 45% (instead of 30%) for March 2021.
- Separate support for landlords of private accommodation ("Privatzimmervermieter") and farms that offer accommodation services (e.g. Holidays on the farm) through "Agrarmarkt Austria GmbH".
- Fund for cases of hardship: Direct subsidies for one-person-enterprises and micro-enterprises with a maximum of 30,000 EUR per enterprise.
- Loan Moratorium: for private persons and micro-enterprises □ possibility of suspension of repayments for ten months (March 2020-January 2021).
- Loss carryback: The loss carryback will allow the losses of the current period to be set off against profits from the previous period and, under certain conditions, against 2018.

2. COVID-19 Investment bonus: Incentive for enterprises to invest in their businesses and thus contribute to saving companies and jobs as well as strengthen competitiveness. Grants of 7% for investments, which will be doubled in case of investments in greening, digitalisation or health. Total volume 3 billion EUR – grants between 5,000 and 50 Mio. EUR. Moreover, specific measures for tourism were installed:

1. Specific package for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) in the tourism sector (administered by the Austrian Bank for Tourism Development):

- Guarantees for bridging loans used to cover temporary liquidity shortages caused by decreases in turnover because of COVID-19 (volume of available guarantees up to 1.625 billion EUR).
- Tourism enterprises that have had an active loan before the outbreak of COVID-19 can apply for the suspension of all loan repayments for the year 2020 and 2021.

2. Support for events: Event organisers will receive financial compensation in case the event is cancelled or restricted due to COVID-19 (March 2021 – December 2022); total volume of 300 Mio. EUR (administered by the Austrian Bank for Tourism Development). Maximum support per event organiser amounts to 1 Mio. EUR (discussion on increasing the max. amount).

3. Support for package travel organisers: guarantees by the Austrian Bank for Tourism Development to cover the down payments by travellers in case of insolvency of the package travel organiser in 2021 (measure to comply with the Package Travel Directive and to address a market failure caused by COVID-19). The measure provides for a guarantee limit of 300 Mio. EUR.

4. Special funding scheme for the gastronomy, in particular to incentivize investments in open-air seating: grants of up to 20,000 EUR; total volume of 10 Mio. EUR.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

The government's support measures for all economic sectors include the following employment-related support:

- Short-time working model: Short-time work is supposed to ensure that companies do not lay off their employees but keep them despite economic difficulties (until at least June 2021). The Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) takes over the salary of all workers (except public service) including apprentices of min. 10% up to 90% of the working time according to collective bargaining agreements up to a certain threshold. If a business has to stay closed due to lockdown regulations, it is possible to reduce working hours to 0% (Nov. 2020 – Feb. 2021) while employees will still receive 80-90% of their income. Additionally, in November and December 2020 employees received up to 100 EUR to substitute tips.
- Restart bonus: Employees that start a new job, but can only work less hours than before, may receive the remaining amount by the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) (up to 80% of their previous salary). This helps tourism businesses that might not work at full capacity at the moment, but still need the manpower. The measure runs since June 2020 for one year and presents for tourism businesses a good and practicable addition to the short-time work model.
- Special short-time bonus of EUR 1,000 for enterprises that were closed from November 2020 (for payout of holiday entitlements and tip substitute).

As of July, Austria implements a voluntary testing programme (PCR tests) for staff in the accommodation sector. As of September, the programme was extended to staff in gastronomy, youth hostels and camping grounds. As of November, the programme was extended further to skiing instructors, mountain guides, tour guides and operators of private lodgings. Staff have the opportunity to get tested for COVID-19 once a week for free, costs are borne by the federal government. Participating establishments may receive a label proving that they are part of the testing programme.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Information websites:

- [www.sichere-gastfreundschaft.at](http://www.sichere-gastfreundschaft.at)  
(German) More detailed information for guests and businesses: information on support measures, rules and regulations, FAQs, etc. for different areas (accommodation, gastronomy, leisure activities, fairs and events).
- <https://www.austria.info/en/service-and-facts/coronavirus-information>  
(English and other languages) Information for guests regarding COVID-19 rules and regulations.
- <https://corona-ampel.gv.at/>  
(German) Austrian COVID "Traffic Light": risk assessment of Austrian regions □ risk of spread of COVID-19 and systemic risks (health care system).
- [https://www.sozialministerium.at/en/Coronavirus/New-coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).html](https://www.sozialministerium.at/en/Coronavirus/New-coronavirus-(COVID-19).html)  
(German and English) General information on COVID-19 by the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Nearly all support measures for the Austrian tourism sector, including COVID-19 related measures, are administered by the Austrian Bank for Tourism Development ("ÖHT - Österreichische Hotel- und Tourismusbank"), a specialised bank acting in a public-private partnership with the Ministry responsible for tourism. On behalf of the Ministry and in cooperation with the corresponding principal banks the ÖHT supports businesses with subsidized financing, guarantees, grants and knowledge.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Throughout the crisis, Austria has introduced, withdrawn and reintroduced a number of different measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 in accordance with the respective epidemiological developments. Rules on physical distancing, face masks and general hygiene have applied consistently during this time.

Due to the emergence of more infectious virus variants as of 25 January, the minimum physical distance was increased from 1 to 2 meters and the use of FFP2 is now mandatory in (e.g.) shops, public transport, accommodation, gastronomy. Cross-border travel:

- All travelers (exemptions apply) entering Austria must register digitally in advance to obtain a so-called "pre-travel clearance" (PTC). At the border, they will need to show their PTC (either digitally or as a hard copy).
- People entering Austria from any country - except from a few countries worldwide, which are classified as "safe" (list is regularly updated, depending on, inter alia, infection rate) - need to show a negative COVID test (PCR tests no older than 72 hours and antigen tests no older than 48 hours are admissible) in addition to committing to 10-day self-quarantine (after 5 days of quarantine at the earliest, you can get a PCR or antigen test. If the test is negative, you do not need to quarantine further.). If you are unable to show a test at the point of entry, you are required to get one within 24 hours.
- Entry is prohibited to third-country nationals when arriving from any states except the Schengen area and the countries classified as "safe". Exemptions apply.

Specific measures for gastronomy, accommodation and leisure facilities:

- Restaurants, bars, cafes are closed for customers (take-away allowed from 06.00 to 19.00 except for alcoholic beverages served in open containers; delivery services allowed 24/7); take-away food/drinks may not be consumed within a 50m radius of the establishment.

- Accommodation establishments may offer services only to business travellers and for other essential reasons.
- Cultural, leisure facilities, sights (museums, cinema, theater etc.) are closed.
- Events are not allowed (except, e.g., funerals, professional sport events without attendees, political demonstrations).
- Cable cars/ski-lifts may open for leisure/sports activities under strict regulations: maximum capacity at 50 %, FFP2 masks when queuing and during the ride.

• Events are not allowed (except, e.g., funerals, professional sport events without attendees, political demonstrations)

As of 8 February 2021, after a full nation-wide lockdown, some soft opening measures were introduced:

- Stay-at-home-order from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- Opening of elementary schools, high schools open in shift operation. For all: obligatory testing of students and teachers once/twice per week
- Opening of shops, museums, zoos and libraries (20m<sup>2</sup> per person)
- Opening of specific services like hair-dressers, cosmetics and massage, etc. with obligatory testing of clients up to 48h prior to the service and regular testing of service staff.

For regularly updated information on rules and regulations in Austria, please also visit Re-open EU:

<https://reopen.europa.eu/en>.

Marketing measures:

- After the COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020, a special campaign (worth 40 million euros) was run by the Austrian National Tourist Office (ANTO) to attract national, German and other travellers from open markets to support the restart of Austrian tourism.
- Moreover, ANTO has adjusted its service and information concept to strengthen the guests' sense of security and satisfy the increased need for information: <https://www.austria.info/en/service-and-facts/coronavirus-information>



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The general rule of keeping at least 2 meter distance from people not living in the same household and wearing FFP2 masks in public places indoors applies.

COVID-19 Testing for tourism staff:

- As of July, Austria implements a voluntary testing programme for staff in the accommodation sector (PCR tests).
- Staff have the opportunity to get tested for COVID-19 once a week for free, costs are borne by the federal government. Participating establishments may receive a label proving that they are part of the testing programme.
- As of September, the programme was extended to staff in gastronomy, youth hostels and camping grounds.
- As of November, the programme was extended further to skiing instructors, mountain guides, tour guides and operators of private lodgings.

Links where the protocols are available:

- <https://www.austria.info/en/service-and-facts/coronavirus-information> Information for guests regarding COVID-19 rules and regulations (English and other languages)
- [www.sichere-gastfreundschaft.at](http://www.sichere-gastfreundschaft.at) More detailed information for guests and businesses (German): information on support measures, rules and regulations, FAQs, etc. for different areas (accommodation, gastronomy, leisure activities, fairs and events).
- [https://www.sozialministerium.at/en/Coronavirus/New-coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).html](https://www.sozialministerium.at/en/Coronavirus/New-coronavirus-(COVID-19).html) General information on COVID-19 by the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Austria is currently in lockdown and hotels and restaurants are closed, making tourism virtually impossible. Essential travel (e.g. for business that cannot be delayed) is still possible.



## IX. OTHER

On the Website of the Austrian Ministry for European and International Affairs relevant international travel information for each country and travel warnings are published (in German only): <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/reise-aufenthalt/reiseinformation/>

Austrian tourism development since the outbreak of COVID-19:

- The outbreak of COVID-19 continues to have massive impacts on the tourism sector in Austria. All stakeholders along the value chain are affected.
- Tourism figures for 2020 indicate a decline of 35.9% in overnight stays and 45.8% in tourist arrivals (Dec: -93.5%|-95.5%, Nov: -79.7%|-90.0%, Oct: -49.2%|-57.5%, Sep: -14.1%|-29.1%, Aug: -11.2%|-20.1%, Jul: -17.4%|-26.6%, Jun: -58.6%|-61.5%, May: -89.9%|-91.9%, Apr: -97.0%|-98.2%, Mar: -58.6%|-67.4%).
- Despite the fact that overnight figures for February 2020 still grew 7.2% compared to 2019, the closing down of accommodation providers due to outbreak of COVID-19 in Austria in March 2020 resulted in an overall decrease of 18.1% in overnight stays and 22.0% in tourist arrivals during the winter season 2019/2020 (November-April).

- The summer season (May-October) brought a slight relief for rural tourist regions due to the increase of domestic tourists, while urban tourism remained highly affected during that time as well. Overnight stays decreased by 31.8% and tourist arrivals by 42.6% compared to the previous year.
- Due to the current lockdown and the strict regulations for cross-border travel as well as for accommodating guests only under certain exceptional conditions, the preliminary figures for January 2021 show a strong decline in overnight stays (-98.1%) and tourist arrivals (-98.6%) compared to last year's results.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Azerbaijan**

**Last update: 10 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Fiscal measures include:

- AZN 1 bln (US\$ 588.2 million) has been allocated from the state budget for funding of measures related to negative impact of the pandemic to Azerbaijan economy, employment and business.
- The Fund to Support Fight Against Coronavirus, aiming to take preventive measures and speed up the fight against COVID-19 has been set up.
- AZN 20 million (US\$ 11.8 million) have been allocated to the fund from the state budget.
- To strengthen the fight against COVID-19 virus, temporary additions to the salaries of medical workers has appointed.
- Imported raw materials for production of products for fighting the pandemic were exempted from VAT.
- The economy minister announced 9 different programs with a total value of AZN 2.5 billion (US\$ 1.47 billion) aimed at reduction of business losses, employment support, sustainability of the economic cycle.
- Tourism sector was named as one of the most affected by the pandemic thus ensuring the opportunity to get more share in support mechanisms.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

The Ministry of Labor and Social Protection has created a Working Group on elaborating measures for solution of possible impact of the pandemic on employment and social welfare. The WG is responsible for preparing an Action Plan on social protection and government support to contract employees working in the industries affected by the pandemic, on strengthening the employment measures in short and midterm and reduce unemployment risk by intensification social protection of vulnerable population.

The following are measures on support of employment and social protection are being currently discussed:

- Reduction of interest on social insurance payments or reimbursement of expenses.
- Providing financial assistance to entrepreneurs for supporting contract employees with the wage level lower than the minimum monthly average salary (250 manat or US\$ 147)
- Exemption from or compensation of compulsory health insurance obligations.
- Temporary easing of conditions for the use of social insurance funds.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The topic on giving priorities to SMEs during the state procurement operations is being discussed.
- Some hotels provided their infrastructure and facilities for accommodation of people on quarantine. The government considers the ways of compensation for these kinds of services.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- A four-phased recovery plan was introduced, beginning with lockdown and closed borders in phase one and culminating with a return to a "new normal" with international travel in phase four.

- The recovery strategy focuses on promoting domestic tourism, developing new tourism products, skills building and trainings for the industry players to help them expand on their knowledge and other activities.
- Azerbaijan as a tourism destination is endeavoring to make sure that the local industry adapts to the new demands of travellers and provides the best travel experiences in the era of “new normal”.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- Azerbaijan was one of the first destinations to introduce nationwide health, safety and hygiene standards.
- SAHMAN (Sanitation and Hygiene Methods and Norms) initiative is an innovative health and safety program for local industry players aimed at improving standards of hygiene and sanitation.
  - By participating, stakeholders commit to sector-specific checklists introducing initiatives such as mandatory precautionary measures, safe distancing, disinfection, quarantine areas, cleaning methodology, and more. The program is audited and certified by PwC.
  - It focuses on accommodation, F&B and transportation providers – 3 key aspects of the tourism value chain.
  - The program reaffirms the country's commitment towards providing a world-class tourism destination for its citizens and future visitors alike in the post-pandemic world. It calls upon all stakeholders in Azerbaijan to adopt even better practices in their businesses in the interest of safeguarding public health and supporting the regrowth of the industry.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- the Azerbaijan Tourism Board has launched a new project to support the companies engaged in domestic tourism in the post-pandemic period, as well as to develop an innovative and digital approach in this sphere.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Belarus

Last update: 25 February 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Tax incentives include:
  - deferral of tax obligations;
  - abatement of property taxes;
  - acceleration of the refund of the difference between the amount of tax deductions and the total amount of the value added tax;
  - recording of the costs associated with sanitary and anti-epidemic measures, including restrictive ones as part of the overhead costs during income tax computation;
  - entitlement for individual entrepreneurs who have paid a single tax on individual entrepreneurs and other individuals to switch to a different regime of taxation in 2020;
  - exclusion from items taxable with the personal income tax on individuals of incomes in the amount of the cost of personal protective gear, etc.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The National Bank issued recommendations to banks to provide individual clients with deferments on their loans and forbade them from unreasonably raising commission fees on payments or from limiting banking operations. It was also recommended that banks grant loan repayment holidays and postpone due dates.
- National Bank's recommended to banks to consider the possibility of granting citizens a deferral of loan repayment and interest payable on a loan, along with a simultaneous prolongation of the loan repayment period as well as to leave interest rates unchanged on a loan in the event of debt restructuring



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Sickness benefits granted out of the state social insurance funds for persons taking care of a child under 10 years of age, who attends an education institution and is in contact with persons with COVID-19 infection.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Belgium**

**Last update: 10 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Where it can be demonstrated that the taxpayer has payment difficulties due to Covid-19, it is possible to request postponement of personal income tax and corporate tax payments.
- The authorities of Brussels introduced a one-off allowance of EUR 4.000 for companies < 50 full time equivalent employees which had to close their doors and with different VAT NACE codes (Hotels, Restaurants, Travel Agencies, etc.).
- The authorities of Brussels have taken the following measures:
  - suspension of LEZ fines (low emission zones);
  - suspension City Tax (on tourist accommodation for the period 1 January to 30 June 2020);
  - tax suspension on the operation of taxis or cars with driver;
  - maintenance of subsidies for postponed events and up to the amount of the expenses incurred, not refundable for cancelled events.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The government of Wallonia has taken the following measures:
  - freezing of loans to public institutions;
  - guarantees on bank loans to companies (SME's and larger ones);
  - rapid loans (equal to the bank loans) from the Walloon government funding body (SOGEPa) for turnaround SME's;
  - flexibility for SME's grant applications.
- The authorities of Brussels have taken the following measures:
  - granting of public guarantees for bank loans (for a total of EUR 20 million via de Fonds Bruxellois de Garantie);
  - a loan at a reduced rate for the hospitality sector for companies (via Finance.brussels);
  - emergency loan for the cash flow of cultural and creative companies at a fixed rate (2%) for an amount of EUR 20.000 to 100.000.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Brussels and Flanders provided EUR 4000 to businesses which were shut down.
- Persons who are self-employed as their main activity are eligible for the bridging right if they are forced to stop their activity, as soon as this interruption lasts longer than one week. The financial support amounts to EUR 1,266.37 per month if they do not have dependant family members and EUR 1,582.46 if they have do have dependant family members.
- Temporary unemployment is granted automatically, extended and reinforced. This means that companies do not have to provide a reason for seeking temporary unemployment. Temporary unemployment is also possible for people who, for example, have to stay at home because their partner is infected.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Walloon Tourism Observatory is conducting each week a survey among a number of tourist accommodation establishments, in collaboration with professional associations (tourist attractions and museums cannot be contacted because they had to close), to measure the impact of coronavirus on tourism.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- VisitFlanders is conducting consultations with tourism stakeholders.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Cancellations of an event due to the COVID-19 crisis can be compensated via vouchers. If a voucher has not been used by the titleholder within 2 year of its issuance, the titleholder can request a reimbursement.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- Quarantine/Isolation time is extended to 10 days for people who test positive
- The Consultative Committee had decided to ban non-essential travellers to and from Belgium on January 22, which was effective until March 1, 2021 and later extended until April 1, 2021

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Bosnia & Herzegovina

Last update: 10 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The BIH deployed substantial resources in 2020 to mitigate the adverse effects of COVID-19 and support the economy and the households. These included strong support to the health sector and severely affected firms. The health-sector support packages amounting to KM 223 million or 0.6 percent of GDP covered funding for medical supplies and facilities, hiring professionals, and raising their wages. Total support to households and firms amounted to KM603 million (or 1.9 percent of GDP). Both entities used compensation/solidarity funds to help firms subsidize Social Security Contributions (SSC) and provide minimum wages to workers in affected sectors. At the entity level, the BIH provided KM55 million support to the health sector, KM180 million support for firms, and KM 256 million other support to cantons and municipalities. In contrast, the RS entity provided KM148 million support to the health sector, KM94 million support to firms, and KM36 million in the form of other support to municipalities and other public entities. In addition, the FBIH and RS governments established guarantee funds amounting to KM100 million and KM50 million, respectively. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

• The government announced a the creation of a guarantee fund to provide guarantees to banks for working capital loans to the most affected sectors.

• The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved on 20 April an EUR 330 million to Bosnia and Herzegovina to combat the coronavirus pandemic and remedy the economic consequences.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

The following measures have been taken:

• Time spent in isolation or self-isolation is treated as sick leave. It will be paid by employer but will be refunded by the cantonal health fund within 45 days from the request for refund. Sick leave certificate can be issued in a state-run healthcare institution or in a private practice.

• Recommendations for employers: reduction of working hours and organization of remote work if possible; annual and other leaves to be allowed according to the law; leave allowances to parents with children not older than 10 years (one parent per family); unclear whether paid or unpaid leave; all business trips to be cancelled; meetings with a larger number of participants to be cancelled, and if necessary, to be organized in large rooms ensuring with sufficient distance between participants (1-2 meters).



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

• The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina will coordinate with professional associations in tourism to develop and implement the program to stimulate tourism sector, promotions, development of new products to attract international tourists at the same time to focus on developing in our domestic tourism.

• This Ministry is in constant contact with entity ministries such as the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Ministry of Trade and Tourism of Republika Srpska to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the tourism sector.

• The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also in agreement with foreign donors (USAID, UNDP, GIZ, EBRD) to help the tourism sector through new projects.

• Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to promote domestic tourist attractions. It is extremely important to bring to the citizens the importance of traveling to local destinations in an attempt to recover domestic tourist capacity in the in circumstances caused by COVID-19 pandemic.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

From September 10th, Bosnia and Herzegovina opens borders for all foreign tourists with a negative PCR test.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- City of Bihac and the Tourist Board of the City of Bihac, with the support of the Municipal Environmental and Economic Governance (MEG) project funded by the Government of Switzerland and implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), launched campaign "Holidays in BiH" ". The aim of the campaign is to attract domestic tourists, promote natural beauties. The City of Bihac has allocated 100,000 BAM for this project, while the Government of Switzerland participates through the MEG project with 54,000 BAM.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Bulgaria**

**Last update: 10 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The European Commission has approved a 500 million BGN leva (about EUR 255 million) public guarantee scheme to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the context of the coronavirus outbreak. The scheme was approved under the State aid Temporary framework adopted by the Commission.
- Additionally, the following measures are introduced (open to the tourism sector):
  - mitigation of the negative effects of the delays of debtors on loans and leases, i.e. no penalties are charged;
  - the State will assist businesses by covering the insurance payments owed by the employers. This is an opportunity that can be used by those employed in hospitality, travel agencies and tour operators, restaurants and fast food establishments;
- Bulgaria to give 10M leva to aid tourism business hit by Covid-19. Bulgaria's tourism business will receive 10 million leva (about EUR 5.11 million) under the EU Innovation and Competitiveness operational programme.
- The European Commission has approved an EUR4.4 million Bulgarian support measure to Burgas and Varna airports in the context of the coronavirus outbreak. The measure was approved under the state aid Temporary Framework.
- On December 21, The European Commission has approved 51 million leva, or about 26 million euro, in state aid for Bulgaria's tour operators and travel agents. The funding will be issued as grants, to be used to refund customers whose travel packages have been cancelled between March 1 and December 31 due to the coronavirus outbreak, and to cover costs of their main activities over the same period.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The Bulgarian National Bank launched programmes in support of businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative supplements the government's measures and includes sectors that are, for the time being, left out of the scope of the state aid. The financial resource is being channeled towards the sectors hit hardest by the pandemic – retail trade, transport, the hotel and restaurant business, tourism, preschool education in the private sector, artistic and creative activity, sporting activities, organization of congresses and expositions, the official announcement reads.
- The European Commission has approved a 150 million euro (about 294 million leva) Bulgarian scheme to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the context of the coronavirus outbreak.
- The European Central Bank (ECB) and the central Bulgarian National Bank have agreed to set up a precautionary currency agreement (swop line) to provide euro liquidity. Under the new swop line, the Bulgarian National Bank will be able to borrow up to two billion euro from the ECB in exchange for Bulgarian leva.
- Specialized enterprises and cooperatives of people with disabilities will be able to apply for financial assistance under OP "Innovation and competitiveness".
- Finance Ministry announced that BGN 4.5 billion of resources for the benefit of small and medium-sized businesses, the self-employed and people on unpaid leave will be committed in the form of financial instruments with public resources for the period of the crisis caused by the coronavirus. The first instrument presented is through the Bulgarian Development Bank and is for the provision of interest-free loans to protect people deprived of the opportunity to work due to the pandemic; it is for individuals employed on unpaid leave and for the self-employed. The second instrument is also managed by Bulgarian Development Bank and is for securing unsecured loans by commercial banks, and is accessible to all business sectors. The third instrument is of though the Fund of Funds with permission for refinancing of liabilities that occurred more than 60 days ago - the measure is administered again through commercial banks and is aimed at supporting small and medium-sized enterprises. Through the Fund of Funds there is a micro-credit instrument of up to for entrepreneurs and self-employed persons with a short business history.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- As part of the Government program to support companies and employees on unpaid leave, the Bulgarian Development Bank will facilitate the financial support for companies and employees on unpaid leave in the amount of BGN 1,500. The unpaid leave will be provided through the commercial banks and their branch network in the country. The capital increase of the bank is under preparation by the Bulgarian government. Through it, the BDB will issue guarantees to commercial banks for lending to both businesses and employees on unpaid leave from the sectors concerned.
- The National Assembly will vote amendments to the laws in force during the current state of emergency. The Ministry of Tourism proposed amendments to the Tourism Act aimed at reducing the burden on business and the risk of further spread of the virus. Measures would include:

- The Labour Code changes will allow employers to force employees to take their paid leave during the State of Emergency. When a company's operations are suspended by government order, employees have to be paid no less than 50 per cent of their net wages, but no less than 75 per cent of the minimum salary mandated by law.
- Employers would be able to apply for state aid from the unemployment fund of the State Social Security Institute, to receive 60 per cent of wages covered by the government.

National Assembly voted a Law on measures and actions during the state of emergency. Some of them are aimed at supporting employment and allow employers to assign employees to work from home as well as send them on paid annual leave.

The law mandates that employers should introduce distance work whenever possible and if not, implement strong anti-epidemic measures, including disinfection of the premises and hygiene training for their employees.

- Workers who are on unpaid leave due to the suspension or contraction of their businesses due to the state of emergency may be hired for a second contract by other employers whose activity has not been affected. The employment of a second employment contract does not require permission from the employer with whom the employee has a basic employment contract, unless there is an explicit prohibition therein.

• According to the Law on measures and actions during the state of emergency, employers would be able to apply for state aid from the unemployment fund of the State Social Security Institute, to receive 60 per cent of wages covered by the government, with the remaining 40% covered by the employer.

- Bulgaria's government allocated an additional 40 million levs (\$24.9 million/20.5 million euro) under operational programme Human Resources Development to support employment in the tourism and transport sectors.

The two sectors have already benefited from 40 million levs of support during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the new funds will enable the government to extend the employment retention measures until the end of March



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Ministry of Tourism issued Guidelines and recommendations of the Ministry of Tourism and the Commission for Consumer Protection regarding concluded tourist package contracts whose implementation is impossible in the conditions of a state of emergency resulting from the spread of COVID-19 in Bulgaria and all over the world.
- The Ministry of Tourism formulated Guidelines for the accommodation places and a special declaration for the tourists that will be accommodated in different tourist establishments in the country.



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The Ministry of Tourism maintains constant communication with all tourism stakeholders – tourist organizations, associations, hoteliers, restaurateurs, tour operators and travel agents. The Ministry publishes information on its website regarding the situation.

A logistics coordination center adjacent to the National Operational Center is set up.



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- The Ministry of Tourism formulated Guidelines for the accommodation places and a special declaration for the tourists that will be accommodated in different tourist establishments in the country.
- Bulgaria's government granted 2.4M leva (EUR 1.23M) for ad campaign for winter tourism in 2020



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The recommendations of the Ministry of Tourism, coordinated with the Ministry of Health, regarding the 2020/2021 winter season provide include:

- In gondola lifts, chairlifts and rope tows, tourists must cover their nose and mouth during their stay in the cabin as well as on the whole territory of lift stations with face masks, scarves, or other type of covering.
- Cabins must undergo disinfection several times a day according to a schedule, with disinfectants which are approved by the Minister of Health.
- Hand disinfectants, approved by the Minister of Health, must be made available at the designated places before and after use of the cable cars.
- All-day usage of the cabins has to be subject to maximum opened windows in order to let the fresh air circulate in them.
- Face mask sign stickers should be placed in each cabin
- A minimum of one-metre distance is required between people queuing for the lifts
- Cafes and restaurants in ski zones must observe the guidelines for the functioning of accommodation establishments and food and entertainment establishments in the context of the danger of Covid-19 infection in Bulgaria
- Groups may not be more than 10 people, there may be no participation of people in a visibly unhealthy state, and there must be no mixing between groups or transfer of people from one group to another



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- Although Bulgarian authorities have lifted restrictions on domestic travel, a number of restrictions remain in place. The wearing of face masks is mandatory in all indoor public spaces, with the exception of dining and drinking areas. Restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues may operate at a reduced capacity with social distancing measures in place. However, indoor and outdoor gatherings remain limited to 30 people.



## IX. OTHER

- Bulgaria's government decided on February 24 to reopen restaurants, bars and cafes on March 1 and night clubs on April 1 despite the constantly rising number of new coronavirus (COVID-19) cases

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Croatia

Last update: 10 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The European Commission has approved about EUR 202 million (HRK 1.53 billion) aid scheme to support companies of all sizes active in the sports and tourism sectors affected by the coronavirus pandemic
- On February 5 - Croatia's government adopted new measures worth 1.5 billion kuna (EUR 198.4 million) to help businesses operating in tourism and sports during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The state aid should provide the companies with more liquidity and easier access to funding under favourable conditions, helping them survive, preserve employees, mitigate business challenges and recover.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

The government has adopted the following monetary measures:

- Reduction of interest rates on investment loans with 30% share of 'ESIF Micro and Small Loans' working capital to 0.1% - 0.25% - 0.5%
- Increase max. guarantee rate for 'ESIF individual guarantees' for working capital loans - 65%-80% (guaranteed loans EUR 150,000-1,000,000) implemented by 17 commercial banks
- Delay and/or installment repayment of public benefits
- Liquidity and working capital loans (salaries and working capital excluding liabilities to financial institutions) up to three months.
- Reprogramming of existing loans to HBOR (Croatian Bank for Reconstruction & Development) clients with the introduction of a grace period in repayment of the loan principal.
- Approval of new liquidity loans to economic entities for financing wages, overheads and other basic operating expenses in cooperation with commercial banks
- Increasing the scope of the Export Guarantee Fund by: including the tourism sector with the aim of enabling the issuance of guarantees (insurance policies) for loans to banks and HBOR for additional liquidity to exporters and the tourism sector and extending the range of eligible beneficiaries of export and tourism insurance policies
- Increase in allocation for financial instrument 'ESIF Micro Loans' for working capital of micro and small enterprises (EUR 1000-25000, 12 months grace period, interest reduction to 0.5% - 0.75% - 1.0%).
- Postponement of payment of: tourist membership fees for economic operators and private renters and tourist tax for private renters (flat rate)
- Support for programmes for financing working capital and improving the liquidity of vulnerable tourism business persons
- Delay of payment of the fee for the concession on tourist land in the camps.
- Special measures applicable to vehicles: temporary suspension of the seasonal increase and additional discount of 7% for vehicles of certain groups.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Establishment of a new financial instrument "COVID-19 loans" for working capital for small and medium-sized enterprises. The paid troubled companies the amount of the minimum wage so the workers were not laid off during the crisis.
- Employers who use grants from the Croatian Employment Service to preserve jobs in coronavirus-affected sectors will be exempted from the costs of their respective contributions.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Ministry of Tourism has approved amendments to the laws under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Tourism, gave the power to the Ministry to additionally regulate, in special circumstances caused by the coronavirus epidemic, a number of by-laws which are currently already being drafted:
  - simplifying conditions for the operations of travel agencies;
  - extending deadlines for otherwise normal harmonisations of standards for hospitality services in households;
  - postponing mandatory re-classification of accommodation facilities (every 4 years);
  - financing of tourist boards;

- temporary suspension of (new) authorizations for the moment for tourist guides.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

• Croatia's Institute for Tourism, and international NGO the Travel Foundation, have formed a partnership that will support the recovery and longer-term development of tourism in Southeast Europe as travel restrictions begin to ease. The partnership aim is to maximize the value that tourism brings to destination communities while minimizing its impact on the environment and natural resources. Together they will offer a programme of support for governments and businesses operating in Croatia and other countries in the region such as Albania, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. The partnership will support tourism recovery planning using science-based research on tourism's positive and negative impacts, and will build the capacity of destination management organisations, local development organisations and small businesses to recover with a smart and sustainable response to the COVID-19 crisis.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Croatian governmental bodies developed the following instructions for different segments of economy:
  - Recommendations and instructions of the Croatian Institute of Public Health for Croatian and foreign nationals who are crossing the state border and entering the Republic of Croatia;
  - Recommendations for travel agencies during the Coronavirus epidemic;
  - Recommendations for hotels and renters during the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - Recommendation for camps and marinas during the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - Recommendations for preventing infections in hospitality facilities with and without terraces, as well as hospitality facilities within accommodation facilities, as part of the gradual easing of restrictions related to COVID-19 (all are available <https://mint.gov.hr/news-11455/big-interest-in-opening-borders-says-tourism-minister/21180>).
- The Ministry of Tourism has approved amendments to the laws under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Tourism, gave the power to the Ministry to additionally regulate, in special circumstances caused by the coronavirus epidemic, a number of by-laws which are currently already being drafted:
  - Conditions for the type, that is, the type and category/class of hospitality and household facilities (Hospitality Act);
  - Amount of the tourist tax, deadlines for payment of the tourist tax, purpose and manner of distribution of funds of the Fund for tourism-wise underdeveloped areas and the continental Croatia and the Fund for the Associated Tourist Boards (Tourist Tax Act).



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- The Croatian Ministry of Tourism and Sports launched the "Safe stay in Croatia" label, through which domestic and foreign tourists will be informed that health and safety protocols are applied in Croatia



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- The Cro Card- A programme to stimulate domestic tourism where companies give their employees a 2,500 HRK (EUR 330) bonus in the form of a voucher, which is exempt from payroll taxes. Participating tourism businesses, such as catering services, hotels or travel agencies are giving CRO Card holders a discount for using the voucher. Employers do not order the card, but employees independently choose the bank where they will open an account related to the card and may receive payments from their employer onto the card, as part of their salary, or charge money to it themselves.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Cyprus

Last update: 11 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Specific support for the recovery of tourism include:

- Additional appropriations of EUR 11 million for the implementation of actions to support tourism in Cyprus in cooperation with airlines and travel operators, as well as actions to boost tourist attraction during the period from October 2020 to March 2021.
- The ECB has already considered measures in support of bank lending. Under the new measures, Cypriot financial institutions will be able to raise liquidity from the Eurosystem under significantly favourable conditions. The measures decided by the ECB concern, inter alia, the release of the capital stock, which for the Cypriot systemic banks is calculated by the CBC beyond EUR 1,3 billion. Furthermore, the Central Bank of Cyprus is considering additional local measures which shall be announced by the Governor of the Central Bank within the next days.
- The European Commission has approved, under EU state aid rules, a EUR 86.6 million Cypriot scheme to support companies active in the tourism sector (including organizers of package travel, hotel businesses, and car rental companies) affected by the coronavirus outbreak. The public support will take the form of public guarantees which aim at covering vouchers (i.e. credit notes) issued by the beneficiaries to either consumers or organizers of package travels for cancelled travel packages or individual touristic services booked prior to 31 October 2020. The scheme aims at supporting service providers in the touristic sector that are experiencing significant losses of revenue and liquidity shortages due to the coronavirus outbreak and the restrictive measures that Cyprus and other governments have had to implement to limit the spread of the virus.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Monetary measures include:

- To all businesses that have decided to suspend their operations and to all businesses that will continue their operations and will suffer losses beyond 25% of their turnover, a Suspended Operations Plan of the businesses is applied aiming at avoiding redundancies and at the same time the affected workers will receive unemployment allowance for as long as the business will be under suspended operations.
- The Parliament passed a bill on March 29, 2020, providing a general moratorium on loan repayments for all creditworthy borrowers until end-December 2020. This moratorium was further extended to June 2021 for a subset of performing borrowers mostly hit by the lockdown in January and by the crisis.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Small Business Support Plan: EUR 10 mill. provided for companies employing up to 5 people, in order to keep their employees at work and who have suffered reducing their turnover by more than 25%. Plan provides for a subsidy of 70% of employee salaries.

Other measures include:

- Granting of "sickness benefit" of an average of EUR 800 per month to employees, self-employees and people under special circumstances.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- The government of Cyprus, on December 3, has approved a plan that will allow visitors who have proof they have been vaccinated against coronavirus to enter the country without a negative PCR test. The plan will enter into force on March 1, 2021. The announcement was part of a new four-tier system of green, orange, red and grey countries, determining different risks and entry requirements.
- In the framework of the holiday island's three pillars of 2021 strategy plan, Cyprus launched its biggest ever digital promotion campaign to win back lost tourists now that people all over the world spend more time online because of the coronavirus lockdowns.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- As from March 1 2021, Cyprus is changing the way it categorizes countries, and will instead be following a colour-coded system harmonized with ECDC evaluation standards. Therefore, only countries not included on ECDC lists, will be evaluated separately by the Cyprus government.
  - i. Persons traveling from GREEN countries will not need to demonstrate a negative PCR test for COVID-19 when traveling to Cyprus; they only need to provide certain information and solemn declarations.
  - ii. Persons traveling from ORANGE countries are required to undergo a molecular test at a certified lab, with the sample taken during the last 72 hours prior to flight departure, and upload a certificate that demonstrates a negative PCR for COVID-19, on the Cyprus Flight Pass Platform. Children who arrive in Cyprus before their 12th birthday, are exempted from testing. All travelers will also need to provide certain information and solemn declarations
  - iii. Persons traveling from RED countries are required to undergo a molecular test at a certified lab, with the sample taken during the last 72 hours prior to flight departure, and upload a certificate that demonstrates a negative PCR for COVID-19, on the Cyprus Flight Pass Platform. They will also need to pay for and undergo a molecular PCR test upon arrival to Cyprus, the cost of which is 30 Euros



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- The Council of Ministers has agreed to continue "Extraordinary Plan for the Support of Domestic Tourism" - Special offers of hotel discounts to permanent residents. The plan includes the provision of affordable prices for tourist accommodation, and subsidizing part of the cost of accommodation to the citizens who decide to make use of it. The main purpose of the plan is to also support all local businesses in various parts of the country. The general objectives of the plan are the extension of the tourist season and the acquainting of Cypriots with the beauties of their homeland in various areas of the island. The plan is expected to reduce the recession of the economy and maintain employment during these difficult times that the global economy is going through due to Covid-19. In addition, it provides for the coverage of 25% of the accommodation costs by the Deputy Ministry including charges for children who will be staying within the same room as their parents. Two nights is set as the minimum stay for the use of the above prices.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Czech Republic

Last update: 11 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The government implemented a fiscal package of CZK 297.9bn (€11.3bn, 5.3 percent of GDP) in 2020 and other fiscal package of CZK 232.9bn (incl. in particular impact of new tax package, new compensatory bonus, selected support to companies and other healthcare expenditure etc.) in 2021. Until the end of April 2021, the government contributes 80 percent of wages (incl. SSC) to employers if employees are sent into quarantine and 100 percent of wages (incl. SSC) if employers' businesses have been closed or reduced as a result of the crisis management or emergency measures taken by the Government. Until end of April 2021, the government also contributes 60 percent of wages (incl. SSC) to employers due to obstacles to work on the part of the employer caused by the current epidemiological situation and related measures to prevent the spread of the disease both locally and abroad. The government also increased compensation for quarantined or isolated employees to 100 percent of the daily assessment base between March and end-April 2021. The government also approved a tax package, which includes, among other things, the introduction of extraordinary accelerated depreciation of assets (in the 1st and 2nd depreciation class), acquired in 2020 and 2021 and effective reduction in the personal income tax rate since 2021. The government approved a new compensatory bonus for self-employed persons and small Ltd in amount of CZK 1000 per day (for contractors in amount of CZK 500 per day) between February and end-March 2021. The government further pledged close to CZK 500bn (EUR 19bn, 9 percent of GDP) in potential state guarantees and approved the postponement of the electronic registration of sales for all subjects until the end of 2022. The government also lowered the VAT rate (from 15% to 10%) on selected services (accommodation, culture, sport), decreased road tax for vehicles above 3.5t (by 25%) and introduced a loss carryback measure: in case of a reported tax loss in 2020 due to the state of emergency, taxpayers will be able to reduce their tax bases for this tax period for the tax years 2019 and 2018 by this loss (maximum tax loss is set at CZK 30million).  
(source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

• Interest-free loans COVID I: loan with one-year postponement of repayments. The Ministry of Industry and Trade prepared them in cooperation with the Czech-Moravian Guarantee and Development Bank (CMZRB). It is possible to apply for a loan from 16 March 2020, and the allocation is EUR 200 mil.  
• Interest-free loans COVID II Program: it responds even more to the needs of companies and self-employed sole traders. CMZRB will guarantee for self-employed persons and small and medium-sized enterprises loans with commercial banks and will also contribute up to EUR 40 000 to pay interest. More than seven thousand projects with a total value of about EUR 800 mil. could be supported.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

• "Kurzarbeit" - financial compensation for employers, who have been unable to allocate work to employees due to quarantine or childcare for a significant proportion of employees. Employers have to prove that they cannot produce because of the limited availability of necessary inputs or because the business is interrupted because of limited demand on its products or services.  
• Care allowance for self-employed - this means subsidies of 17 EUR for each day of quarantine / caring for a family member. This is similar to the care benefits for employees. It will be provided by Ministry of Industry and Trade.  
• Compensation program for employers – ANTIVIRUS – state budget program aims to compensate wages of employees. This program is a key measure, thanks to which the State Labor Office of the Czech Republic will compensate companies for the funds paid out. This measure will help employers better manage the current situation, so that they do not have to lay people off.  
• Direct support for self-employed - it is a support measure for self-employed persons, thanks to which those who were most affected by the current pandemic and related government measures will receive direct support of 1000 EUR. The extraordinary title will be paid on the basis of an application received by the Financial Administration until the emergency situation is finished.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Subsidy program – innovative projects - The Country For the Future (CFF) program for innovative projects - it focuses on the areas of national start-ups, digitization and smart investments and, among other things, supports the facilitation of robotics, automation and innovation in companies with an emphasis on SME's in accordance with defined Industry 4.0 standards and key trends in industries.
- There is a National Program of Support for Tourism in Regions (currently until 2022), which is aimed at supporting the infrastructure in tourism (requirements for reaching the subsidiary being simplified).



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- The question of reparatory measures and compensations for tour operators and other tourism businesses will be discussed after the worst of the crisis has abated.  
For more information please visit: <https://www.cmzrb.cz/en/>
- Countries considered medium or high risk must present a negative test result, take a test with a negative result within 72 hours of arrival, or self-isolate for 14 days.
- CzechTourism has launched videos in foreign markets to attract visitors to the country in 2021, with the tagline: 'See you in 2021'. The US market, one of the most important for inbound tourism, was the first to see the advert broadcast on a major TV station, as well as on the large-screen ABC TV in Times Square, New York.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- Prague Airport receives ACI Airport Health Accreditation. The Accreditation Certificate confirms that the set processes, measures and individual steps applied at Prague Airport meet the requirements and recommendations of ICAO and Airports Council International.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- Czech Republic bans travel to South Africa, Brazil due to Covid-19 variants from February 26 to April 21 (2021)

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Denmark**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The European Commission has founded a Danish State loan facility of up to DKK 1.5 billion (approx. EUR 200 million) in support of the Travel Guarantee Fund ("Rejsegarantifonden") to be in line with EU State aid rules. The loan was approved under the State aid Temporary Framework to support the economy in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak adopted by the Commission on 19 March 2020.
- The authorities responded to the ongoing crisis quickly and forcefully through various initiatives. Currently, announced discretionary fiscal support amounts to DKK 117.6 billion (5.1 percent of 2020 GDP) and includes increased spending for additional health care needs and extraordinary budgetary measures to support workers and businesses that have been extended in the wake of the second wave. Temporary liquidity measures, including postponement of tax payments, and government guarantees will further support activity in Denmark and have been extended as well. The fiscal budget for 2021 foresees a green, fair and responsible recovery of the Danish economy. In response to the targeted lockdowns the authorities reintroduced the wage compensation scheme to all companies (Dec 9) and other support measures (Dec 11). Many support and liquidity measures were extended in line with the extension of lockdown restrictions (Jan 14 & Feb 9). (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark created a page with Information in English about the COVID-19 (<https://um.dk/en/travel-and-residence/coronavirus-covid-19/>) that includes info for tourists and for information about travel to and through Denmark
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark has a page on investment in DK (<https://investindk.com/corona-information-page>) - which features a list of relevance official links and factsheets, such related to compensation scheme for cancelled events.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The government and the corporate corona unit, which together with business will discuss targeted and concrete proposals for temporary measures that can address current challenges in the transport industries as well as tourism and the experience economy.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- For the purpose of foreign travel, Denmark has classified foreign countries as either 'open' or 'banned'. Persons resident in 'open' countries are free to enter Denmark for any purpose. Those residents in 'banned' countries or provinces can only enter Denmark for essential purposes, which include work, study, and family reasons. As a rule, countries outside the EU, Schengen Area, and the United Kingdom are defined as banned countries unless included on the exemption list.
- Denmark has introduced digital coronavirus passports in February 2021 for travel purposes.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

• Danish Coastal and Rural Tourism, Dansk Storbyturisme and Visit Denmark are encouraging the Danes to hashtag #baredenmark and showcase the interesting things they are doing by being on a vacation in Denmark. They also have a campaign that if you put this on Instagram you can win 200.000 DKK. For more information please visit <https://www.megetmereendbare.dk/>



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Estonia**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Government announced a EUR 2 billion economic stimulus package that will support businesses in difficulty, including tourism. A specific pillar is dedicated to events, with a partial compensation by the state of up to EUR 3 million of costs incurred due to events that have been cancelled.
- The European Commission has approved an EUR 30 million Estonian measure to provide a share capital increase and a subsidized interest loan to the state-owned aviation company "Nordica Aviation Group AS" ("Nordica"). The scheme was approved under the State aid Temporary Framework.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications has commissioned a survey of the business sector/entrepreneurs on the impact of COVID-19. Based on this survey, the most affected sector is tourism, with 98% of responding hotels, 97% of restaurants and 82% of tour operators.
- The Ministry is working on a medium term national tourism strategy for 2021-24 and the planning for the new EU financial framework 2027. Many strategic issues are being revalued, refocused and strengthened. For example, the role of DMOs in managing and leading the tourism sector through the crisis as well as co-operation with ministries and policy areas (e.g. tourism and transport) to restart the business as soon as the crisis alleviates.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- Quarantine requirements for travelers who've been vaccinated against or can prove they've recovered from COVID-19 in the previous six months have been removed. Estonia said it will accept vaccinations from nine global suppliers, not just the three approved by the European Union. Vaccination records including manufacturer and batch number are required in English, Russian, or Estonian.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- Authorities in Estonia have restricted the freedom of movement for ten days, for citizens of 26 countries, in which the Coronavirus infection rate is higher than 150 people per 100,000 inhabitants in the past 14 days. According to Estonia's government, the decision will be effective from March 8 until March 14 and has been taken in an effort to minimize the rapid transmission of the virus. Estonia's recent preventive measure will affect the following countries: Austria, Andorra, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Latvia, Monaco, Portugal, Poland, France, Romania, Sweden, San Marino, Slovakia, Switzerland, Slovenia, the Czech Republic as well as Hungary.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Finland

Last update: 11 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Deferral of tax and pension payments for 3 months are expected to provide additional short-run relief of 2 percent of GDP (EUR 4.5 billion).
- On November 19, the government submitted a proposal to amend the 2021 budget to include among others EUR 350 million in capital funding for Finavia Corporation; EUR 56 million for unemployment security; and EUR 45 million to increase the health insurance reimbursements for COVID19 tests carried about by private healthcare providers.
- On January 27, 2021, the government decided to reimburse vaccinations received through private occupational healthcare though the reimbursement amount is yet to be determined. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- As a tourism specific measure, the government granted a State guarantee of up to EUR 600 million to support Finnair's financing needs.
- In addition to ECB measures, key measures within Finland include: (i) Bank of Finland to support liquidity through investing in short-term Finnish corporate commercial paper (EUR 1 billion); (ii) 1 ppt reduction in the structural buffer requirements of all credit institutions by removing the systemic risk buffer and adjusting institution-specific requirements (increases Finnish banks' international lending capacity by an estimated EUR 52 billion – that, plus other countries' measures, increase lending capacity to Finnish households and firms by an estimated EUR 30 billion); (iii) Finland's Export Credit Agency is expanding its lending and guarantee capacity to SMEs by EUR 10 billion to EUR 14.2 billion (and the government will increase its coverage of the agency's credit and guarantee losses from 50 to 80 percent); (iv) the State Pension Fund will also invest in commercial paper (EUR 1 billion); and (v) easier re-borrowing of pension contributions allowed.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Temporary recognition of entrepreneurs and freelancers as unemployment benefit recipients.
- Elimination of waiting period for unemployment benefits expanded parental allowance, social assistance and unemployment insurance (EUR 3 billion).
- Special guidelines to municipalities granting supplementary and preventive social assistance (prioritization of cases totally without other incomes, granting preventive social assistance if there are delays granting basic social assistance in Kela/Social Insurance Institution), municipalities are not recommended to apply reductions of social assistance due to non-compliance (e.g. person refuses to accept a work offer or does not participate in training or certain other activating or integration measures).
- The Government is proposing a temporary increase in the exempt amount of the adjusted unemployment benefit from EUR 300 to EUR 500 per month. The aim is provide financial support to help people find part-time work or other short-term work in agriculture and horticulture enterprises or elsewhere. The raised exempt amount would also apply to income from self-employment. Moreover, the amendment would apply to unemployed jobseekers who already receive adjusted unemployment benefit. The exempt amount means the amount unemployed jobseekers can earn without an effect on their unemployment benefit.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- Finland has allocated additional financing of EUR 500,000 (USD 590,000) to support domestic travel and tourism as part of the recovery measures related to the COVID-19 crisis. The financial effort will be mainly used to implement a national domestic tourism campaign in connection with the ongoing '100 Reasons to Travel in Finland' campaign by the Finnish Association of Tourism Organisations, Suoma ry.



## IX. OTHER

- As of February 2021, only entry from Iceland is possible, while from the rest of the Schengen Area countries, only travellers reaching the country for absolutely essential purposes will be able to enter. Entry is also restricted for arrivals from the four EU but non-Schengen countries as well – Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, and Romania.
- The Finnish government has announced that it will implement a three-week shutdown from 8 to 28 March, during which time bars and restaurants will be closed and secondary and upper secondary schools will shift to distance learning.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: France**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The economic package consists of three axes: an “immediate” support plan for workers and companies for EUR 45,000 mill., loan guarantees for EUR 300,000 mill. and, finally, a plan to protect threatened companies, nationalization included. Another EUR 2,000 mill will go to a “solidarity fund” for small businesses with less than one million euros of annual turnover that, due to the crisis, no longer have income, or that have seen their income decrease by at least 70 % compared to March last year. These are catering companies or the tourism sector, among others.

Other business support fiscal measures include:

- Payment deadlines for social and / or tax deadlines (URSSAF, taxes). In the most difficult situations, direct tax rebates can be decided as part of an individual examination of requests.
- The deferral of the payment of rents, water, gas and electricity bills for the smallest businesses in difficulty.
- The French government announced the deferral of several aeronautical taxes and charges for French airlines due between March and December 2020 until 2021 and 2022.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Business support measures have been introduced, among them:

- Aid of EUR 1,500 for the smallest enterprises, the self-employed and micro-enterprises in the sectors most affected by the solidarity fund.
- The mobilization of the State of EUR 300 billion and of Bpifrance to guarantee bank cash lines for companies affected by the pandemic.
- Support from the State and the Banque de France (credit mediation) to negotiate with his bank a rescheduling of bank credits.
- An “umbrella” scheme with an estimated budget of EUR 7 billion to support non-financial companies. It allows for the provision of aid in the form of:
  - Limited amount of aid in the form of direct grants, equity injections, repayable advances and subsidized loans, up to a maximum nominal amount of EUR 800,000 to a company;
  - State guarantees for loans, subject to safeguards for banks to channel State aid to the real economy; and/or
  - Public loans to companies with favourable interest rates;

The measure allows aid to be granted by French authorities at all levels, including central government, regional and local authorities and other bodies administering schemes involving state resources channelled through their own budgets. The measure is targeted at SMEs and large corporates and applies to the whole territory of France. Aid is granted under the measure either directly or, if it concerns guarantees on loans, through credit institutions and other financial institutions as financial intermediaries. The Commission found that the French measure is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- France has now allowed 3,600 businesses and 60,000 workers to claim “technical unemployment” or “partial activity” status due to coronavirus.
- Companies are supported in the efforts to maintain employment through the simplified and reinforced • A new “tourism plan” has been announced on October 10. The plan is open to businesses and associations of CHR-tourism (for cafes, hotels and restaurants), events, sport and culture, and companies which have activity strongly linked to tourism or to events.
- VSEs and SMEs that are administratively closed or companies subject to time restrictions which have a loss of turnover greater than 50% may benefit from an exemption from social contributions during the entire period of closure or restriction



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The Ministry of Economy has held meetings with national economic actors and social partners on several occasions the impact of the Coronavirus Covid-19 on economic activity. An economic continuity unit has been activated to better manage the impact on the economy through daily decision-making.
- The Bureau of the Tourism Sector Committee meets regularly to best support the entire tourism sector.
- On December 11, Government announced a 400 million euros plan in support of mountain professionals, to compensate for the shortfall due to the prolonged closure of ski lifts. This plan, the implementation of which depends on the approval of the European Commission, includes an "ad hoc mechanism" for ski lift companies, private or under public authority, with the coverage of their fixed costs up to 70%.

Second provision of the government plan: assistance to all shops - including food - in the stations. They will be able to access the solidarity fund, up to 10,000 euros, in the event that their turnover drops by at least 50%. This access to the solidarity fund, which also applies to businesses in the valleys which depend on the resorts, is unprecedented since it is based on a territorial basis. Overall, it concerns around 12,000 companies



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- To boost tourism, France encouraged its citizens to travel within the country. Using the hashtag #CetÉtéJeVisiteLaFrance (#ThisSummerIVisitFrance), the country's tourism board has invited vacationers to share their localized summer holidays on social media.
- Boosting coordination between national and regional levels, Atout France organized in partnership with the Regional Tourism Committees a strong digital campaign that involved influencers' visits to France throughout the summer.
- #JeRedécouvrelaFrance (I rediscover France) - Following the success of the #CetÉtéJeVisiteLaFrance campaign Atout France continued its action on the domestic market and launched the #JeRedécouvrelaFrance.

Actions of the Campaign:

- Social Network: Heavy participation of the influencers and a video series from famous people like chefs to tell their story about France
- Interactive Map - It allows the French to find all tourist providers open and committed to respecting health protocols.
- TV campaign to promote winter destinations.
- Conversion Campaigns



## IX. OTHER

- The French Parliament on February 9, approved an extension of the state of health emergency until June 1. The bill was approved with 278 votes in favor, 193 against, and 13 abstentions.
- On March 11, France eased travel rules for the following seven countries: Australia, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, and the United Kingdom. Travelers arriving in France from the seven countries will still have to present a negative COVID-19 test taken a maximum of 72 hours beforehand

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Georgia**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• Georgian government has prepared an economic stimulus package to confront the negative impact of COVID-19 on economy. The measures include infrastructure spending and tax exemptions to benefit Georgia's recently blooming tourism industry.

The package is amounts to around 1 billion lari (about US\$330 million).

Tourism-related businesses will be exempt from property and income taxes. The scheme will apply to 18,000 companies presently operating in Georgia, and more than 50,000 employees.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Georgian government's plan to save the economy is mainly focused on protecting the tourism sector. Against this backdrop, the following measures have been approved:

- Banks will restructure debts for all individuals and especially for companies operating in tourism industry.
- Banks have suspended customer payment on loans.
- The government has been paying interest on loans for hotels with between four and 50 hotel rooms.
- The following measures have been approved:
  - interest rate subsidy on hotel business loan (80%);
  - bank guarantee interest rate subsidy for tour operators;
  - co-participation fee subsidy for participation in international travel fairs;
  - credit guarantee scheme for F&B business;
  - support schemes for travel companies and guides.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

• 84 hotels across the country have been allocated to host citizens during a 14-day mandatory quarantine. Starting from the 10th of March, the contracted hotels have received over 23,000 guests in quarantine. In the frames of the aforementioned project, up to 2,500 people are being employed by the hotels and 74, by the transportation companies. With the joint commitment of the parties and active involvement of the Government, effective management of the aforementioned process is provided. The tourism industry gained invaluable experience, which currently guarantees readiness of the country as a safe destination to properly serve tourists in compliance with international health protocols and safety standards.

• In order to support the private sector to follow the internationally acclaimed safety norms and regulations, Georgian National Tourism Administration will be conducting special training programmes for the representatives of the tourism industry to operate in line with all the mandatory sanitary norms (local and international).



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Government of Georgia, in coordination with the relevant institution has established Mandatory Safety Guidelines. To this point, strict safety regulations are created and implemented in all directions of the tourism industry such as: Airports and Land Borders; Transport; Hotels & Accommodations; Restaurants & Cafes; Tourist Companies; Sea and Winter Resorts; Guides.
- Special awareness raising campaigns are being launched to inform the tourism industry on sanitary and safety norms and to guarantee unimpeded services for tourists. The campaigns will include broadcasting of informative videos and allocating special informative banners spread via social media.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

• With the leadership of the Prime-Minister, a inter-governmental team has been created that has been meeting daily to control the development of situation in the country.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Georgia has reached a preliminary agreement to resume flights with more than 20 airline companies that were operating in the country.
- The main focus will be on the following tourism products:
  - Health and Medical Tourism;
  - Eco and Agri Tourism;
  - Adventure Tourism;
  - Protected Areas;
  - Wine Tourism;
  - Ski Resorts.
- Georgian government launched a program "Work Remotely from Georgia". Georgia is welcoming long-term visitors who are interested in working remotely from the country.
- The Ski resorts resume operating from March 8.
- Restaurants & Cafes resume operating from March 1 with restrictions on the number of people allowed.
- Starting March 1, Georgia will allow air travel for nationals of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine. The passengers must present a negative COVID-19 result taken no more than 72 hours prior to departure.
- Starting March 5, the air connectivity to/from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan was resumed



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- Since February 1 new rules for the entry of foreigners and citizens of Georgia into the country have been in effect. The government has eased a number of restrictions that were introduced due to the coronavirus pandemic:  
Rules for foreign citizens traveling to Georgia  
From February 1
  - Vaccinated visitors will be able to enter without any conditions – they must present at the border a document confirming a full course of vaccination of any type. This applies to citizens of all countries.
  - Visitors who have not been vaccinated, must have a negative test result within the last 72 hours.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- The government of Georgia launched a new state programme 'Travel for Georgia' to promote domestic tourism. The government is encouraging all the stakeholders to take part in the program and revive domestic tourism.
- Georgian National Tourism Administration launched a program called "explore what is yours". They regularly host different culinary and other master classes in different regions of the country and encourage people to explore the country.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Germany**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- To combat the COVID-19 crisis and subsequently support the recovery, the federal government adopted two supplementary budgets: EUR 156 billion (4.9 percent of GDP) in March and EUR 130 billion (4 percent of GDP) in June. The authorities plan to issue EUR 218.5 billion in debt this year to finance the packages. Early measures include: (i) spending on healthcare equipment, hospital capacity and R&D (vaccine), (ii) expanded access to short-term work ("Kurzarbeit") subsidy to preserve jobs and workers' incomes, expanded childcare benefits for low-income parents and easier access to basic income support for the self-employed, (iii) EUR 50 billion in grants to small business owners and self-employed persons severely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak in addition to interest-free tax deferrals until year-end and EUR 2bn of venture capital funding for start-ups, (iv) temporarily expanded duration of unemployment insurance and parental leave benefits. The stimulus package in June comprises a temporary VAT reduction, income support for families, grants for hard-hit SME's, financial support for local governments, expanded credit guarantees for exporters and export-financing banks, and subsidies/investment in green energy and digitalization. In August, the government extended the maximum duration of short-term work benefits from 12 to 24 months.
- At the same time, through the newly created economic stabilization fund (WSF) and the public development bank KfW, the government is expanding the volume of available guarantees and access to public guarantees for firms of different sizes, credit insurers, and non-profit institutions, some eligible for up to 100 percent guarantees, increasing the total volume by at least EUR 757 billion (24 percent of GDP). The WSF and KfW also include facilities for public equity injection into firms with strategic importance.
- In addition to the federal government's fiscal package, many local governments (Länder and municipalities) have announced own measures to support their economies, amounting to EUR 141 billion in direct support and roughly EUR 70bn in state-level loan guarantees.
- Parallel to the renewed lockdown to combat the second wave of COVID infections, the government introduced additional fiscal measures and enhanced existing ones to support affected businesses, including revenue compensation (of up to 75 percent), as well as, public loan guarantees and basic income provision.  
(source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Companies can access the KfW Special Programme which supplements already existing KfW programmes. Loan terms have been improved and KfW Bank now covers a higher share of companies' risks. For medium-sized companies only that have been on the market since at least January 2019 with more than 10 employees the loan is 100% secured by KfW.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- The German Federal Government has adopted an extensive set of measures – for the whole economy, not only for the tourism - to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus. The approach is based on 5 pillars:
  - More flexible use of short-time working allowances
  - Tax-based measures to improve liquidity
  - Several billions in financial support for companies
  - Assistance for microenterprises and own account workers
  - Close cooperation and dialogue with European partners.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy launched a coronavirus hotline for companies.
- The Federal Government Centre of Excellence for Tourism has set up the [www.corona-navigator.de](http://www.corona-navigator.de) website. This website is used to pool the latest news, facts and recommendations for action and provides guidance to all tourism stakeholders.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- Germany's federal and state governments have extended the country's shutdown until March 28th, but from March 8, book shops, florists and garden centers are allowed to reopen as long as strict hygiene measures are in place, with further reopenings possible later this month, depending on infection data.

Also , up to five people from two different households are permitted to meet, with children under the age of 14 not counting toward the total. Currently, a single guest from one other household is permitted.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Greece

Last update: 11 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The Greek government has launched a second package of economic support measures to deal with the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic will total EUR 3.8 billion, EUR 2.0 billion of which have already been announced by the government and another EUR 1.8 billion from a special fund of the European Union

Other measures include:

• A total of 21,007,300 euros in relief aid to be allocated to Greek tourism enterprises operating tour buses has been approved. The emergency funding is aimed at providing much needed relief for sector businesses which own and run tour buses and have suffered a blow due to restrictions imposed to curb the spread of Covid-19. Companies eligible for the funding will receive on average 3,600 euros for each bus, with an 0.87 euro subsidy for each reserved seat per month.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Financing of enterprises in the form of return advance payment to deal with a reduction in turnover and payroll and non-payroll costs.
- Banks will present interventions and measures covering enterprises and individuals along with financing instruments to support liquidity. The government has also taken measures to protect the stock exchange.
- Extension of the possibility of suspending payment of tax and insurance obligations.
- Extension of the right to suspend employment.
- Extending the special purpose compensation.
- Extending the coverage of insurance contributions.
- Keeping the rent reductions for all affected businesses.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Workers whose labour contracts are temporarily suspended will receive EUR 800 in compensation, while the state will cover their social insurance and health contributions.
- All educational units supervised by the Ministry of Tourism offer the opportunity to their students to continue from home through a distant learning platform. This opportunity also refers to further education and training programmes addressed to people already working in tourism.
- Three new programmes of 40.4m euros, for advising, education and certification of unemployed in the fisheries sector, diving tourism and tourism industry in order to upgrade skills of people working on tourism, thus, upgrade the quality of the national tourism product.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- "Visit Greece" app: supporting digital transition, application for smart devices, with tailor-made information and innovative services.
- Destination Greece Health First": the initiative of the Ministry of Tourism and GNTTO for the safe opening of Greek tourism. Through social media, on the internet with a special website (microsite) and in combination with the new digital application "Visit Greece", the initiative focuses on the so-called "critical decision", presenting vividly and convincingly to the tourist all the health and safety measures applied to promote safe, seamless travel as well as to restore confidence. The GNTTO's flagship video "Destination Greece Health First" is the campaign's central element, which includes an inspirational branding for the destination combined with a solid reassurance on health and safety protocols.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The Ministry of Tourism set up an Open Communication Line for tourism operators, businesses and market representatives to address emerging issues.

The Ministry has set up a Crisis Management Committee for Coronavirus, whose mandate is related to the following:

- provide up to date information to the tourism market for developments,
- draw up a plan for the internal organization of the Ministry in order to continue its operation,
- elaborate packages of measures to stimulate the market in the short run and the long run, taking also into account proposals from the private tourism sector,
- set up a programme to promote the country as a safe destination when conditions are deemed appropriate;
- plan how to recover in the international market and
- participate in initiatives to provide a coordinated confrontation to the effects of Coronavirus at European and international level.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Greece unveiled a national campaign for tourism dubbed “Greece. More than a destination.” The 42-second video, associating positive emotions with experiences and attractions at various destinations in Greece, appeared in six languages. The campaign was launched by Greece’s National Tourism Organization (GNTTO) together with the country’s largest carrier, Aegean Airlines.
- Greece and Israel agreed to pave the way for vaccinated tourists to travel between their two countries in an effort to boost their economies amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- Foreign tourists who have been vaccinated against COVID-19, have recovered from the disease or who test negative prior to their arrival will be allowed into Greece from May 14



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- The Undersecretary of Civil Protection has presented the Map of Hygienic Protection from Covid-19, as well as the activation of the website <https://covid19.gov.gr>. Along with the Ministry of Digital Governance, a framework of categorized and targeted local measures have been presented for the safe and smooth continuation of economic and social life in Greece. The map consists of four levels of precautionary measures and rules for every regional unit of the country. It categorises 74 regional units of Greece in levels of hygienic safety and protection in respective sets of measures, in force for everyone. In particular, they are included into the following levels: Level 1 – Readiness, Level 2 – Surveillance, level 3 – Augmented Surveillance and Level 4 – Augmented Danger.
- Greece has become one of the first countries in the European Union to issue digital COVID-19 vaccination certificates



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- The Greek Government allocated from EUR 30 million to EUR 100 million to subsidize holidays for citizens through the social tourism programme 'Tourism for All', addressed to low-income groups. Eligible parties are those with EUR 16,000 (USD 19,000) of annual individual income and EUR 28,000 (USD 33,400) for family income. The programme subsidizes half of a 4-night-stay in a hotel that is enrolled in the programme and is expected to provide some 1 million overnight stays with 250,000 social tourism coupons being distributed to Greek citizens. Greece will also stimulate domestic tourism through a corporate or business holiday travel vouchers programme worth EUR 300 (USD 360) which will be made available for private sector employees in order to encourage employees to travel.



## IX. OTHER

- Greece’s authorities have decided to prolong the restrictions on domestic flights until March 16 and international flights until March 22, after taking into account the COVID-19 situation in other countries, from which only essential travel will be permitted.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Holy See

Last update: 23 April 2020



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Not available



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Working Group 2, coordinated by DPIHD, will do research and studies of the present covid-19 epidemic and its related issues and to think about a post covid-19 society and world, especially in areas of ecology, economics, labour, healthcare, politics-governance, communications and security. Partners of this Working Group are the Pontifical Academy for Life and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, and the multiple organizations collaborating with DPIHD.
- Working Group 4, coordinated by the Second Section of the Secretariat of State, will support the Holy See in its activities and relations with States and International Organizations, communicating with them the fruits of the research, dialogue, and reflections.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Working Group 1, coordinated by DPIHD, is dedicated to serving local Churches by listening to them and supporting them as protagonists of their situations, in cooperation with Caritas Internationalis. The group is also tasked with collaborating fruitfully with charitable initiatives promoted by other Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, such as the Office of Papal Charities, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and the Vatican Pharmacy.
- Working Group 3, coordinated by the Dicastery for Communications, will disseminate information about the work of the Teams and promote communication with and among local Churches, helping them to respond authentically and credibly in the post-covid-19 world.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- On 20 March 2020, Pope Francis asked the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (DPIHD) to create a Commission, in collaboration with other Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, to express the Church's solicitude and care for the whole human family facing the Covid-19 pandemic, including analysis, reflection on the new socio-economic-cultural future, and the proposal of relevant approaches.

Accordingly, DPIHD has established a Vatican Covid-19 Commission to take up the Pope's concern through the activities of five Working Groups.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Hungary**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Businesses can apply for a 2-years term, job-retaining liquidity loan at 0.1% interest, for up to 24-month wage cost of the business.
- Reimbursement of lost COVID revenue for the catering and hospitality sector: the government reimbursed hotels for 80% of the bookings registered before the 8th of November 2020 for the period between November and December 2020 (Programme already completed).
- In order to provide support for hard-hit economic sectors, such as tourism and hospitality, the government provided HUF 600 billion support for priority areas of intervention in the next three years in the form of investment subsidies, tax reductions, infrastructure development, soft and guaranteed loans, and capital programs.
- The Széchenyi Card Programme offers a loan possibility for individual entrepreneurs and micro businesses for whom it would be difficult to obtain loans from banks otherwise. The Program was extended in September 2020 with a new loan scheme, which is only available to micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises operating in the tourism sector. With the help of the Széchenyi Tourist Card, businesses can apply for a free-use loan with zero interest rates. The government allocated 100 billion HUF (278 million EUR) and took full responsibility for the interest rate.
- The 2021 budget focuses on supporting families while restarting the economy and helping to create jobs to make up for the ones lost due to the epidemic.
- Tour operators and travel agencies only have to pay their annual securities (after 50% of their 2019 revenues.)
- All concerned businesses have been exempted from paying the tourism development contribution. Initially from March 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020, and later extended until the end of the emergency situation in the country.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Credit moratorium on both personal and business loans, was first introduced until the end of 2020, and was later extended for the most vulnerable social groups and businesses until the end of June 2021.
- A "Quick Restart" interest-free loan program was launched, with a total budget of HUF 100 billion. The scheme enables companies in difficulty to apply for an interest-free loan of up to HUF 10 million with a maximum term of 10 years. The loan can be used to finance wages, contributions, operating expenses, and inventory. The loan scheme starts with a 3-year moratorium, so repayment should only start 3 years after disbursement. The loan can be applied for through the Hungarian Development Bank.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- The government allocated HUF 450 billion (EUR 1.23 billion) to investments for job creation.
- Subsidy program for the tourism and hospitality industry - the program gives 50% wage subsidies and waives payroll taxes (an overall governmental contribution of 70% to wages) for companies in the hospitality- (restaurants and hotels), arts-, entertainment- and recreational industry. This measure is aimed to preserve 140,000 jobs. The subsidy program is conditional on businesses maintaining headcount.
- The Hungarian Tourism Agency created a support grant with a budget of HUF 300 million to assist tour guides during the covid-19 pandemic.
- The Government supported "Gypsy Musicians" with HUF 800 million and an additional HUF 700 million was given to festival organizers to keep the music festivals alive. Folk musicians were supported with another 200 million HUF.
- The Government has reduced the VAT on food deliveries from 27% to 5% for the period during which restaurants are only allowed to serve take-away and deliveries.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Hungarian Tourism Agency embarked on a domestic campaign to promote staying at home and preparing to come back (#visszajovok) to the favourite places after the coronavirus crisis.
- COVID Handbook: The Hungarian Tourism Agency has prepared a detailed Covid Handbook, (one week before the EU protocols), which includes basic public health information for travellers as well as for accommodations. The Covid-19

Handbook compiled by the Hungarian Tourism Agency with the involvement of professional organizations and the National Public Health Center formulates recommendations to help hotel managers and other tourism companies to adjust to the current situation affected by the coronavirus to serve the safety of guests and employees.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Termination of the lease and increasing of the rent for certain business premises is forbidden throughout the emergency situation
- The Hungarian Tourism Agency set up a task force in order to consult the stakeholders, to collect information.
- The Hungarian Tourism Agency reports to the government every 48 hours on the state of the sector. The HTA consults daily with the leaders of the professional organizations.
- The Hungarian Tourism Agency started an online research asking the stakeholders of the tourism sector to share their views with in order to give more precise inputs to the decision makers of the Hungarian Government.
- The Hungarian Tourism Agency relaunched the domestic campaign to promote takeaway food ordering from restaurants, bars and confectioneries under the hashtag #jótettem (I ate good food). The aim is to help the businesses in such difficult times.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Hungarian Tourism Agency has prepared a detailed Covid Handbook, which includes basic public health information for travelers as well as for accommodations. The Covid-2019 Handbook compiled by the Hungarian Tourism Agency with the involvement of professional organizations and the National Public Health Center formulates recommendations to help hotel managers and other tourism companies to adjust to the current situation affected by the coronavirus to serve the safety of guests and employees. In writing the handbook, existing Western European examples and models have been considered and a number of WHO recommendations have been incorporated.
- The Hungarian Tourism Agency started a new online research on its renewed website asking the stakeholders of the tourism sector to share their views with us in order to give more precise inputs to the decision makers of the Hungarian Government.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- In Hungary, the in-kind benefits system which employers may give employees in addition to their salaries (SZÉP Card "engine of domestic tourism") will allow for larger benefits: the SZÉP Card is issued by commercial banks, it works almost like a bank card, but can only be used for the services eligible (accommodation, catering and leisure-time). It has always been taxed at a preferential rate, but now the yearly amount which can be provided at this preferential tax rate is maximized with the ceiling almost doubled. The scope of the measure was first until 31 December 2020 and then extended until 30 June 2021.
- The Hungarian Tourism Agency embarked on a domestic campaign to promote staying at home and preparing to come back (#visszajövök) to the favorite places after the coronavirus crisis. The newest campaign video of the HTA is titled "Take care of each other and we will succeed!" in Hungarian. .
- The Hungarians are encouraged in various ways to spend their holidays in the country. Part of this is a joint campaign between the Hungarian public transport companies and the Hungarian Tourism Agency.
- Accommodation development programmes: The already existing Kiszalud Accommodation Development Programme entered a new phase, the Hungarian Tourism Agency provided HUF 85 billion in support for the construction and renovation of hotels with more than 100 rooms in rural Hungary, 1,500 new rooms will be created and 4,200 refurbished rooms made available to guests. In addition to the HUF 85 billion source, beneficiaries match the governmental support providing an additional HUF 85 billion, thus contributing a total of HUF 170 billion to the development of domestic tourism. The owners of all accommodation establishments in rural Hungary with a maximum of 8 rooms can participate in a HUF 60 billion support program. Also, in addition to all that, a tender for the development of campsites on the shores of Lake Balaton was announced in May with a budget of HUF 5 billion.
- The Tourinform development program is aimed at boosting domestic tourism with an overall budget of HUF 1 billion.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Iceland

Last update: 11 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Parliament approved an array of fiscal measures to ease the strain on households and firms and, looking forward, to help the economy recover. Key measures to support households and firms include tax cuts, deferrals, and loss offsets; increased unemployment benefits, child allowances, quarantine grants, subsidies, state contributions to firms' dismissal costs to prevent bankruptcies of viable firms and protect workers' rights; early pension withdrawals, and state-guaranteed loans to companies. Key measures to restart the economy include public investment, tax incentives for real estate improvement, temporary tax relief for the tourism sector, and marketing efforts to encourage tourism in Iceland. Parliament also approved simpler temporary rules for financial restructuring of companies. A number of supporting fiscal measures were extended beyond their original sunset clauses to deal with flareups in contagion. (source: imf.org)

- On 21 March 2020, the Government announced the first phase of response measures to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the action, the following three tourism-specific actions together represent a ISK 4.6 billion injection into Iceland's tourism industry:

- Payment and collection of the tax on overnight stays (bed-night tax) will be suspended from 1 April 2020 through 31 December 2021. Payment of tax on overnight stays from 1 January 2020 through 31 March 2020 is deferred until 5 February 2022.

- Icelandic residents over 18 years of age will collectively receive ISK 1.5 billion worth of travel vouchers from the Government, to spend domestically. This action will be further implemented in co-operation with the Icelandic Travel Industry Association.

- The response package also includes a special ISK 15 billion investment acceleration initiative including several projects that are aimed at supporting tourism:

- ISK 650 million for infrastructure at national parks and protected areas including large public tourist sites.
- ISK 200 million for the Tourist Site Protection Fund (private/municipal tourist sites).
- Harbour improvements around the country.
- Road improvements around the country.
- Infrastructure to speed up electrification of harbours and rental car fleet.
- Renovation of Harpa Concert and Conference Centre in Reykjavik.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The Central Bank of Iceland (CBI) has provided monetary support and has taken measures to preserve financial stability. Since the outbreak, the Monetary Policy Committee has cut policy rates by 200 basis points to 0.75 percent and reduced deposit institutions' average reserve requirements to 1 from 2 percent to ease their liquidity positions. To increase liquidity in circulation, the CBI eliminated its intake of 30-day deposits. The CBI Financial Stability Committee reduced the countercyclical capital buffer to 0 from 2 percent. A voluntary loan moratoria program is being phased out. (source: imf.org)



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- A one-off child benefit payment was made on June 1, 2020 to all families with children under the age of 18.
- Up to 75% of salary for short-term workers or unemployed. The overall aim of this legislation is to encourage businesses to keep employees on their payrolls, rather than lay them off. The self-employed and freelancers are also eligible for this benefit.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Most hotels, attractions, restaurants, nightclubs, gym and shops open; and public gatherings of up to 200 people permitted (with social distancing).
  - Travellers from the EEA and Switzerland who can prove they have been vaccinated, however, are now exempted from both testing and quarantine requirements.
- Such passengers need to show an approved digital or paper vaccination certificate in Icelandic, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish or English.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- A promotional campaign for Iceland as a destination was prepared. The campaign is two-fold, one to encourage Icelanders to travel within the country and another to encourage international travel to Iceland. The video campaign is available in [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyC9\\_K\\_KCJA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyC9_K_KCJA)



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Ireland**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The Irish authorities have announced a comprehensive fiscal package of EUR 24.5 billion (about 14 percent of GNI\*), distributed over 2020 and 2021, which includes EUR 20.5 billion in direct support and EUR 4 billion indirect support through (a) EUR 2 billion credit guarantee scheme and (b) EUR 2 billion Pandemic stabilisation and recovery Fund (ISIF). The direct supports include: (i) EUR 2.9 billion taxation measures, i.e., warehousing and deferrals; (ii) EUR 17.6 billion expenditure measures through (a) EUR 11.4 billion labor market support, (b) EUR 2 billion health sector capacity enhancement, (c) EUR 1.5 billion business support, (d) EUR 0.5 billion capital works. Draft Budget 2021 contains an additional stimulus of 1.7 percent of GDP and is focused on extending the income support measures, providing targeted support to the hospitality sector, and increasing health and housing spending, as well as strengthening the green agenda. In addition to that, the government has increased unemployment and wage subsidy supports to cushion the negative shock from the tightening of restrictions announced this week. Furthermore, the automatic stabilizers operate in full, i.e., tax revenues have automatically fallen in tandem with the decline in economic activity, while unemployment spending has risen (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- EUR 200 million working capital scheme for affected businesses making available loans of up to EUR 1.5m at reduced rates.
- The Credit Guarantee Scheme supports loans up to EUR 1 million for periods of up to 7 years. Applications can be made to AIB, Bank of Ireland and Ulster Bank. The purpose of the SME Credit Guarantee Scheme is to encourage additional lending to SMEs by offering a partial Government guarantee (currently 80%) to banks against losses on qualifying loans to eligible SMEs. The Credit Guarantee Scheme does not substitute for conventional lending that would otherwise have taken place.
- Microenterprises can access COVID-19 Business Loans of up to EUR 50,000 from Microfinance Ireland. The terms include a six months interest free and repayment free moratorium, with the loan to then be repaid over the remaining 30 months of the 36-month loan period. Loans are available at an interest rate of between 4.5% and 5.5%. Businesses can apply through their Local Enterprise Office or directly at microfinanceireland.ie.
- The new EUR 450m SBCI COVID-19 Working Capital Scheme for eligible businesses supports loans from EUR 25,000 up to EUR 1.5 million (first EUR 500,000 unsecured) with a maximum interest rate of 4%. Applications can be made through the SBCI website at sbci.gov.ie.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Short-time Work Support: Employees of businesses that need to reduce hours or days worked can avail of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection Short-time Work Support.
- Grant supports: Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Local Enterprise Office and Údarás na Gaeltachta grant supports continue to be available to eligible firms to help with strategies to access finance, commence or ramp-up online trading activity, reconfigure business models, cut costs, innovate, diversify markets and supply chains and to improve competitiveness.
- Competitive Start Fund: The Enterprise Ireland Competitive Start Fund, worth EUR 750 million, is open to early stage companies in manufacturing and internationally traded services. The maximum support available is EUR 50,000 for a 10% ordinary equity stake in the start-up company.
- Filing of annual returns: The Companies Registration Office has introduced changes to annual filing obligations for companies to assist companies during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Employment Permits System Contingency Arrangements: The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation has implemented a contingency plan to ensure that the Employment Permits system will continue to operate in all scenarios during the COVID-19 crisis: COVID-19 Employment Permits System Contingency Arrangements.
- First Responder support service: The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation will provide a joint First Responder support service through the Intreo Offices and development agencies, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland in each region to provide tailored supports for impacted firms.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Fáilte Ireland supports: In response to the COVID-19 crisis and the impact on the tourism sector, the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Business Support Hub is targeting its supports to respond to the most urgent challenges and threats tourism businesses are now facing.
- Tourism Ireland has launched a new online "inspirational and compelling content" campaign called #FillYourHeartWithIreland. The purpose of the campaign is to share inspirational content about Ireland on social media while international travel is restricted due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic to help keep Ireland "front-of-mind" with people for future holidays.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Creation of Business Supports Taskforce to provide recommendations to the Government including measures to support business sustainability, employment and initiatives designed to kick-start demand.  
Other measures include:
- Trading Online Voucher: The Local Enterprise Office Trading Online Voucher is a government grant scheme, designed to assist small businesses with up to 10 employees. It offers financial assistance of up to EUR 2,500 along with training and advice to help your business trade online. Businesses that have already received a Trading Online Voucher can now apply for a second voucher, where upgrades are required.
- COVID-19 Business Financial Planning Grant: The COVID-19 Business Financial Planning Grant, worth up to EUR 5,000, is designed to help companies to develop a robust financial plan, including the preparation of documentation required to support applications for external finance from banks and/or other finance providers. The grant is a new support for Enterprise Ireland clients and those manufacturing or internationally traded services companies that employ 10 or more full time employees.
- Lean Business Improvement Voucher: The Lean Business Continuity Voucher is available to eligible companies to access up to EUR 2,500 in training or advisory services support related to the continued operation of their businesses during the current pandemic. It is open to small, medium or large client companies of Enterprise Ireland. The voucher may be used to obtain services from approved providers.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Fáilte Ireland has worked with industry experts to guide businesses in the key areas of risk management, providing a safe place to work, managing and planning changes to contracts and hours (including potential redundancies), and managing employment supports and payments. These supports have all been developed in line with equality and employment legislation.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Israel**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The Government had announced the allocation of NIS 10 billion as a loan fund in support of businesses hit by the initial stages of coronavirus crisis. This was a first-aid measure. Naturally, a large number of these were tourism businesses.
- On 30 March the Government has announced a further support plan of NIS80 billion (\$22.4 billion) for healthcare, social protections, SMEs affected by the crisis and money for the revival stage. The Ministry of Tourism broadened its marketing support fund for incoming tour operators, to include businesses affected by the coronavirus crisis
- In addition to covering the marketing activity expenses, the government has expanded the support of DMCs by covering the costs of manpower.
- Government is supporting businesses by deducting 95% of all local taxes until June 2021.
- HOTEL GRANT - The Minister of Tourism promoted the release of grants to hoteliers last year, lowering the property tax conditions that affected the allocation of such grants. A total of NIS 300 million will be given by the Ministry of Tourism in three instalments, the last of which will be distributed in May 2021.
- A stimulus package of NIS 300 million (\$89,504,000) for Israel's ailing tourism sector has been created to help hotels re-open and continue functioning.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The government set aside 10 billion shekels (US\$2.7 billion) for loans to businesses negatively impacted by the coronavirus outbreak.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Workers placed on leave received "improved" unemployment benefits, with those employed for six months were eligible for the payments (an easing of the regulation that formerly required workers to have been employed for at least one year).
- Since the spring 2020 and on-going, the Ministry of Tourism has been operating a comprehensive training program of professional webinars and web based courses, with the purpose to preserve and enrich the human capital of the Israeli tourism industry (hoteliers, travel agents, tour operators, tour guides, and other travel professionals). The curricula delivered included expert guidance for coping with the Corona crisis, and planning ahead for post-Corona days, in order to use the crisis as leverage for mastering practices which will be of advantage upon emerging out of the Corona crisis. The series featured topics like, inter alia, tools for upgrading the financial aspects of the tourism business; crisis management; post Corona tourism trends; marketing; digital marketing; accessibility; gastronomy; leadership; mentoring, to name a few (<https://learn.goisrael.com/>).



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Israel's internal security agency, uses cellphone location data to help combat the coronavirus. The data will be used to retrace the movements of individuals who test positive for the virus, and identify others who should be quarantined.
- Overseas IGTOS (23 around the globe) are operating series of professional webinars and on-line presentations for the Israeli tour operators and for the local tourism suppliers in key source markets. This is as part of keeping the business channels that were built over a long time, open, and in order to strengthen mutual commitment for future cooperation.
- The Ministry of Tourism has installed in its marketing websites, a series of virtual tours of sites and attractions around the country, in order to raise appetite and keep the postponed tours alive in the memory.
- Ministry of Tourism is preparing a plan for "the day after" collaborating with the National Nature and Gardens Society and the Ministry of Health, to encourage gradual departures for nature, according to the health guidelines. Promotion for incoming tourism will start later, gradually, in certain source markets and according to sensitivity analysis in each country.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- With Jerusalem's tourist scene decimated just before Passover and Easter, its tourist chiefs are launching an online platform to give people a "virtual" experience in the city.
- The Ministry of Tourism lead a project of using some 4,500 hotel rooms, of various grades and categories, emptied as a result of the Corona crisis, as temporary quarantine accommodations for non-acute levels of Covid-19 diagnosed patients, or those who just have to stay in 14 days confinement.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

### • WEBINARS & OVERSEAS MARKETING

The Ministry of Tourism has conducted dozens of webinars led by tourism experts in order to help tourism business owners upgrade their business in advance of tourism's return. With the assistance of the Office's Digital Technologies and Information Division, a total of 74 webinars were held in 2020 on topics relevant to the promotion of tourism to Israel, with thousands of agents and industry professionals participating.

In addition, the Ministry has launched campaigns aimed at encouraging domestic tourism during periods when it was possible to safely take a vacation, and continued to participate in virtual and in-person trade fairs in Europe, the United States and Asia. At the same time, it increased its digital activity abroad, particularly on social networks; in the past year, the Ministry's social media pages gained 5.9 million followers.

• Israel and Greece agreed to pave the way for vaccinated tourists to travel between their two countries in an effort to boost their economies amid the coronavirus pandemic.

• Israel on February 7, opened restaurants, bars and cafes to vaccinated "green pass" holders, with about 40 percent of the population fully inoculated against the coronavirus. Restaurants are now permitted to resume indoor dining up to 75 percent capacity, with a cap of 100 people and with tables two metres (6.5 feet) apart.

Hotel event halls, sport venues and places of worship are also re-opening to green pass holders, with capacity limits in place.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

• "Purple Guidelines certificate" - Accommodation facilities are held to high standards of cleaning, training workers according to the specific guidelines, upgrading air ventilation, reducing crowd-gathering and offering special booking and cancellation terms.

• Israel launches 'green pass' for vaccinated people. Israelis in possession of a "Green Pass" - a certificate of presumed COVID-19 immunity, displayed on an Israeli Health Ministry app - will be allowed entry to leisure facilities such as gyms and hotels, the statement said.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

• Government has subsidized free walking tours all over the country in order to help tour guides continue their businesses and encourage population to do tours in the country.

• GUIDED TOURS - In light of the crisis, which caused many tour guides to lose their jobs, the Ministry of Tourism budgeted for thousands of guided tours for the general public that will take place through March 2021 via the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA). Also, for the first time, "guiding hours" will be funded by local authorities on behalf of INPA, allowing people to independently tour sites and attractions, thereby assisting the tourism industry. The Ministry of Tourism as allocated NIS 10 million to the INPA to finance the service of tour guides.

In addition, in order to further assist tour guides, the Ministry has advanced regulations that allow the renewal of a tour guide licence for one year without any conditions. It has also released guides from paying a licence fee for 2021.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Italy**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- On March 17, the government adopted a EUR 25 billion (1.6 percent of GDP) "Cura Italia" emergency package. It includes (i) funds to strengthen the Italian health care system and civil protection (EUR 3.2 billion); (ii) measures to preserve jobs and support income of laid-off workers and self-employed (EUR 10.3 billion); (iii) other measures to support businesses, including tax deferrals and postponement of utility bill payments in most affected municipalities (EUR 6.4 billion); as well as (iv) measures to support credit supply (EUR 5.1 billion)
- On April 6, the Liquidity Decree allowed for additional state guarantees of up to EUR 400 billion (25 percent of GDP). The guarantee envelope from this and earlier schemes is aimed to unlock more than EUR 750 billion (close to 50 percent of GDP) of liquidity for businesses and households (see below).
- On May 15, the government adopted a further EUR 55 billion (3.5 percent of GDP) "Relaunch" package of fiscal measures. It provides, among other things, further income support for families (EUR 14.5 billion), funds for the healthcare system (EUR 3.3 billion), and other measures to support businesses, including grants for SMEs and tax deferrals (EUR 16 billion).
- Following the Parliament's approval for a further EUR 25 billion (1.6 percent of GDP) deficit deviation, on August 8, the government adopted a new third support package. Labor and social measures (EUR 12 billion) include, among other things, additional income support for families and some workers, an extension of the short-time work program, and a suspension of social security contribution for new hires. Other key measures are extensions of the moratorium on SMEs' debt repayment and the time to pay back tax obligations.
- On October 27, the government adopted a EUR 5.4 billion (0.3 percent of GDP) package that seeks to provide quick relief to the sectors affected by the latest round of COVID containment actions. Measures include grants to 460 thousand SMEs and the self-employed, and further income support for families. The government has also extended social contribution exemptions for affected businesses.
- In mid-January 2021, the government has announced another stimulus package of about EUR 32bn aiming at extending supports for business and workers affected by the pandemic as well as kickstarting the economy in early 2021. (source: imf.org)
- On 16 March 2020, the government announced EUR 200 million in measures to support the troubled airlines, Alitalia, and Air Italy.
- European Commission approved EUR1.6 million Italian scheme to support sport associations and entities affected by Coronavirus outbreak.
- Travel Operators and travel agencies in Italy affected by the Coronavirus outbreak received financial support to get out of the current economic crisis, as the European Union Commission has approved EUR625 million Italian scheme, under the State aid Temporary Framework.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- One-off payments of EUR 500 per person for the self-employed, government support for companies paying redundancy payments to their staff, a freeze on any worker lay-offs, and a cash bonus for Italians still working during the lockdown. Allowances for workers in the tourism, culture, entertainment, film and audiovisual sectors are approved. The allowances are also extended to workers without social safety nets.
- Extension of social safety nets also to seasonal workers of tourism and entertainment and interventions in favor of authors, artists, performers and agents.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The government has approved an emergency pack of measures to protect the festival show and cinema sector, which includes the creation of “The live show, cinema and audiovisual emergencies Fund”, consisting of 130 million euros for 2020 for the support of operators, authors, artists, performers affected by the measures taken for the COVID-19 emergency and for investments aimed at relaunching these sectors. The methods for allocating were established taking into account the negative impact on beneficiaries resulting from the measures to contain the contagion from COVID-19 and include voucher for cinema tickets, theaters, museums and concerts. Refunds with vouchers already provided for travel and tourist packages canceled are also extended to tickets for shows, cinemas, theaters, museums and other places of culture.

Refunds with vouchers already provided for travel and tourist packages canceled and other accommodation facilities.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- Italy's government has extended the ban on travel between its 20 regions until March 27 due to the upsurge in the number of Coronavirus infections.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Kazakhstan**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The anti-crisis package announced in March 2020 includes cash payments to the unemployed and self-employed, an increase in pension and social benefits, additional health spending, and support for employment and businesses. Subsidized lending of KZT 1 trillion (1½ percent of GDP) is being provided under the State Program “Economy of Simple Things,” along with actions to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) finance working capital (KZT 800 billion). KZT 1.8 trillion is allocated to support employment under an “Employment Roadmap” program, including some large-scale projects to modernize the transportation infrastructure. Selected enterprises and individual entrepreneurs are also eligible for new tax incentives. Further measures recently announced to restore economic growth include: a subsidized mortgage program for households with a segment targeting youth specifically, tax incentives to agriculture and hard-hit sectors (civil aviation, tourism), credit support to SMEs and manufacturing enterprises (the latter via a newly created industry development fund), and infrastructure development. Following the reintroduction of the quarantine in early July, the authorities provided additional cash transfers to individuals who lost their jobs due to the quarantine, lowered subsidized interest rates for SME loans (to 6 percent), and extended tax concessions for vulnerable individuals and businesses. Some supportive measures (e.g. “Employment Roadmap” and working capital support to SMEs) are expected to continue in 2021. The Ministry of Health recently announced plans to increase salaries for doctors over 2021-23; the estimated overall fiscal cost amounts to about 0.7 percent of 2021 GDP. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

• For spring farming works, a sum of 70bn tenge has been allocated from the budget for farmers through the joint-stock company Agrarian Credit Corporation.  
• The interest rate for the end borrowers will not exceed 5%. An additional 100 bn tenge will be channelled towards these goals under the Economy of Simple Things programme.  
The cost of diesel will be reduced for agricultural producers by 15% of the market price. About 390,000 tonnes of diesel will be allocated at a reduced price to this end.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

• Food and household packages have been provided for over 800,000 people, including children aged 6 to 18 from low-income families receiving targeted social assistance (TSA), adult members of families receiving TSA, disabled people, parents taking care of disabled child, and unemployed people who officially registered their status.  
• For unemployed people, especially youth, citizens who are ready to go to work under the state public work programme, it will be provided, in addition to the regular wage, “start-up money” double the minimum wage, upon their arrival at the workplace.  
• Involving local SMEs in producing and delivering the abovementioned household packages. Increasing the volume of state guarantees for SMEs. • Deferment of loan repayments and the reduction and unification of loan rates for SMEs. For SMEs engaged in the most affected sectors of the economy, the accrual and payment of taxes and other payments from the wage fund have been abolished. These sectors include catering, separate trade sectors, transport services, consulting services, IT, the hospitality business, tourism, and others.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Kyrgyzstan**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The authorities will safeguard health spending at around budgeted levels and create space for increasing health and other spending. In collaboration with international organizations, the authorities have recently adopted a health sector contingency plan, with an estimated cost of \$16 million (0.2 percent of GDP) to provide training for health-care workers, procure personal protective equipment and medical tests, and to put in place a communication plan about measures to contain COVID-19. To mitigate the impact on the economy, the authorities have approved the first package of anti-crisis plan economic measures of \$15 million (0.2 percent of GDP) including the postponement of tax payments, time-bound exemptions of property and land taxes, and temporary price controls on 11 essential food items. They prepared a second and a third package of economic measures of about \$540 million (7 percent of GDP), including temporary tax exemptions for SMEs, support food security program to the vulnerable groups, and subsidized credit to banks to provide funding to small and medium-size enterprises through soft loans. The implementation of containment measures caused 13.8 percent drop in tax revenue in 2020, which will lead to a temporary widening of the budget deficit. On March 26, the IMF Board agreed to provide \$121 million in emergency financial support to the Kyrgyz authorities. On May 8, the IMF Board approved \$121 million, the second emergency assistance to the Kyrgyz Republic since the outbreak of the pandemic. The Kyrgyz authorities received budget assistance of \$50 million from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on June 10. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

• Prohibit the dismissal of workers and employees, except for valid reasons, and amend the Labour Code accordingly.  
• Restrict on-site inspections before 1 January 2021. (The following exceptions apply: scheduled inspections of businesses that produce and distribute excisable goods; unscheduled inspections resulting from reorganization, the liquidation of organizations, and the termination of an individual entrepreneur's activity; and unscheduled inspections and cross-checks when tax authorities receive documentation evidencing incorrect tax calculations by taxpayers.).



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

• Kyrgyzstan has joined a digital "COVID-19 Free Travel" platform to facilitate the cross-border movement of citizens within the Eurasian Economic Union.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Latvia**

**Last update: 12 March 2020**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• The government has announced a support package of about EUR 3.8 billion (13 percent of projected 2020 GDP) covering several sectors of the economy: i) the largest package focuses on relief to businesses directly affected by the crisis in the form of loans and guarantees amounting to EUR 1.1 billion, ii) a sectoral support package of EUR 1.2 billion covering, among others, the air and transport industry, health and education sectors as well as infrastructure projects, iii) use of EU funds amounting to about EUR 761 million to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, iv) revenue measures amounting to about EUR 344 million, and v) expenditure measures supporting idle workers and social benefits of more than EUR 300 million. The government will also contribute EUR 50 million to the EUR 100 million investment funds established to support large enterprises affected by the crisis. These measures are partly financed by the issuance of EUR 1.5 billion Eurobond and some expense saving from the budget (amounting to EUR 4.4 million). The government has also signed a 10-year EUR 500 million COVID-19 mitigation loan from the Nordic Investment Bank. Latvia could receive nearly €10.5 billion in 2021-2027 from Next Generation EU if the plan is approved by the European Parliament and national parliaments.  
(source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

• National measures include: (i) a 50 percent cut in interest rates on loans for SMEs in the tourism sector and a 15 percent cut for large enterprises; (ii) an increase of the reserve capital of the Finance Development Institution Altum by EUR 100 million to raise its capacity to provide support to companies through loans and guarantees. In addition, Altum issued EUR 20 million bond as a part of its Second Program for the Issuance of Notes to expand its financial capacity.  
(source: imf.org)



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

• Quarantined workers are entitled to receive paid sick-leave, also in case of care for quarantined children below 14 years or children with disabilities below 18 years.  
• The emergency bill stipulates that for businesses that are struggling to keep staff due to the coronavirus pandemic - in the sectors that suffering the most from the Covid-19 crisis, employees will be paid 75 percent of their wages from the state budget, with the maximum monthly payment per employee set at EUR 700. These payments from the state budget will not be applied personal income tax and social contributions



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

• The Latvian Investment and Development Agency launched a marketing campaign highlighting the comparative success of Latvia in handling the COVID-19 outbreak. Through short videos, Latvia showcased the innovative solutions that were adopted in the country in order to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. These include online education, a home-grown contact tracing app and government agencies that were able to function through remote working. Through these videos, the Latvian authorities hope to inspire visitors to feel safe in visiting Latvia.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

• The Ministry of Economics developed a crisis plan for tourism in co-operation with NGOs of tourism industry sectors and related governmental subordinated bodies such as Consumer Rights Protection Centre, State Revenue service and as well as the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Transport.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- The Latvian Government decided on March 9 to lift the ban for international passengers using air travel to and from non-European countries. All flights, including tour operating services, to and from third countries will be available from March 17.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- In order to slow the spread of the new strains of Covid-19, on February 25 the government extended the ban on entry to Latvia for reasons deemed unnecessary until the end of the state of emergency - April 6.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Liechtenstein

Last update: 23 April 2020



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Not available



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Lithuania**

**Last update: 11 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- On March 16, 2020, the government announced an overall fiscal package of 2.5 billion euros (5 percent of 2019 GDP). Within this amount, spending measures by the General Government amounts to 1.1 billion euros (2.3 percent of 2019 GDP) which includes (i) additional funds for the healthcare system and emergency management (500 million euros), (ii) additional funds for caring for the sick and disabled, including for parents of school children who now need to stay home, support for the self-employed (250 million euros), and wage subsidies for employees in affected firms (250 million euros), and (iii) co-financing of climate change investment projects (about 20 percent of 250 million euros). In addition, the government expanded guarantee schemes, including guarantees for agricultural as well as SME loans by around 1.3 billion euros (2.6 percent of 2019 GDP). Finally, the government increased the borrowing limit by 5 billion euros (10 percent of 2019 GDP).
  - Various schemes and measures have been introduced since then. This includes interest compensation support for SME's with deferred loans, a new financial instrument for businesses to form portfolios from business loans, cheap loans targeted to hard hit sectors like travel services and accommodation and services, and increased financial support to the agricultural sector. A business support fund of 100 million euros was launched with aim to provide loans and invest in debt and equity securities.
  - On May 7, 2020, the government approved to support an economic recovery for businesses and households. The package includes extended wage subsidies for persons returning from downtime or unemployment (380 million euros), job search allowances of 200 euros for those who have dropped out of the labor force (265 /million euros), an increase in social benefits to pensioners and others (182 million euros), additional funds for the self-employed and for vocational training (15.6 million euros), and an increase in unemployment benefits of 42 euros per benefit. In addition, the universal child benefit of 60 euros has been increased to 100 euros for a period of six months after the end of the national quarantine for families who lost income during the quarantine
  - On June 10, an investment plan was approved, comprising 6.3 billion euros (13 percent of 2019 GDP), of which 2.2 billion euros (4.5 percent of 2019 GDP) is new investment and the remainder is already planned investment that will be accelerated. This plan is being reviewed by a new government that was sworn in December 2020 following parliamentary elections in October.
  - In the government's 2021 budget, 1.1 billion euros was allocated to economic support measures during the second quarantine and through June 2021. This includes an extension of wage subsidies, job search allowances, interest expense compensation, soft loans to businesses, and funds for the acquisition of COVID-19 vaccines.
- (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- In addition to policies from the ECB, the Bank of Lithuania has lowered its counter-cyclical capital buffer from 1 to 0 percent and has encouraged banks to be flexible and negotiate, on a case-by-case basis, loan terms with borrowers if necessary (within the existing regulatory framework). Solvent credit or other financial institutions—including payment and electronic money institutions, management companies and insurance undertakings—which are facing temporary liquidity problems can apply to the Bank of Lithuania for emergency liquidity assistance in the form of loans provided at the European Central Bank's Marginal Lending Facility rate. Regular conditions apply including adequate collateral and having exhausted all other options.
- (source: imf.org)



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Subsidizing wages: from public resources to contribute (up to three months) to the efforts of employers to safeguard jobs by covering part of the salary to employees for downtime or partial downtime. The employee should be guaranteed the payment which is not lower than the minimum monthly salary (MMS).
- Ensuring the payment of sickness benefits.
- Flat rate sickness benefit (EUR 257) to self-employed persons who have paid social insurance contributions for at least 3 months during the year prior to the declaration.
- Payment for up to 9 months the unemployment insurance benefits to unemployed persons.
- Prolongation (from 3 to 6 months) the grace period for repayments on mortgage loans to redundant persons by issuing

- Possibility of deferring or arranging in installments the electricity and gas payments to public provider.
- To recommend the municipalities to exempt the taxpayers from taxes levied on business property and land.



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- To promote the tourism sector after COVID-19, marketing measures will also be developed aimed to promote tourism on local and closest priority tourism markets. The measures would be implemented by the public body Travel Lithuania. It is planned that tourists from neighbouring markets would help to recover the inbound tourism. It is therefore important to promote internal tourism consumption and attract tourists from the neighbouring countries traveling by surface transport.
- The transformation of the tourism sector will be pursued by promoting innovation and digital technologies through the development of tourism services and products. To this end, the 'E-business model' tool will be used to finance new business models created via introducing e-business solutions, as well as the 'Retraining of Enterprise Workers' tool and the 'Innovative Checks' tool, which will finance the purchase of services of publishing, voice-reading, translation, photography, filming, design, communication, etc.



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- As of March 6, members of two separate households will be able to meet outdoors and have parties in open spaces, and outdoor sports, leisure and entertainment services for up to five people will be permitted. The Cabinet also allowed driving lessons and tests to restart as of March 10. Libraries will be able to reopen to in-person visits, and groups of up to five people or two families will be allowed to visit nature trails, parks, museums, galleries and other exhibition spaces, and zoos and botanical gardens in open outdoor spaces. Drive-in events will be permitted, but limited to two people or members of one family in a car.



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



#### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- In order to encourage the recovery of tourism sector after COVID-19, it is planned to create a system of holiday vouchers for medical people working in Lithuania. The services of creating and issuing holiday vouchers would be provided by a local tour operator contacted by medical professionals. The estimated value of a holiday coupon will not exceed EUR 200. Medical professionals will be able to use the coupon to pay for a package consisting of the services provided by the local tour operator or accommodation establishments (accommodation, transport, catering, SPA, entertainment, etc.). The aim of this initiative is to thank the medical people for their work during the quarantine period and to encourage the recovery of the local tourism market



#### IX. OTHER

- Lithuania has from Monday, February 15, reduced the self-quarantine period required for people entering the country from two weeks to ten days
- The Lithuanian government on February 24 extended the coronavirus lockdown for another month, until April, but allowed not to wear facemasks outdoors and to travel between cities and their surrounding municipalities

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Luxembourg**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- A large fiscal package to address COVID-19 effects has been partly adopted by the Parliament, including spending measures (EUR 2.3bn or 3.6 percent of 2019 GDP) and liquidity support for eligible businesses and self-employed (EUR 8.1bn, 12.8 percent of 2019 GDP). Key spending measures include: (i) acquiring medical equipment and infrastructure (EUR 194 million, 0.3 percent of 2019 GDP); (ii) covering employees' leave for family reasons (EUR 226 million, 0.4 percent of 2019 GDP) and sick leave (EUR 106 million, 0.2 percent of 2019 GDP); (iii) paying partial-unemployment benefits (EUR 1bn, 1.6 percent of GDP); (iv) granting capital advances to cover companies' operating costs (EUR 400 million, 0.6 percent of 2019 GDP); and (v) providing non-repayable financial aid to micro enterprises and eligible self-employed (EUR 250 million, 0.4 percent of 2019 GDP). Liquidity support measures include postponing tax and social-security contribution payments for the first half of the year (EUR 4.6bn, 7.2 percent of 2019 GDP), and extending credit guarantees for new bank loans and special anti-crisis financing for SMEs and large companies (EUR 3.6bn, 5.6 percent of 2019 GDP). To finance higher spending, the government issued a EUR 2.5bn bond (3.9 percent of 2019 GDP) at a negative interest rate.
  - On May 20, the government announced a new fiscal package to support economic recovery (up to EUR 800 million, 1.3 percent of 2019 GDP). Measures include: (i) providing structural partial unemployment benefits for affected businesses based on recovery/employment retention plans until the end of 2020; (ii) providing non-repayable financial aid to businesses not yet allowed to reopen (including retail, hospitality, tourism and events sectors); (iii) flat-rate aid to support the non-food retail stores and personal care providers (less than 250 employees); (iv) financial incentives to support national tourism; (v) extending leave for family reasons to take care of adults with disabilities and elderly and increasing the cost-of-living allowance for low-income households; and (vi) fiscal incentives to support private investment and green recovery (including aid for development and energy efficiency projects).
  - On July 9, the government announced a series of measures to fight unemployment by providing support for unemployed people of advanced age and incentives for businesses to further educate young workers, and making professional training programs more accessible to young workers.
  - On November 13, the government introduced capital grants to partly cover fixed costs and extended flat-rate financial aid for most affected sectors (tourism, events, culture and entertainment) through March 2021. Businesses eligible for both schemes should choose the one most suitable for their needs. Several existing aid schemes (available to all sectors) have been extended through Q2 2021, including partial unemployment benefits, credit guarantees and capital advances.
  - On November 20, the government announced new measures to support businesses, including: (i) lump sum grants for most affected sectors to partially compensate the increase in minimum wages scheduled for early 2021; and (ii) a capital injection to the public credit insurer (EUR 20 million), the Office du Ducroire, to increase its capacity to provide guarantees to exporters.
  - On December 21, the government extended the list of sectors eligible for capital grants that partly cover fixed costs to retail and personal care sectors.
  - On March 2, the government temporarily relaxed the limit on non-worked hours eligible for partial unemployment benefits for hospitality, tourism and event sectors (up to 100 percent for April and then back to 50 percent).
- (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The Luxembourg authorities have intensified off-site oversight of key risks in the banking sector and stepped up surveillance of investment funds, including new requirements for weekly updates on financial data, notifications on significant events and large redemptions, and fund managers' governance arrangements. They introduced a draft law which, among others, grants the supervisory bodies powers to extend, for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, reporting deadlines for entities under their remit. In line with the ECB's recommendation on dividend distribution during the COVID-19 pandemic, banks were advised to refrain from distributing accumulated profits should this constrain their capacity to meet their clients' credit and liquidity needs. They also issued guidance on COVID-19-related financial Q&As clarifying, among others, reporting requirements for investment funds, and the prudential treatment of COVID-19 industry-wide private moratoria as well supervisory flexibility to avoid IFSR9-related procyclical effects for banks. Also, Luxembourg banks committed to offer a 6-month moratorium on loan repayment for SMEs, self-employed and liberal professionals.
- (source: imf.org)



### III. JOBS & SKILLS

- The government set up a “force majeure” short-term working scheme benefitting those businesses that have had to partially, or completely cease their activities due to Covid-19 measures. Under the umbrella of the scheme, the government will pay compensation of up to 80% of the salaries (limited to 250% of the social minimum wage). Any difference between this threshold and the salary will be borne by the Employment Fund. A company benefitting from the scheme commits to refraining from dismissals for economic reasons. The government will set aside EUR500 million/month to cover the scheme. It has put in place an accelerated procedure to deal with support requests and process payments.
- The government has also simplified registration and access to unemployment benefits for workers who lost their job due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Unemployment benefits that are due to expire will be prolonged.
- An emergency fund for very small companies and self-employed persons who had their activities interrupted by Covid-19 measures has been set up. The fund will provide eligible companies as well as self-employed persons with an immediate and non-refundable financial aid of EUR5000. In addition self-employed are eligible for an emergency support of EUR2500.
- The government has also adopted aid measures for certain micro-undertakings (less than 10 employees) and undertakings employing between 10 and 20 people.



### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



### IX. OTHER

- Up to this point, Luxembourg accepted only COVID-19 test results in one of the three official languages of the country, Luxembourgish, French, and German. However, the country's government announced that from now on, it would accept test requirements in other languages to avoid problems in boarding. The announcement following the the confirmation that the government has extended the test requirment rule until March 31

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Malta**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The government has announced a series of spending measures, projected to cost EUR 520 million (4 percent of GDP) that aim to support the healthcare sector as well as firms and households income. These include (i) more than EUR 130 million (1 percent of GDP) healthcare spending; (ii) allowances to support individuals unable to work from home (such as families with children, persons with disabilities); (iii) special unemployment benefits; (iv) wage subsidies for businesses and self-employed individuals affected by the pandemic; (v) support for businesses to cover costs of quarantined employees and invest in teleworking facilities; and (vi) increases in rent subsidies for unemployed individuals. In addition, the government will provide deferrals of tax payments for income tax, VAT, social security and maternity fund contributions. These measures were originally issued for March and April, and later extended to cover May and June. The government also approved a direct grants scheme of EUR 5.3 million to support investment in research and development (R&D) related to the coronavirus outbreak, and a rent subsidy scheme for SMEs with a budget allocation of EUR 2.5 million, covering February 2020 to December 2022.
- On June 8, 2020, the government announced a EUR 900 million (7 percent of GDP) package to help the economy recover from the impacts of the pandemic. It includes (i) EUR 400 million (3 percent of GDP) of infrastructure investment over the coming years, (ii) the extension of tax deferrals, estimated at EUR 200 million (1.5 percent of GDP), (iii) the extension of wage subsidy schemes, (iv) subsidies for rent and electricity bills for businesses, (v) lower taxes for property transactions, (vi) cash vouchers redeemable at bars, restaurants, hotels and retail outlets, (vii) lower fuel price, (viii) tax refund for workers, (ix) additional in-work benefit and grants, and (x) various funds, grants and supporting schemes for businesses.
- In October 2020, the government further extended the wage subsidy schemes until at least March 2021 and decided to issue another round of cash voucher redeemable at restaurants, accommodations and shops. On January 5, modification to the wage subsidy scheme was announced. The new scheme decides the assistance level according to the losses in business turnover incurred during the pandemic. On March 4, 2021, the wage subsidy scheme was further extended until June 2021.
- In January 2021, the government announced one-time payment of up to EUR 2,870 for bar owners (total €2.2 million) to cover costs during the five months of business closures.  
(source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The government will provide loan guarantees up to EUR900 million (6 percent of GDP).
- Banks have been directed to offer a six-month moratorium on repayments on capital and interest for borrowers who have been negatively affected by COVID-19.
- A Guarantee Fund of EUR 350 million (2.7 percent of GDP) has been allocated by Government, through the Malta Development Bank, for the purpose of guaranteeing loans granted by commercial banks in Malta to businesses affected negatively by the pandemic. The amount of loans under guarantee could reach up to EUR 780 million (6 percent of GDP). The government will be subsidizing the interest rate on these loans for two years up to 2.5 percent. In addition, banks were directed to offer a six-month moratorium on repayments on capital and interest for borrowers who have been negatively affected by COVID-19. (source: imf.org)



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- EUR 350 grant will be awarded to employers for each employee required to be on mandatory quarantine leave.
- Government will cover the equivalent of two days' salary per week (based on a salary of EUR 800 per month) in relation to employees of enterprises, including self-employed, which suffered from a complete suspension of operations (such as hospitality and entertainment and language schools). Self-employed persons in these sectors who employ people will get coverage for an additional day.
- Employees who lose their job and have rent to pay will be entitled to a rent subsidy including those not previously entitled to such subsidy. Furthermore, the government will increase the rent subsidy for those families where one dependent had his/her employment terminated.
- 3-month moratorium can be requested from banks in relation to both personal and business loans. (all points above from KPMG).

- The Malta Tourism Authority will be seeking out employees eligible for the wage supplement scheme to help with contact-tracing services.  
The scheme, a collaboration between MTA and Malta Enterprise, will allow employees for MTA-licensed establishments to carry out contact-tracing duties with the Health Authorities over the coming months. This includes those working in bars and catering establishments, among others.  
Those chosen for the scheme will receive the full EUR 800 wage supplement with an added top-up of EUR 5.28 per hour or the difference between the wage supplement and Scale 10.



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) has launched a new Covid-19 helpline specifically for tourists in collaboration with the Tourism Ministry.



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Malta launched a new post-Covid-19, 10-year tourism plan. The plan is being built on three pillars – Recover, Rethink, Revitalise



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



#### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



#### IX. OTHER

- On March 10 2021 the government has ordered all non-essential shops and services as well as schools to close for at least a month amid a surge in COVID-19 cases.  
All restaurants and ancillary services in hotels will close and only room service will be provided;  
Closure of non-essential shops and services including hairdressers, barbers, beauty shops, clothes shops, furniture and jewellery shops, toyshops and florists;  
Crossings to Gozo will be limited to essential travel and those who own property on the island;  
Groups gathering in public are being limited to four from the current six;  
All organised sports activities are banned;  
Pools, cinemas, museums, theatres, wedding receptions and religious activities banned except funerals;  
Non-urgent surgery to be postponed;  
Religious activities including Masses stopped except funerals;  
The measures apply until April 11.  
Business establishments that are being ordered to close will benefit from the wage supplement.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Monaco**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- In response to the economic difficulty, in March 2021, the Principality has pledged to offer more financial aid to the worst affected businesses. The Principality will be devoting 150 million euros to the survival of struggling companies, which include: bars, restaurants, gyms, ice-cream parlours and certain companies linked to tourism and events.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- EUR 50 million have been released to help businesses and prevent bankruptcy, in the form of a credit opening, a state counter-guarantee from the banks sought by companies in difficulty, to prevent bankruptcies by relieving the cash flow of troubled businesses.
- Principality that finance a structural investment with a bank loan can currently apply for an interest rate subsidy of this business loan will be extended to other companies that request it. This subsidy consists of reducing the interest rate charged by the bank, for the entire duration of the loan, with a minimum rate set at EURIBOR plus 0.75%. The loan subsidy system will be reduced to a zero rate.
- A credit guarantee fund is intended to support the development of economic activities in the Principality. The percentage of cover, which is currently set at 65%, will be increased to 100%.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Employers and self-employed workers in the Principality who are experiencing a significant drop in activity due to the Coronavirus epidemic can contact the Social Security Contributions Collection Office to request staggered payment of their contributions.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Creation of a Committee for Assistance to Businesses in Difficulty (COMED): The role is to examine applications from businesses that are in great difficulty. It aims to: Analyze the causes and undertake an analysis. The Committee provides written opinions on the cases submitted to it and suggests practical measures to support and help businesses in difficulty.



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- "Monaco Safe" health label launch.
- The "Monaco Safe" label serves as a guarantee of quality and ensures that the establishment carrying this label complies with all the health safety criteria imposed by the government to combat the spread of coronavirus.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Montenegro**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The first package of economic measures included: (i) the removal of the excise on medical alcohol sold in pharmacies; (ii) the delay of tax payments and social security contributions; (iii) the creation of a new Investment Development Fund (IRF) credit line of EUR 120 million to improve the liquidity of entrepreneurs; (iv) the deferral of lease payments for state-owned real estate; (v) advance payments to contractors for capital projects; (vi) one-off financial assistance to low-income pensioners and social welfare beneficiaries in the amount of EUR 50; (vii) and an increase in the March 2020 wages of healthcare workers by up to 15 percent.
- The second package of economic measures was approved on April 24 and included (i) wage subsidies for employees in sectors that are closed because of the pandemic, employees who are unable to work due to childcare for children aged under 11, or people who have to be self-isolated and quarantined; (ii) wage subsidies of newly employed workers in SMEs for six months if these workers are registered as unemployed; (iii) state bodies and state-owned companies will impose a six-month moratorium on the enforcement of claims for companies that are not operating due to the pandemic; (iv) energy firms will exempt the fixed portion of electricity bills for businesses that have stopped operating due to the pandemic-related lockdown; (v) the state utility EPCG will double its electricity subsidies for vulnerable households; (vi) assistance to the agriculture and fisheries sector, including one-off assistance to fishermen and payments for the contributions of insured agricultural workers; and (vii) one-time assistance of EUR 50 to all persons recorded as unemployed in the Employment Agency of Montenegro and who did not receive any compensation.
- The third package (adopted by the Government on July 23) comprised of short- and long-term measures worth EUR 1.22 billion over four years (EUR 281.2 million in 2020); however, implementation has been reportedly low. Short-term measures in this package include (i) support to the tourism sector (such as interest subsidies on loans and the reduction of VAT from 21 percent to 7 percent in the hospitality industry), (ii) interest subsidies for the agriculture sector; (iii) programs for improving competitiveness; (iv) wage subsidies; and (v) one-off support to veterans and pensioners.
- The Montenegrin government announced a fourth economic package on January 28, 2021 of EUR 163 million, which is expected to cover 100,000 citizens. Measures include (i) wage subsidies (with an expanded list of eligible sectors); (ii) one-off support to the vulnerable population; (iii) tax deferrals; (iv) support for new employment; (v) one-off support for firms to implement e-fiscalization; (vi) domestic travel vouchers for health and education workers; and additional measures for the tourism, catering, and agriculture and fisheries sectors. The measures are aimed at maintaining employment levels, improving liquidity, increasing the number of tourists, the stability of agriculture, as well as supporting the vulnerable population.  
(source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

The measures adopted include:

- Creation of a new IRF credit line intended to improve the liquidity of entrepreneurs, micro, small, medium-sized and large enterprises up to a maximum amount of EUR 3 million per beneficiary. By a simplified procedure, no approval fee and an interest rate of only 1.5%. These funds are intended for companies operating in the field of procurement of medicine, medical equipment and vehicles; tourism and catering; traffic; services; food production and processing.
- All measures related to the liquidity of the economy also apply to the entities that are the founders of the Montenegrin media.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Since January 12, 2021, Montenegro removed the PCR test and/or quarantine requirement for high-risk nations and stopped the use of their 'country lists', that dictated which nations could visit under which requirements. Now foreign arrivals from all nations are treated equally with having no entry restrictions when travelling to Montenegro



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Netherlands**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• A series of fiscal measures have been introduced since the start of the pandemic to contain the economic impact of the outbreak. The two first support packages (announced in March and May, respectively) include spending measures estimated at about 31.6 billion euros (4 percent of GDP) in 2020, and covering (i) compensation of up to 90 percent of labor costs for companies expecting a reduction in revenues of 20 percent or more; (ii) compensation for affected sectors (hospitality, travel, agriculture, culture, and others); (iii) support for entrepreneurs and the self-employed, start-ups and small innovation companies; (iv) scaling up of the short-time working scheme (unemployment benefit compensation available to companies needing to reduce their staff by at least 20 percent), (v) allowances for SMEs to help them finance their fixed costs. In addition, companies can defer tax payments without penalties, and calculate provisional taxes on the basis of expected reduced activity levels. In 2020, revenue shortfalls from deferral of tax payments and other forgone revenue measures are estimated at 17.2 billion euros (or 2.2 percent of GDP). Also, public guarantee schemes (with a ceiling increased by 65 billion euros, or 8.1 percent of GDP), especially for SME loans but also covering large firms, are expanded to help the most vulnerable companies to manage their liquidity problems. A guarantee scheme for supplier credit has also been established. On August 28, the government announced the third support package which primarily aims at expanding and adjusting measures already in place on the expenditure side through June 2021. This new package with an initial envelope of 12.5 billion additional expenditure (of which 1.5 billion of public investment) was further expanded by 3.7 billion on December 9 and 7.6 billion on January 6 (totaling about 3 percent of GDP). The authorities also aim at supporting labor mobility toward expanding sectors. Platforms to facilitate job transition are being developed, and public financing is being allocated for training, re-skilling and career counseling. Tax incentives are also introduced to support private investment. The total cost of these programs will depend on demand.

(source: imf.org)

• European Commission approves EUR165 million Dutch measure to support the travel industry in the context of the Coronavirus outbreak. July 30.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

• The so-called GO-regulation, through which SMEs can secure a 50% guarantee from the government on their bank loans and bank guarantees, will be expanded. The maximum ceiling guaranteed will be increased from EUR 400 million to EUR 1.5 billion and the maximum GO-facility per firm will be increased from EUR 50 million to EUR 150 million. This will enable both small and large firms to benefit from this policy.

Monetary measures adopted also include a guarantee facility for SME loans (BMKB) working – EUR 665 mn of available budget of EUR 765 mn- 0.08% GDP. Guarantees are expanded to higher guarantee percentage, up to 90% of credit risk of banks for SMEs taking out a loan of EUR 1.5 mn max. but that don't have required collateral.

• Public guarantee schemes, especially for SME loans, are expanded to help the most vulnerable companies to manage their liquidity problems. The total cost of these programs will depend on demand.

• The Dutch central bank has reduced systemic buffer requirements for the three largest banks to support bank lending. The central bank is also taking measures to provide temporary regulatory relief to other banking institutions. The largest Dutch banks have agreed to grant SMEs a six-month postponement of their loan repayments.

• The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality will temporarily underwrite working capital granted to farms and horticultural companies as part of the Guarantee SME Loans scheme for small and medium-sized farms and act as a guarantor for loans granted to farms. There is an emergency package of EUR 650 million of additional measures for companies in the floricultural sector, specific parts of the food horticulture and the French fries potato sector.

• A package of EUR 300 million is added to support cultural institutions so they can ensure that the flow of assignments, also towards self-employed workers, can be taken up smoothly after the COVID-19 crisis.

• On 28 April, the government decided to broaden the financial support and to relax the criteria for the SME credit guarantee scheme (BMKB) so that another 10.000s of companies will be supported (from 16 March 2020 to 1 April 2021). The term of a credit is extended to four years and besides an extensive liquidity forecast, it is also possible to look via a turnover test.

The scheme to provide capital to investments funds (SEED Capital Scheme) will be increase from EUR 22 million to EUR 32 million. Support and relief for especially startups in technology and creative areas in obtaining venture capital from investment funds.

• Startups and scale-ups can apply for the 'Corona-Overbruggingslening' (Corona Bridging Loan or COL) that vary between EUR 50,000 and EUR 2 million. On 20 May, the government announced an available second tranche of EUR 150 million

for the Corona Bridging Loan (COL) that contributes to improving the liquidity position of innovative companies (start-ups and scale-ups) due to the large number of applications submitted.

- Government is guaranteeing bank loans (minimum EUR 1.5 million - maximum extended to EUR 150 million per company) to large and medium sized companies. The maximum guarantee rate, as previously announced, has now increased from 50% to 80% for large companies and 90% for SMEs with the condition that they are affected by corona. The term of a credit will be 6 years.

- SMEs who have a loan from microcredit provider Qredits do not have to repay their loan for a period of 6 months. During this period, the interest will be reduced to 2%. The government supports Qredits with EUR 6 million.

- The government is making EUR750 million available for bridge loans for small businesses in the micro-, medium- and small business sector. These bridge loans are available to small businesses with a relatively small financing need of between EUR10,000 and EUR50,000. Financiers provide the Small Credit Coronavirus guarantee scheme (KKC). The state is the guarantor for EUR713 million of the available 750 mln.

Temporary support fund of EUR11 million for local newspapers, broadcasters, local newspapers, websites and door-to-door newspapers

Financial compensation for a period of up to 5 weeks for fishermen who cannot sail out (EUR9 mln available).



### III. JOBS & SKILLS

- The Employee Insurance Agency provided the company with an advance amounting to 80 per cent of the requested allowance. This allowed companies to keep paying their employees' salaries. In order to be eligible, companies had to not dismiss any employees from their jobs for economic reasons during the period covered by the allowance. It covered employees with permanent and temporary contracts.

- A temporary bridging measure for self-employed professionals (TOZO). The Tozo offers support for self-employed professionals such as a sole proprietor, zzp'er, partner in a general partnership, owner of a private limited company, who are experiencing financial difficulties due to the corona crisis.

- The Dutch government offered companies from specific sectors a one-time reimbursement of EUR 4000 (TOGS).

- The government announced a scheme: Allowance for Fixed Charges for SMEs - in particular catering, recreation, events, fairs, and cultural sector - (successor of TOGS), applicable by 1st of June. SMEs can receive - in addition to the wage costs allowance (NOW) - a tax-free compensation of up to 20,000 euros to cover their fixed material costs. The amount depends on the size of the company, the costs and the loss of turnover (at least 30 percent). This scheme costs EUR 1 billion.



### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Restaurants, bars and cafés can open under the following conditions: a maximum of 30 guests (so not counting staff); people must make a reservation; everyone must stay 1.5 metres apart (except people who live together); the business must assess possible health risks beforehand together with the customer. There is no maximum number of people for outdoor seating areas, but all guests must sit at tables and people who do not live together must stay 1.5 metres apart.

- Cinemas, theatres and concert halls can reopen under the following conditions: a maximum of 30 audience members per auditorium; people must make a reservation; the venue must assess possible health risks beforehand together with the customer; everyone must maintain a distance of 1.5 metres from others.

- Museums and heritage sites can reopen if people buy tickets in advance and the health risks are assessed beforehand. The maximum number of visitors depends on the building. People must stay 1.5 metres apart.



### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- As of January 23, 2021, people traveling to the Netherlands not only need a negative result of a PCR-test taken within 72 hours before arrival in the Netherlands, but now also need a negative result of a so called antigen rapid test, or LAMP (loop mediated isothermal amplification) test taken within 4 hours before departure to the Netherlands. Upon arrival in the Netherlands, people are required to self-quarantine.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: North Macedonia**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The government has adopted fiscal measures to help address firms' liquidity problems, protect jobs and support the most vulnerable. The measures, most of which are temporary, include subsidies on private sector wages and social security contributions for firms that maintain employment, postponement of income tax payments, loans at favorable terms and loan guarantees, and sector-specific support. Also, vulnerable households have received financial support through existing social assistance schemes and cash vouchers. Students have received partial re-imbursement of university tuition fees and IT courses. Previously implemented price controls on basic food products, medicines, and disinfection products have been lifted, and the import duty on medical supplies has been reintroduced. (source: imf.org)
- Establishment of a Tourism Fund to support the tourism industry, a request to ZAMP to put a stop to claims on restaurants and hotels are part of the Ministry of Economy's measures to mitigate the impact of COVID 19.
- Government also decided to freeze the prices of the basic food products in order to avoid price shocks.
- The Tourism Fund currently estimates about MKD 74 million out of which MKD 44 million denar are under the Ministry of Economy programs that will not be used and MKD 30 million denar are from the Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The National Bank decreased the reference rate for calculating the penalty interest rate to 1.75% (= a 0.25% decrease).
- Reduced mandatory reserves for new or reprogrammed loans to most affected companies.
- Regulatory easing in relation to liquidity assessments (credit risk management).
- Abolished fees for withdrawing and returning cash to the central vault.
- Decree that enables the banks to postpone the credits to their clients in an easy and simple manner, without signing any annexes or going to the physical locations of the banks.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Unemployment benefit for the citizens who lost their jobs due to the crisis, amounting to 50% of the employee's average salary, and up to 80% of the average salary in the country.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- North Macedonia has lifted all Covid-19 related travel restrictions



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- Parliament has extended the current nationwide state of crisis through June 30, 2021 to effectively manage state resources in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

- Starting March 10, the Government of North Macedonia is imposing a two-week national curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. to curb a recent surge in COVID-19 infections and transmission rates. Travelers en route to and from the airport with tickets or itineraries in hand are exempt from this curfew. This curfew will be in effect until March 22.
- Beginning March 10, the Government is mandating a 14-day quarantine period for all travelers arriving from countries in Africa to prevent the spread of a COVID-19 variant identified in several of these countries. This travel quarantine order will remain in effect until March 22 and the Government will reassess this measure after this date.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Norway**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Key implemented and proposed fiscal measures (discretionary measures close to NOK 131.3 billion, or 4.35 percent of 2020 mainland GDP per the authorities' estimates, excluding the government bond fund and any losses from government guarantees and loans above budgeted loss provisioning) include:

- Expenditure measures: (i) household income protection scheme offering larger wage subsidies for temporary lay-offs, more generous unemployment benefits, and expanded sickness and child care; (ii) measures for business offering a scheme to compensate heavily affected but otherwise sustainable businesses for unavoidable fixed costs, the reinstatement of a government fund that buys bonds issued by Norwegian companies, grants for start-ups and subsidies of domestic air routes; (iii) strengthening of critical sectors such as healthcare; (iv) a subsidy for businesses to take back temporarily laid-off workers, (v) a green transition package, and finally (iv) expanded funding for education and training.
- Revenue measures: (i) lowering of reduced VAT rate from 12 to 6 percent; (ii) deferral of various tax payments and reduction of the employer tax for May and June 2020, change in CIT regulations so that loss-making companies can re-allocate their losses towards previous years' taxed profits, and temporary amendments to the petroleum tax system to improve liquidity in the sector; suspension of aviation charges; temporary lowering of the employers' social insurance contributions.
- Guarantee and loan schemes for businesses which include loan guarantees for SMEs, and a scheme for re-insurance of private credit insurance providers.
- The 2021 budget proposes continuing but more targeted discretionary measures to support businesses and households consistent with the 2020 measures, at an envelop of 2.2 percent of mainland GDP.  
(source: imf.org)
- Introduction of an aviation guarantee scheme totalling NOK 6 billion, with a 90% government guarantee on each loan.
- For organizers of cultural and sports events, a compensation scheme of NOK 900 million (around EUR 80-90 million) for cultural and sports events that were cancelled due to state restrictions.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Monetary measures include:
  - reduction of the policy rate by 1.25 percentage points to 0.25 percent;
  - provision of additional liquidity to banks in form of loans of differing maturities;
  - establishment of a swap facility of US\$ 30 billion between Norges Bank and the US Federal Reserve (mutual currency arrangement);
  - possibility for banks to borrow in US\$ dollars against collateral.
- Macro-financial policies include:
  - easing of countercyclical capital buffer by 1.5 percentage points;
  - possibility that banks can temporarily breach the liquidity coverage ratio.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Removed three waiting days between the period when employers have to provide salary to workers in temporary layoffs and workers' entitlement to daily unemployment benefits.
- Employer's social insurance contribution is to be reduced by 4 percentage points for one term, equivalent to two months. This proposal will be submitted in the revised budget. For zone V (the former Finnmark county and region of Nord-Troms), where the rate is zero, compensation of NOK 250 million is to be provided.
- Employers are to be reimbursed for sickness benefits paid from the fourth day onwards for absences due to the coronavirus.
- The Government proposed temporary legislative amendments enabling employers to decide that employees being temporarily laid off can continue as members of the pension scheme.
- Wage subsidies for temporary layoffs via the unemployment benefit, eligibility for which has been reduced from 50 percent to 40 percent work reduction.



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- People who travel to Norway from abroad will be required to register with authorities for the duration of their stay at quarantine hotels under tightened rules.  
The new rule has been introduced in February 2021 in order to ensure quarantine rules are complied with.



#### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



#### IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Poland**

**Last update: 25 February 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Measures concerning the scope of action of the Minister responsible for tourism include:

- Tour operators shall get the refund of their contributions to the Tourism Guarantee Fund for the package which has been cancelled due to the coronavirus epidemic;
- Accommodation services and travel and tour guides services will also be supported.
- Mechanism to minimize the financial loss of the entrepreneurs to ensure proper functioning of the economic operators on the tourism services market within the framework of coronavirus spread.
- Poland announced a rescue package designed to protect jobs and the economy from the impact of the COVID-19 that will cost around 212 billion PLN (US\$ 52 billion), or roughly 9% of gross domestic product.
- Key tax and spending measures include:
  - additional funds for hospital equipment and supplies;
  - wage subsidies for employees of affected businesses and self-employed persons;
  - increased guarantees from the national development bank (BGK) for enterprises;
  - additional loans for micro-firms;
  - postponement of payment of social contributions and possible deferral, payment in installments, or cancellation of taxes;
  - deduction of this year's losses for 2021 tax settlement;
  - allowance for parents for school closures.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The National Bank of Poland reduced its policy interest rate by 50 bps to 1 percent.
- The NBP has re-introduced repo (fine-tuning) operations to provide liquidity to banks, reduced the required reserve ratio from 3.5 to 0.5 percent, and raised the interest rate on required reserves to the level equal to the policy interest rate.
- The 3 percent systemic risk buffer for bank capital requirements has been repealed.
- The Polish Financial Supervisory Authority announced measures related to provisions and reclassification of loans to existing SMEs to allow smoothing of credit losses over a longer period. Some flexibility has been granted in how banks meet capital and liquidity requirements. A flexible approach has been adopted for valuation under Solvency II for the insurance sector. Additionally, the Polish Banking Association has recommended voluntary deferral of loan payments for affected borrowers for up to three months.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- In Poland, the Department of Tourism has developed a Q&A guide for travellers and tour operators. This guide points to regulations which define the rights of tourism market entities, with particular emphasis on those regulations that may apply in the current situation.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- Poland boosts domestic tourism with free vouchers for families with children. Each family with a child under 18 years old or a child with a disability can claim a voucher of 500 zloty (111 euros). The amount can be spent on hotel services or tourist events carried out by an entrepreneur or public organization throughout the country.



## IX. OTHER

- Polish Government announced that fully vaccinated travelers will be exempt from the mandatory quarantine, but these, travelers must come from a place that Poland is already allowing into the country.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Portugal**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Portugal's government announced the following measures:

- A EUR 9.2 billion euro package supporting workers and providing liquidity for companies affected by the coronavirus outbreak. Further details are provided under III. Jobs and Skills.
- Government specific measures for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Portugal new and exclusive for startups:
  - Startup RH Covid19 - support early stage startups with liquidity that allows their immediate survival and maintenance of jobs.
  - Extension of Startup Voucher - support entities with Active Startup Vouchers (EUR 2.075 per entrepreneur)
  - Incubation Cheque Covid19 - to help startups with less than 5 years to fulfil their commitments with incubators and ensure their sustainability, allowing the contracting of business incubator services through a simplified immediate payment cheque. Non-refundable.
  - "Mezzanine" Funding for Startups Covid19 - injecting liquidity into companies (already invested) through debt instruments convertible into share capital (supplies), after a period of 12 months, applying a discount rate that avoids the dilution of promoters, involving average tickets between EUR 50.000 and EUR 100.000 investment.
  - Launch of an instrument COVID19-Portugal Ventures - facilitates the strengthening of the liquidity of startups (bridge financing) in syndication with existing shareholders (at least 30%), in the current context, through a Call of Portugal Ventures for investments in startups, with tickets starting at EUR 50.000.
- Government measures in force and adapted to startups:
  - An EUR 200M Fund - allows a significant capitalization of companies supporting them in this period of great uncertainty and then boost their growth after COVID-19. Provides technological startups and scaleups with much greater investment capacity in the stages late Seed and Series A and B, through co-investment with private investors in Portuguese startups and scaleups in the digital area, life Sciences and Biotech, with a public minimum of EUR 500.000 and a maximum of EUR 5 M (the minimum value might be relaxed). Call option for private co-investors during the first years of the investment operation with an IRR of between 4% and 6%. For more information please visit <https://www.200m.pt/>
  - Co-investment fund for social innovation - enables enterprises with a strong social impact dimension to have a much greater investment capacity in the so-called Seed to Series A phases, through matching between private operators and FIS (Social Innovation Fund), with a public minimum of EUR 50.000 and a maximum of EUR 2.5M. Call option for co-investors during the first years of the investment operation with an IRR between 3% and 5%. For more information please visit <https://www.fis.gov.pt/en>
- The European Commission has approved, under EU state aid rules, EUR133 million in liquidity support to SATA Air Açores (SATA). The aid will allow the company to fulfil its public service obligations, provide essential services and ensure the connectivity of the Azores outermost region.
- New and expanded credit lines, targeting SMEs (EUR 750 mln), exporters (EUR 1,050 mln, with loans up to EUR 4,000 per worker, of which 20 percent can be converted into a non-refundable subsidy if jobs are maintained), large companies in affected sectors (750 mln), tourism sector, including microcredit to small companies (EUR 400 mln)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Special credit line for enterprises' cash flow of 200 million euros.
  - The Treasury (with an allocation of 90 million euros) support line for tourism micro-enterprises that demonstrate a reduced capacity to react to the strong retraction of demand.
  - Credit lines for companies, guaranteed by the State and made available through the banking system, aimed at the sectors most affected:
    - Restoration and the like will have access to 600 million euros, 270 million of which for micro and small businesses
    - Travel agencies, entertainment companies, event organization and the like will have access to 200 million euros, of which 75 million are for micro and small businesses;
    - Tourist developments and accommodation will have access to EUR 900 million, of which EUR 300 million is for micro and small businesses
- These credit lines include a 4-year repayment term, including a grace period until the end of the year and payments are deferred.
- Support Line for Tourism Microenterprises Liquidity - COVID-19. The Support Line for Tourism Microenterprises Liquidity - COVID-19, with an allocation of EUR 60 million, it is a new line of financing aimed at tourist micro-enterprises that show little capacity to react to the strong retraction in demand that has been registered.

- It was also decided to support the reimbursement of costs incurred by events organizers whose events in 2020 were postponed or canceled due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- Capitalizar COVID-19 - Special credit line for enterprises cash flow. This credit line has doubled the budget to 400 million euros and is not available for the tourism businesses since March 28, once there is 1.760 million euros available only for the tourism industry companies.
- Suspension of repayment of debt for six months both for citizens and enterprises.
- Moratorium to credits: suspension of repayment of debt until 30th September 2021 both for citizens and enterprises.



### III. JOBS & SKILLS

In order to protect employment the following measures have been adopted:

- Simplified lay off: extraordinary support for the maintenance of contracts in a company in a business crisis situation, in the amount of 2/3 of the remuneration, ensuring Social Security the payment of 70% of this amount, the remainder being borne by the employer.
  - IEFP (Portuguese institute of Training) scholarships are granted.
  - Promotion of an exceptional and temporary regime of exemption from the payment of social security contributions during the lay off period by employers.
- Other measures to support businesses in the following circumstances:
- simplified lay-off regime, upon declaration by the Management and Certified Accountant, if any;
  - the complete stoppage of the activity of the company or establishment that results from the interruption of global supply chains, the suspension or cancellation of orders;
  - the abrupt and sharp drop of at least 40% of the billing, with reference to the same period of three months, or, for those who started the activity less than 12 months ago, to the average of that period.
  - The government approved a simplified lay-off scheme. For more information please visit: <http://www.seg-social.pt/iss-ip-instituto-da-seguranca-social-ip> and <https://www.iefp.pt/covid19>.
  - A EUR 9.2 billion package supporting workers and providing liquidity for companies affected by the coronavirus outbreak. The package includes EUR 5.2 billion in fiscal stimulus, EUR 3 billion in state-backed credit guarantees and 1 billion related to social security payments.
  - Turismo de Portugal's Hotel and Tourism Schools are now delivering classes fully online and tuition fees suspended during this period.
  - Turismo de Portugal also provides for health care workers, members of police forces and other members of essential public services, at zero cost and immediately, the accommodation available in its hotel and tourism schools in Setúbal, Faro and Lamego
  - Turismo de Portugal Hotel and Tourism Schools offer 2500 meals daily to several social institutions and members of essential public services identified by Social Security.
  - Online Certified Executive Training Programme. In response to the needs identified by several enterprises Turismo de Portugal Hotel and Tourism Schools launched a set of certified training courses in the areas of marketing and communication, hygiene and food safety, management of teams, labour legislation, new business models and languages.



### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Daily update of market information for enterprises (air transport, reservations, tour operators and travel restrictions), produced by the offices of Turismo de Portugal worldwide and publicly available on Turismo de Portugal's knowledge management platform TravelBI: <https://travelbi.turismodeportugal.pt/pt-pt/Paginas/HomePage.aspx>
- Monitoring the flow of tourists to Portugal, using mobile and airlines data.
- Launch of Turismo#PorTodos movement, with the purpose of creating a force for good, including support measures for the industry enterprises, to help and inform tourists and play a significant role with country residents.
- Upgrading of the information and advisory team at Turismo de Portugal including increment of phone and online channels to support companies on financial instruments created to deal with the COVID-19 crisis.
- COVID-19 Portugal Tourism Response was developed in the area of communication focusing on tourists with information on consumer rights in the context of the crisis, protection advice, restrictions and useful contacts.



### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthening response capacity of IAPMEI's (Institute for SMEs) and Turismo de Portugal (NTA) in assisting the impact caused by COVID-19.

- Turismo de Portugal provided a specialized online support service, provided by a team of 60 trainers from the Hotel and Tourism Schools who are available to help companies to provide advisory in dealing with specific operational issues, helping to minimize the impact Contingency Plans for COVID-19.
- Turismo de Portugal is collaborating with #Tech4COVID19, a movement with more than two thousand people, including startups, engineers, designers, marketers, health professionals and professionals from other areas, which developed a

platform to recruit accommodation (Hotels and Short-term rental) for use by health professionals who are unable or unwilling to return home for fear of contagion to the family.

- In this context, together with private sector associations such as ALEP, AHRESP and AHP, Turismo de Portugal will promote the platform to units that want to participate in this initiative, while having made available a fund of EUR 250.000 to support - through sector associations - accommodation and hotel owners, with electricity, water, gas and cleaning costs.
- Online Live Training - BEST (Business Education for Smart Tourism). Turismo de Portugal in cooperation with several portuguese private hotel and tourism associations developed a business education training programme that has been available since late 2018. In order to keep this successful tool available to businesses, is now organizing them in an online live training version.
- Compliance with obligations to Turismo de Portugal regarding own funding instruments ongoing contracts:
  - Suspension of repayments for the financial support granted under all programmes financed by Turismo de Portugal's budget;
  - Cofinancing for costs incurred with 2020 events delayed or cancelled because of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- NEST - Tourism Innovation Center Portugal, of which Turismo de Portugal is a founding member along with other 7 companies, has the mission to promote innovation and the use of technology in the tourism value chain, supporting the development of new business ideas, project experimentation and the training of companies in the transition to the digital economy. NEST created the Tourism Now! Programme that has 3 pillars:
  - leverages startups through a collaborative workspace seeking innovation for tourism businesses and actively supports them to come up with solutions for the sector during and aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak;
  - organizes a set of webinars for tourism to promote knowledge sharing during this period as well as running an online survey to measure the impacts of the outbreak to settle a ground for possible solutions;
  - strengthens the network of startups, disseminating the actions of those who are developing initiatives leading to caring for the present and to help overcome the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, in the spirit of the #TurismoPorTodos movement.
- Mezzanine Funding: call for startups, this includes startups in the tourism sector, to apply to funding provided by the Portuguese government. It is called Mezzanine funding for Startups: Convertible loan into equity (supplies), after 12 months, applying a discount rate that allows promoters to avoid dilution. Average investment tickets between 50,000 EUR and 100,000 EUR per startup. More details available: <https://www.portugalventures.pt/en/calls/call-innov-id>
- Launch of Covid-19 Portugal Ventures instrument: additional funding available for follow-on investments (up to 500,000 EUR) in companies that previously received venture capital funding from other operators, with business models that remain viable despite the current circumstances. Proposals will be presented to Portugal Ventures by the investors in previous rounds of such startups.

## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Tourism of Portugal created a "Clean and Safe" seal to distinguish the tourist activities that ensure compliance with hygiene and cleanliness requirements for the prevention and control of the COVID-19 virus and other possible infections. With this measure, the Tourism of Portugal intends to transmit to the companies information about the necessary hygiene and cleaning measures of the establishments, in accordance with the recommendations of the General Directorate of Health, as well as promoting Portugal as a safe destination from the point of view from care to the spread of the Virus, reinforcing the confidence of the visitor to the country. This recognition is valid for one year, free and optional and will require the implementation in companies of an internal protocol that will ensure the hygiene necessary to avoid risks of contagion and guarantee the safest procedures for the operation of tourist activities. The Tourism of Portugal, in coordination with the competent entities, will carry out random audits of the establishments that join the "Clean and Safe" initiative.
- Turismo de Portugal launched a travel insurance for foreign tourists visiting national territory "adapted to the new pandemic reality caused by Covid-19". Cover includes medical, surgical, pharmaceutical and hospital expenses "associated" with Covid-19, as well as expenses that may occur for cancellation, interruption or extension of trips.
- Turismo Portugal, the country's tourism board, has launched a new campaign to promote more responsible and sustainable tourism, using the hashtag #CantSkipTomorrow. Aimed at the UK, France, Spain, Germany and Brazil, the video was released following recommendations by the UNWTO, which aims to help the tourism sector recover responsibly after the current pandemic. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPY2zLHQL84&feature=emb\\_title&ab\\_channel=VisitPortugal](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPY2zLHQL84&feature=emb_title&ab_channel=VisitPortugal)

## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- On February 26, President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa has decreed, for the 12th time, a state of emergency in Portugal due to the pandemic. The current state of emergency period ends at 23:59 on Monday, 1 March. This renewal will take effect in the period between 2 and 16 March.

## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- In June, a domestic tourism campaign #TuPodes (#YouCan) by Turismo de Portugal was announced inspiring the Portuguese travellers to visit the places that have made Portugal the world's best destination three years in a row. The campaign will be carried out in three phases. The first phase consisted in the launch of the new video #TuPodes with the second phase focussed on the testimonies of tourism workers and the third phase on a digital platform, 24 which will support the national campaign, but also the regional campaigns, compiling countless tourist experiences across the country. The visibility that will be given to the services of these companies will also boost the business fabric of the regions and support the marketing effort of these companies through offers specifically aimed at the national tourist who is not their usual customer.

## IX. OTHER

- The Portuguese parliament on 11 March 2021. approved a 15-day extension of a state of emergency until the end of March

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Rep. Moldova**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• A comprehensive fiscal package has been adopted as per two 2020 State Budget Amendments, following several targeted fiscal measures to support businesses and vulnerable households, such as expanding unemployment benefits and strengthening existing targeted social assistance, tax relief for sectors affected by state-imposed restrictions, delaying tax payment deadlines to mid-2020, suspending tax audits and other controls, and increasing state budget allocations to the budget emergency and health funds and to a mortgage guarantee program. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

• The National Bank of Moldova adopted a decrease of the basic rate applied to the main short-term monetary policy operations by 1.25 percentage points, up to 3.25% annually. Interest rates on loans and overnight deposits were reduced to 6.25 percent and 0.25 percent annually, respectively. These measures are needed to strengthen the level of liquidity in the banking sector and to support the business environment in the light of recent developments in the global and national economy.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Compulsory social insurance contributions for the period of inactivity imposed by authorities will be reimbursed to individual entrepreneurs, self-employed professionals and patent holders.
- For unemployed people for at least 9 months, or not having had a stable job and could not benefit from classic unemployment benefit procedure - the state provided them a financial support - in the amount of 2775 lei (EUR 143 approx.).
- For the state employees who have been tested positively at COVID-19 and are in the front line of battle, (doctors, nurses, police officers, etc.) the state granted them a single aid amounting to 16.000 lei, (EUR 825 approx.), the equivalent of 2 average salaries per economy.
- The following additional measures have been ordered by the Government:
  - the unemployment benefit has been increased for the state of emergency period. The new benefit amounts to MDL 2775 (about EUR 138);
  - the minimum monthly income has been increased for - the state of emergency period. The new minimum income amounts to MDL 1300 (about EUR 65).



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

• An online platform was launched that will reflect the current situation regarding COVID-19.  
<http://gismoldova.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/d274da857ed345efa66e1fbc959b021b>.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

• In efforts to restart the economy, the government has permitted economic activity to resume across the country. In Chişinău economic activity has resumed, except for nightclubs, cinemas, theaters, and concert halls. Schools and educational institutions have resumed operations. International air travel has resumed and commercial flights are operating to and from Moldova. Additional health screening, hygiene, and social distancing measures are in place at airports and on airlines.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Romania**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- During the state of emergency, small and medium-sized enterprises holding the emergency situation certificate issued by the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment, benefit from the deferred payment for utilities - electricity, natural gas, water, services telephone and internet, as well as the deferred payment of the rent for the building destined for registered office and secondary offices.
- On the 11 April, an aid scheme worth RON 16 billion (approximately EUR 3.3 billion) was introduced to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This will benefit tourism businesses as well.
- The European Commission has approved, under EU state aid rules, a Romanian loan guarantee of up to around EUR62 million (approximately RON 301m) in favour of Romanian airline Blue Air.
- A new guarantee scheme of about RON 1.5 billion (0.15 percent of GDP) was adopted to support the procurement of work equipment by SMEs. Other measures include faster reimbursement of VAT, suspending foreclosures on overdue debtors, suspending tax authorities' control, discounts for paying corporate income taxes, postponement of property tax by three months, exempting the hospitality industry from the specific tax for 90 days
- The emergency ordinance for providing state financial support to entities in the HoReCa sector, worth RON 1 billion (EUR 200 mln)
- March 2021, the National Council of Private Small, Medium Enterprises of Romania (CNIPMMR) proposes the programme 'IMM Restart Romania' with a budget of 1.23 billion EUR to support the SMEs in the context of the economic crisis generated by the Covid-19 pandemics.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

The following monetary measures have been adopted (among others):

- Key measures include: (i) reducing the monetary policy rate by 1.25 percentage point to 1.25 percent; (ii) narrowing the corridor defined by interest rates on standing facilities around the monetary policy rate to  $\pm 0.5$  percentage points from  $\pm 1.0$  percentage points; (iii) providing liquidity to credit institutions via repo transactions (repurchase transactions in government securities); (iv) purchasing government securities on the secondary market; and (v) operational measures to ensure the smooth functioning of payment and settlement systems. The repo transactions stand at around RON 42 billion in 2020, while the total volume of government securities purchased on the secondary market amounted RON 5.3 billion. In addition, the Government has issued legislation that banks will defer loan repayments for households and businesses affected by COVID-19 for up to nine months – applicable also in 2021. The European Central Bank has set up a euro repo line with Romania's central bank worth a maximum of €4.5 billion (\$5.1 billion). It was initially agreed that the repo line would remain in place until end 2020, but was extended until March 2022. (source: imf.org)



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- The main specific measures for the protection of tourists on the beaches on the Romanian coast:
  - economic operators or administrators, as the case may be, have the obligation to place visibly the regulations of access and behavior on the beach and at the same time to ensure measures to respect a distance of 2 meters (left / right, front / back) between sunbeds that are used by people from different families;
  - administrators will ensure access to the beach within the adopted capacity limits, while maintaining the physical distance, discouraging overcrowding and limiting large gatherings and will take measures to restrict access to the beach if the established capacity limits are exceeded and the physical distance cannot be maintained;
  - access will be ensured by clearly signaled entry points; entrance and exit will be unidirectional, separate, with the signaling of the corresponding distances;
  - the reservation of the use of the beach for certain periods of time is made through an online or telephone reservation system and / or the adoption of strategic operating hours or flexible closing criteria;
  - a distance of at least 2 meters between persons (including employees) must be maintained at all times, except for members of the same family or if the safety of the basic activity requires a shorter distance (e.g. lifting heavy equipment);
  - work areas (e.g. lifeguard chairs, towers) are arranged so that those providing services on the beach are at least 1.5 meters apart. Where distancing is not possible, provision should be made for the use of protective masks or physical barriers, such as plastic / plexiglass panels, should be adopted;
  - the service for the clients will be done by the employed personnel of the beach, without the movement of the clients in the service points;
  - in the case of opened/free beaches, the local public administration will be responsible for maintaining the rules of physical distance and avoiding the formation of agglomerations;
  - beach equipment (e.g. chairs, sunbeds, umbrellas) must be used individually, without this equipment being shared between people who are not members of the same household and, before and after each use, it must be cleaned and disinfected with approved biocide products;
  - toilets on the beach must be provided with suitable consumables for hygiene: water, soap, disinfectant with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels and trash cans without touch. Frequent cleaning and disinfection will be ensured;
  - sports or leisure activities are not allowed except in spaces especially designed for this purpose, with the limitation of the number of people not sharing the same household;
  - the staff will wear a mask and will be provided with approved biocide devices and products necessary for the disinfection of tourists' hands and information on how to use them.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- In order to support tourism businesses hardly hit by the COVID-19 crisis, the Romanian Government has decided to maintain the Tourist Pass Holiday 13 initiative (holiday vouchers for public employees similar to the meal tickets, with which employees can buy tourist services in Romania, i.e., accommodation, meals and transport), and the validity of vouchers granted between March 19 and December 2019 has been extended by law until 31 May 2021. These vouchers can be granted and managed only to licensed operators, authorized by the Tourism Ministry.
- The Economy, Energy, and Business Environment Ministry have launched a campaign meant to support the local hospitality industry and encourage Romanians to rediscover the country as a tourism destination and promote it online.
- The campaign, titled Be the ambassador of Romanian tourism!, will feature video messages from various personalities, supporting local tourism. These will be published on the ministry's social media channels.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Russian Federation

Last update: 12 March 2020



## I. FISCAL POLICY

Key measures include: (i) increased compensation for frontline medical staff as well as health and safety inspectors; (ii) individuals under quarantine to receive sick leave benefits and leave pay to equal at least the minimum wage until the end of 2020; (iii) for those who lost a job after March 1, 2020, including for sole proprietors, the standard unemployment benefit to equal the minimum wage for five months; the minimum unemployment benefit to be tripled until end-August; and eligibility was extended by 3 months; the maximum unemployment benefit, which was increased in March 2020 to the minimum wage, will remain at the same level in 2021. (iv) all children up to 3 years of age to receive an additional lumpsum benefit for 3 months, starting in April; all children 3-15 years of age eligible for a one-time lumpsum benefit; all children under 16 years of age eligible for another one-time lumpsum benefit; all families with children to get an additional lumpsum benefit for each child for up to 6 months if a parent loses job (for up to 4 months for parents who lost their jobs before March 1); an additional lump-sum benefit for all kids under 8 years of age was announced at the end of December 2020; (v) interest rate subsidies for SMEs and systemically important enterprises; (vi) tax deferrals for most affected companies on most taxes; (vii) deferrals on social contributions for SMEs in affected sectors for 6 months (extended for three more months for selected affected sectors); (viii) social contributions by SMEs on wages in excess of the minimum wage permanently reduced; social contributions and CIT permanently reduced for IT firms; (ix) a tax holiday on all taxes (excluding VAT) and social contributions for Q2 for SMEs, sole proprietors, and NGOs providing social services; (x) registered self-employed will be refunded their taxes for 2019 and get a partial refund on their 2020 taxes; eligibility age to register as self-employed lowered from 18 to 16; (xi) sole proprietors got a partial refund on their social contributions; (xii) deferrals on rent payments to all levels of government until the end of the year plus zero rent to the federal government for three months for SMEs in affected sectors; (xiii) budget grants for SMEs in affected industries to cover salaries at the rate of one minimum salary per employee for two months plus subsidized and forgivable (under condition of preserved employment) loans for all enterprises in affected industries to pay minimum wages for 6 months; in 2021, enterprises in selected affected industries, like restaurants, hotels and entertainment, will get subsidized (but not forgivable) loans to pay minimum wages for 12 months, again under condition of preserved employment; (xiv) zero import duties for pharmaceuticals and medical supplies and equipment; (xv) guaranteed loans to SMEs and affected industries; (xvi) subsidies to airlines, airports, automakers, and others; (xvii) state-owned bank, airlines and development institution re-capitalization and (xviii) expanded eligibility for subsidized mortgage lending. The total cost of the 2020 fiscal package is estimated at about 3½ percent of GDP— 4½ percent if debt guarantees and capital injections are also included. In 2021, the anti-crisis fiscal package is expected to be much less at around 1½ percent of GDP. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The Government established Anti-crisis Foundation with 300 billions roubles.
- Amendments to the Budget Code to guarantee support to export products were made.
- Subsidies to loan organizations to allow SMEs postponing loan return (5 bln rub).
- Set consumer loan and mortgage holidays. The right to temporarily stop debt servicing and reschedule it is provided for people whose monthly income declined by over 30 percent. Additionally, the government announced a 3 month deferral on insurance contributions and a temporary deferral of rents for leases of state-owned or municipal properties.
- A guarantee fund for restructuring loans given to the affected companies, is established.
- The government has capitalized regional microfinance entities to provide the maximum number of SMEs with soft loans. In addition, the government has set a moratorium on inspections of SMEs, including tax and customs inspections.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Support to families with low income in the form of subsidies and support to families with children aged 3-7 y.o. (136 bln rub).
- The monthly unemployment benefit has been increased from 8,000 rubles to the minimum wage amount of 12,130 rubles. All families that are eligible for maternity capital are given an additional 5,000 rubles a month for each child up to three years of age.
- For employment retention of workers, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has developed a package of labour market support measures with an aim to create temporary employment opportunities for workers who are under risk of

dismissal or part-time workers. The government has provided advanced professional training and apprenticeship/internship opportunities to those who are at the risk of dismissal.



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Russia has resumed flights to neighboring Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and will resume flights to South Korea from Sept. 27. Citizens and permanent residents of these countries will be permitted to enter Russia through air checkpoints, and Russians will be able to enter these countries without restrictions as well. The weekly flights will connect Russia to the capital cities of Minsk, Nur-Sultan, Bishkek and Seoul.
- The decision to resume air traffic between Russia and Japan on a reciprocal basis came into force on November 1. There are two flights to the capital of Japan from Moscow and one from the capital of Primorsky Krai. National flag carrier and the largest airline in Russia, PJSC Aeroflot – Russian Airlines, commonly known as Aeroflot, operated the first flight to Japan's capital Tokyo on November 5. Moscow-Tokyo flights will operate once a week during the first stage, then twice a week on Thursdays and Saturdays, while flights from Tokyo to Moscow will operate on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Russia is re-opening its borders to foreign students who show two negative coronavirus tests and arrive from countries with flight resumption agreements in place, authorities announced on February 16 2021.



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



#### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



#### IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: San Marino**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

The key measures approved by the government include: i) suspension of payment deadlines for government tax and non-tax obligations, utility bills, and other dues to provide liquidity to the private sector; ii) temporary freeze of all non-essential government spending and reduction in public sector wage bill to redirect spending to the health sector; and iii) extension of supplemental wage scheme to support workers displaced by COVID-19 containment measures; iv) deferral of income tax payment; v) minimum guaranteed income for poorer households; vi) other measures to support businesses, including tax credits, tax payments postponement and rescheduling; vii) an economic recovery fund, financed initially through a temporary solidarity levy applied on pensions (above 1500 euros). Supplemental wage measures instituted to tackle the pandemic have been extended to February 2021.

(source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Suspension of repayment of the share of capital for mortgages taken out by enterprises, self-employed and farmers.
- The authorities guarantee the repayment of loans granted by the Central Bank to private banks in support families, businesses, the self-employed workers and farmers during the COVID-19. This guarantee applies to loans contracted until March 31, 2021.
- The repayment of mortgages and loans taken out by families are suspended until March 31, 2021.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Employment retention scheme with income support for workers (35% for the first week, 45% for the second and 60% of the salary for subsequent weeks) during periods of temporary disruption due to the COVID-19 emergency. In order to access the employment retention scheme, workers must have already used their annual leave. Access to the scheme is not allowed for employees with tenure below 15 days and workers in non-standard forms of employment.
- For public civil servants, during the lockdown period it is envisaged a reduced remuneration that is equal to 30% for the first week, 45% for the second and 60% for subsequent weeks. A threshold of minimum monthly amount of EUR500 is granted to workers when the reduced remuneration is lower than this amount.
- Teleworking arrangements. Whenever possible and during the COVID-19 emergency, work can be carried out through teleworking arrangements. Its activation requires an agreement between the employer and the worker to be notified to the social partners.
- Reorganization of production processes. Employers must reorganize business processes in order to reduce the presence of workers in the enterprise by at least 50% through the application of turnovers and sanitization of the workplace. The reorganization does not apply to companies with only an employee and to those that provide essential goods or services.
- Strengthening of health and safety measures in the workplace. These measures provide that the employer: (i) informs its employees of the safety measures to be taken and of the protections required to avoid contagion; (ii) for the employers to check, upon entering the workplace and during work shifts, the presence of COVID-19 symptoms among the employees and prove that they have carried out all checks and; (iii) limit movement within the sites to the maximum and contingent access to common areas. In the event of findings of symptoms of respiratory infection and fever, the employer is required to isolate the employee, to contact the appropriate medical service and to sanitize the workplace.
- Paid leave. Temporary allowance for sick leave (30% for the first five days, 45% from the sixth to the tenth day, 60% from the eleventh to the fifteenth day and 86% for subsequent periods).



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

• Cross-border workers. In light of the emergency provisions issued by the authorities of Italy and San Marino, cross-border workers (one-third of the total number of employed persons) employed in essential economic activities and services of the Republic of San Marino, should request their employers to provide a declaration or copy of the payslip in order to certify that travel is directly linked to work reasons. These documents should be shown in case of border control.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Serbia**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

The package approved by the government is worth EUR 5.1 billion, or 608.3 billion dinars (presented by the Government of the Republic of Serbia on 31 March 2020). Measures are grouped in fiscal, monetary and employment support measures. As regards fiscal measures, these include (among others):

- Tax reliefs, arranging deferred tax payment due delaying paying taxes through installments (earliest starting beginning of 2021). It is a matter of deferring tax payments and social contributions for at least three months, postponing the payment of the advance income tax for the second quarter, making donations exempt from paying taxes.

The total value of these measures is RSD 161 billion.

- Deferral of payment of salary taxes and social security contributions incurred during the state of emergency caused by the Covid-19 pandemic until the end of the year. As of January 2021 the businesses have an option to further postpone the payment of these taxes and contributions by another 24 months with no interest;

- Loans of up to five years are envisaged, which include a grace period of up to two years and a repayment period of up to three years, the interest rate is 1% annually, and the funds are approved and returned in Serbian dinars.

- The maximum loan amount for entrepreneurs and micro legal entities is up to 20 million dinars (approx. up to 170,000 EUR), for small enterprises up to 80 million dinars (approx. up to 680,000 EUR), and for medium enterprises up to 180 million dinars (approx. up to 1,530,000 EUR). Depending on the loan amount, users submit different collateral (bill of exchange, surety, pledge).

National Bank of Serbia decided to reduce the reference interest rate by 50 basis points to 1.75 percent.

- The National Bank of Serbia has introduced a moratorium on repayment of loans for all debtors over for the period of at least 90 days. During the state of emergency, the bank, as well as the leasing provider, will not charge default interest on arrears and outstanding claims and will not initiate enforcement proceedings. Those who want to continue with the repayment will have this opportunity.

- Regulation concerning tax measures during the state of emergency was also adopted. The regulation applies to taxpayers who already have signed Agreement on Deferral of Tax Debt with the Tax Administration, and will not be subject to the measures prescribed by the Tax Procedure and Tax

- Small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs in the sectors of tourism, hospitality and passenger transport, most affected by the Covid19 pandemic, are given access to favorable loans for liquidity and working capital financing from the special program of the Development Fund of the Republic of Serbia.

Loans of up to five years are envisaged, which include a grace period of up to two years and a repayment period of up to three years, the interest rate is 1% annually, and the funds are approved and returned in Serbian dinars.

The maximum loan amount for entrepreneurs and micro legal entities is up to 20 million dinars (approx. up to 170,000 EUR), for small enterprises up to 80 million dinars (approx. up to 680,000 EUR), and for medium enterprises up to 180 million dinars (approx. up to 1,530,000 EUR). Depending on the loan amount, users submit different collateral (bill of exchange, surety, pledge).

- The new Law on Amendments to the Law on the Budget for 2020 of the Republic of Serbia was adopted on 5th November 2020, which approved 150 million dinars for subsidies of insurance policy premiums to travel agencies. Subsidies are awarded to cover the cost of providing a travel guarantee.

The aim of this measure is to help travel agencies, especially smaller tour operators, who are most at risk during the crisis. Subsidies will be paid in dinar equivalent calculated at the middle exchange rate of the National Bank of Serbia on the day when state aid was granted. The right to use the grants have companies, other legal entities and entrepreneurs registered in the appropriate register and possessing the license of the tour operator

The new regulations give agencies the opportunity to change the license to a lower category, with a significantly lower coverage limit, in which way, they can conclude a travel guarantee agreement with insurers or provide a bank guarantee.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Economic measures adopted are mainly aimed at preserving the liquidity of economic entities in the conditions of economic crisis expected during and after the end of an emergency. The program envisages two measures:

- Affordable loan program with a 1% interest rate, for maintaining liquidity and working capital for companies in the segment of entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium-sized economic entities, agricultural households and cooperatives, which are registered in the relevant register through the Development Fund of the Republic of Serbia.

- Guarantee schemes to support the economy in the conditions of "corona-crisis" for loans for maintaining liquidity and working capital for companies in the segment of entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium-sized economic entities, as well as agricultural households, negotiated with commercial banks, loans backed by the state.

The total value of the programs provided under this measure amounts to 264 billion dinars, which is about 2.2 billion euros.

Other monetary measures include:

- Moratorium on repayment of loans during the state of emergency (at least 90 days).
- Reducing the reference interest rate by 0,5%, to the level of 1,75% by the National Bank of Serbia.

National Bank of Serbia decided to reduce the reference interest rate by 50 basis points to 1.75 percent.

- The National Bank of Serbia has introduced a moratorium on repayment of loans for all debtors over for a period of at least 90 days. During the state of emergency, the bank, as well as the leasing provider, will not charge default interest on arrears and outstanding claims and will not initiate enforcement proceedings. Those who want to continue with the repayment will have this opportunity.

• Price ceilings for essential food and safety equipment. Strict penalties for raising prices in the state of emergency. It is possible to raise prices only within the limits of the annual inflation rate.

- Two sets of government bonds payable in 3 years with an interest rate of 1.7% will be sold in April and May worth in total some 1 billion US\$.

• Favourable loans (with 1% interest rate) for liquidity will be provided to micro, small and medium enterprises, farms and cooperatives through commercial banks, covered by the state guarantees worth 2.4 billion US\$.



### III. JOBS & SKILLS

Measures to support employment and economic relief for citizens include:

- Direct payments to the companies, through the payment of three minimum wages. It is a measure set to pay minimum wage for entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the private sector; subsidy of 50 % of the minimum wage to large enterprises whose employees were sent on forced leave due to reduced volume of business or complete shutdown.

The state will pay three minimum wages for each employee to all entrepreneurs, lump sums and small businesses. The Government proposes to pay 50 percent of earnings to those who have lost work in large companies.

- Payment of direct one-off assistance in the amount of EUR 100 in RSD equivalent to all adult citizens of Serbia.

The value of the programs envisaged by this measure is RSD 70 billion.

Other measures include:

- One-time assistance in the amount of RSD 4000 for all pensioners, as well as assistance packages for the most vulnerable pensioners with income up to RSD 30,000.
- Increase in earnings of the employees in the Health sector by 10% from April 2020.
- All beneficiaries of social assistance, child benefits, personal care benefits and compensations related to special care of the children whose entitlement to these social protection benefits has expired on March 15 have got an automatic extension of those benefits until the end of the state of emergency.
- All entrepreneurs, micro and small enterprises will be entitled to grants in the amount equivalent to one minimum wage per employee (275 US\$/month), including the owners, for each of the three months of duration of the state of emergency, provided that they haven't laid off more than 10% of their workers
- All employees in the medium and large private enterprises for whom a decision on work termination has been issued from 15 March 2020 in line with the Articles 116 and 117 of the Labour Law will be given 50% of their monthly wages. The number of employees is also increased by the number of part-time employees, commensurate with their engagement, based on data from the PPP-PD tax return.
- A new package of measures to support the hotel industry in Serbian cities worth 1.460 billion dinars (Program of schedule and use of subsidies to support the work of the hotel industry in Serbia due to business difficulties caused by the epidemic of COVID-19 disease caused by SARS-COV-2 virus). The package of measures envisages a one-time direct subsidy to each hotel of 350 euros per individual bed and an additional 150 euros per accommodation unit. Hotels from 67 cities in Serbia are entitled to this type of assistance



### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Maintaining constant contact, gathering, and exchanging relevant data and information with all stakeholders in tourism and hospitality from the public and private sectors regularly. Exchange and collection of information with representatives of the health sector. Tracking trends and information from the most relevant global and European tourism authorities in the tourism and hospitality industry.



### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- At the initiative of the tour operator, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Decree on the offer of a replacement trip for a tourist trip that was canceled or not realized due to the COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- Together with the business association of the hospitality industry HORES, the stamp “Clean & Safe” was initiated according to the rules of WTTC in order to obtain global certification Safe Travels. The idea is to differentiate between hotels, other accommodation facilities and restaurants, which adhere to the minimum hygiene and health-safety measures prescribed by the World Health Organization and our national health institutions, to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, as well as other infections.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- In 2020, the Government of the Republic of Serbia set aside 2.8 billion RSD for 560,000 tourist vouchers worth 5,000 RSD intended for (at this moment maximum) 560.000 citizens of Serbia who want to spend their vacation (or part of it) in the Republic of Serbia.

Vouchers can be realized only in hospitality facilities in the Republic of Serbia. In that way, domestic tourist traffic is encouraged, as well as support for the domestic hospitality industry.



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Slovakia**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

• Measures introduced by the coalition government include (i) wage compensation for affected businesses and self-employed, and subsidies to individuals without income (subsequently extended to June 2021 and augmented in size); (ii) enhanced unemployment benefits, and sickness and nursing benefits; (iii) deferral and waiver of employers' social security contributions for some months for affected companies and self-employed (deferral extended to June 2021); (iv) easing of the administrative burden on businesses and relaxing labor code requirements; (v) deferral of payroll and corporate tax payments for businesses whose revenues decline by more than 40 percent; (vi) allowing companies to include loss carryback since 2014; (vii) rental subsidies; and (viii) higher medical spending. These measures and the reserve for impacts of the pandemic in the 2021 Budget amount to EUR 3.96 billion, or 4.3 percent of 2020 GDP. To ease liquidity pressures, the government introduced several state-guarantee schemes, up to a total of EUR 4 billion or 4.4 percent of 2020 GDP, covering both SMEs and large firms. Individuals, self-employed and SMEs are also allowed to defer loan repayments for up to 9 months (application deadline later extended to March 2021), while a rent payment moratorium was imposed until June 30, 2020. The government also introduced temporary state protection from creditors for affected businesses. (source: imf.org)

• In an effort to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector in Slovakia, the National Council of the Slovak Republic approved an amendment to the Tourism Support Act in November last year, which establishes a framework for the creation of state aid schemes and a minimum aid for the tourism sector in Slovakia totalling to EUR 100 million.

All domestic tourism entities, whose sales fell by more than 40 percent compared to the same period last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, are able to apply for this state aid.

The amount received can reach up to 10 percent of the 2019 revenues depending on the specific conditions.

As of 12 March 2021, 6349 applications have been submitted to the programme and almost EUR 40 million has been provided to 4 thousand applicants.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

As part of the first-aid' Economic Package due to Coronavirus the following jobs supportive measures have been adopted:

- The government refunded 80 percent of salaries received by people employed in facilities that had been obliged to close.
- Compensation has been offered to the self-employed and employees depending on the drop in revenues of the affected businesses.
- EUR 500-million bank guarantees have been provided per month to allow banks to refund businesses' expenditures under advantageous conditions.
- Quarantined people and parents staying at home with their children received 55 percent of their gross salaries.
- Businesses that had suffered a more than 40-percent drop in revenues were able to delay payroll deductions for their staff and advance corporate tax payments.
- The state covered 80% of the monthly gross wage of those employees whose companies had to suspend activity due to special measures introduced to slowdown the spread of the coronavirus. The upper limit is EUR 1,100 per month before taxes. It applied only to those employees who could not work and it did not apply to those who were on notice period. A company could get maximum EUR 200,000 per month.
- Sole traders and employees of companies that had experienced a decline in sales received a monthly allowance depending on the amount of that decline:
  - EUR 180 for a 20% decline
  - EUR 300 for a 40% decline
  - EUR 420 for a 60% decline
  - EUR 540 for a 80% decline
- Companies whose sales had fallen by more than 40% could postpone the payment of mandatory social levies. Such companies could also defer income tax advances.



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- Since February 8, the so-called COVID Automat has been applied in Slovakia. It is a nationwide alert system for monitoring the development of the pandemic and taking anti-epidemic measures depending on the spread of the corona virus. The COVID Automat determines a set of measures based on the regional epidemiological risk. In case of an exceptionally unfavourable epidemiological situation, national limits shall apply, setting a minimum level of measures. COVID Automat refers in more detail to the measures contained in the individual traffic lights for each sector of the economy.
- "Traffic light for Tourism" was recently adopted in Slovakia. Depending on the spread of the virus, this system sets conditions for the operation of ski resorts, accommodation and wellness facilities, restaurants, mass events, or swimming pools. The measures are divided according to target groups for visitors, employees, hygienic-epidemiological measures and services.



#### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



#### IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Slovenia**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Deferral of payments on bank loans; and state guarantees for bank loans, for tourism and hospitality sectors.
- Reimbursement of fixed costs for companies in tourism and hospitality industry – Programme is intended for the most affected companies, which record a decline in turnover and loss of income (at least 30% reduction of revenue in 2020 compared to 2019.) It was agreed that the fixed cost measure is adjusted by raising the limit on the amount of aid per employee to 2,000 euros in the event of a drop in revenue of more than 70 percent
- The public call for co-financing operating costs for companies in the hospitality and tourism industry during the COVID-19 epidemic (covering costs during the first wave), published by the SPIRIT Public Agency, had a tendered value of EUR 10 million.
- A new loan fund at SID Bank is being prepared (favorable loans for tourism sector - of which 75% for investments and 25% for working capital). The Slovenian Enterprise Fund will offer interest-free loans for SMEs (EUR 90 million for interest-free loans with a moratorium).



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Key Slovenia measures include: (i) affected firms and individuals are allowed to obtain deferrals of bank loan repayments; (ii) The Bank of Slovenia (BoS) extended all ECB measures to all banks and savings banks in Slovenia; (iii) The BoS restricted profit distribution at banks and savings banks; (iv) The BoS reduced the maximum level of allowed bank account fees, with higher reduction for the more disadvantaged groups; and (v) BoS allowed banks to temporarily exclude income declines caused by the epidemic when calculating creditworthiness. (source: imf.org)
- Public tenders in the field of tourism:
  - Public tender for the transformation of the tourist offer in the leading tourist destinations in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-2019 epidemic, in the amount of EUR 5.48 million,
  - Support to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the field of tourism to increase material and energy efficiency, in the amount of EUR 21.56 million (2020-2022),
  - Public tender for the promotion of the introduction of environmental and sustainable signs for tourist accommodation and catering providers and the adjustment of the offer due to the Covid-19 epidemic, in the amount of EUR 105,000.00 (MGRT, completed).
- SID Bank loan fund for tourism, which was added to the initial FS2 loan fund of tourism in 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic, supported investments in tourism and working capital with soft loans. Over 70 projects were supported within 2 months, more than half of which were working capital



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Measures to preserve jobs are:

- New arrangements for co-financing wage compensation for workers on standby: jobs already directly subsidized by the state through specific programs, are co-financed to the extent of the difference between full co-financing and other subsidies.
- Extraordinary assistance measures for the self-employed, e.g: all self-employed persons who declared themselves affected by the crisis through a special statement via an electronic application were eligible for emergency assistance. Self-employed persons who, due to the crisis, were unable to pursue the activity or perform it in a substantially reduced volume were entitled to a monthly basic income of 70% of the net minimum wage. The affected self-employed were written off contributions.
- The hospitality and tourism sector receives all measures adopted within the framework of 8 packages of assistance to the economy, prepared by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia.

The most important measures being:

- Subsidizing waiting for work:

In 2020, EUR 105,278,768.69 million was paid to entities from the hospitality and tourism industry. In 2020, 5,982 business entities or 34,418 persons from the hospitality and tourism industry benefited from this measure.

- Reduced working hours: in 2020, over EUR 4,933,042.26 million was paid for catering and tourism entities for 1,449 business entities or 5,459 persons.

- Quarantine fees: EUR 369,795.88 million was paid to hospitality and tourist entities in 2020. This measure benefited 251 business / 503 persons from catering and tourism sectors.
- A total of EUR 110.6 million was paid to hospitality and tourism companies in 2020 for compensation for waiting for work, part-time work and quarantine
- At the end of 2020, workshops for the promotion of catering professions, known as "Knowledge under the hood" were held by MGRT with a public procurement in the amount of EUR 20,000



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- The Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, together with its key partners prepared the Recovery and Resilience Plan of Slovenian Tourism 2020–2023.
- SLOVENIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP FUND (SPS)- In 2020, the Slovenian Enterprise Fund granted financial incentives to a total of 941 economic entities (SMEs) from the hospitality and tourism industry, with the total amount of EUR 27,108,626.64, which is 14.64% of the total value of financial incentives by the Slovenian Enterprise warehouse. 553 projects in the field of hospitality and tourism were granted financial incentives in the form of loans or guarantees (of which 345 were covid credits for tourism and hospitality). Also, 388 entities from this activity benefited from vouchers (of which 371 companies from catering and tourism received subsidies for protective equipment).
- SLOVENIAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (SRRS) -  
In the period of 1 January 2020 to 15 February 2021, the Slovenian Development Fund approved 91 projects in the total value of EUR 6,196,253 from the hospitality and tourism industry.
  - 155,100 Hotels and similar accommodation,
  - 155,201 Holiday homes and resorts,
  - 155,209 Other short-term accommodations
  - 156,101 Restaurants and inns,
  - Confectioneries and cafes
  - 156,300 Beverage services.
- SLOVENIAN TOURIST ORGANIZATION -  
In 2020:
  - Public tender in support of Slovenian tourist companies in the amount of EUR 0.67 million (project not yet completed)
  - Public tender for co-financing of promotional activities of the Slovenian tourist offer of leading tourist destinations in the amount of EUR 1.1 million (project not yet completed)
  - Public call for business entities that provide tourist guide services in the amount of EUR 146,000
  - Public call for incoming TO and TA (Realized funds: 113,102)
- In 2021:
  - Public tender for co-financing of promotional activities of the Slovenian tourist offer of leading tourist destinations in 2021, worth EUR 1.3 million,
  - Public call for business entities that provide tourist guide services in the amount of EUR 300,000
  - Public tender intended for receptive tourist agencies and organizers of tourist trips, in the amount of EUR 2 million.



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Tourist destinations and tourist services providers in Slovenia will carry the Green&Safe label, which means that they follow the standards for responsible travelling.
- State subsidies for the re-establishment of air connections with Slovenia (a public tender in the amount of EUR 5 million was published at the end of October)



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- As of February 12, entry into Slovenia without having to go into quarantine or presenting a negative COVID test is possible for anyone who has received two doses of a COVID vaccine or has recovered from the virus and has a doctor's certificate to that effect
- Slovenian authorities have introduced a traffic light system to determine which coronavirus disease (COVID-19) measures should be implemented in which regions, effective as of Friday, October 16. The red, amber, and green ratings are determined by the number of cases per 100,000 over the previous 14 days, the number of hospitalized patients, and the number of patients in intensive care units. As of October 16, no regions are green, but seven of Slovenia's twelve statistical

regions are rated as red, including Central Slovenia, Gorenjska, Koroška, Savinska, Posavska, Southeastern Slovenia, and Zasavska.

- On March 6, the Republic of Slovenia decided to introduce new measures at its borders to contain the spread of the COVID-19 infections. The recent amendment has been effective since Monday, March 8, 2021.

The border checkpoints are divided into two types, type A checkpoints and type B checkpoints, based on who is permitted to cross the border and when.

At type A checkpoints, all passengers are allowed to cross the border at all times. At type B checkpoints, only people qualifying as exemptions under Article 10 are allowed to pass.

At the same time, the Government of Slovenia has also announced that the Police had implemented an online application called Enter Slovenia to make travelling to Slovenia easier. The application form is also designed for passengers entering Slovenia as a transit country.

According to the Government's declaration, all persons coming from a country or administrative unit that are not listed on the red zone can enter Slovenia without submitting a negative Coronavirus test or staying self-isolated.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- The Public Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Marketing and Promotion of Tourism (Slovenian Tourist Board) has launched a new call for tenders on 28 February 2020, bringing companies closer to the possibility of co-financing smaller promotional projects and executing projects on the domestic market.

- National tourism agency launched a campaign "Now is the time. My Slovenia" to encourage domestic travel.

- Slovenia has approved a tourism voucher scheme by which every adult will receive a EUR 200 voucher (USD 240), while children under 18 will receive EUR 50 (USD 60). The vouchers will be reimbursed by the Slovenia's Financial Administration (FURS). Valid since the first day of school summer vacation (25 June) until the end of 2021, the voucher can be used at any accommodation businesses registered under the following categories: hotels and other similar accommodation, holiday homes and resorts, tourist farms with rooms, renting private rooms to guests, mountain lodges 14 and youth hostels, and other short-term accommodation and camping activities. The total value of tourist vouchers amounts to EUR 356,858,450.00



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Spain**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The Spanish government has approved an aid package that revolves around four main guidelines: easing the conditions of the temporary collective layoffs (known as ERTes in Spain), supporting workers and businesses affected by the slump in activity, guaranteeing liquidity for businesses, and supporting research to find a coronavirus vaccine. The aid packages includes a liquidity injection of EUR14 billion to boost economy, EUR3.8 billion to reinforce public health, EUR400 million for most affected sectors, tourism and transport. Shock plan amounts EUR18.2 billion (1.5% of Spain GDP)
- The government adopted a set of measures to complement the aid package approved on 17 March 2020 addressed to mitigate the economic and social impact of COVID-19 with extraordinary measures. The aid package aims to:
  - provide relief to businesses, with special focus on SMEs and self-employers and reduce their operational costs (among others, rental contracts clauses may be revised);
  - facilitate access to finance and payment of credits (the role of insurance credit companies is enhanced and guarantee schemes supported by the state is reinforced);
  - provide fiscal stimulus by deferring and introducing flexibility mechanisms in tax payment (income corporate tax and and personal income tax for self-employers and VAT) with special focus on SMEs and self-employers;
  - support jobs reinforced protection especially to permanent workers with discontinuous contracts;
  - protect the most vulnerable groups



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The government of Spain has extended up to EUR100 billion government guarantees for firms and self-employed, covering both loans and commercial paper of medium-sized companies that participate in Spain's Alternative Fixed Income Market (MARF); launched a new Instituto de Crédito Oficial (ICO) line of guarantees to promote investment activities—particularly in the areas of environmental sustainability and digitization—and liquidity provision (EUR40 billion); created a state rescue fund to support strategic business (EUR10 billion); and introduced (i) EUR2 billion public guarantees for exporters through the Spanish Export Insurance Credit Company, (ii) guarantees for loan maturity extensions to farmers using the special 2017 drought credit lines, (iii) a line of guarantees to provide financial assistance on housing expenses for vulnerable households (EUR1.2 billion), (iv) additional loan guarantees for SMEs and self-employed through the Compañía Española de Reafianzamiento (EUR1 billion, subsequently increased to EUR1.1 billion), as well as (v) line of guarantees for listed companies (EUR1 billion). Other measures include additional funding for the ICO credit lines (EUR10 billion); guarantees for financing operations carried out by the European investment Bank (EUR2.8 billion); endorsement to the European SURE instrument (EUR2.3 billion); loans through the State Financial Fund for Tourism Competitiveness (FOCIT) to promote sustainability in the tourism sector (EUR515 million); expansion of ICO credit lines for the tourism sector (EUR200 million); loans for the industrial sector to promote digital transformation and modernization (EUR123.5 million); temporary authorization of ICO to participate as a buyer of new commercial paper issued at MARF; moratorium on mortgage payments for the most vulnerable, including households, self-employed and homeowners who have rented out their mortgaged properties; moratorium or reduction of rent payments for vulnerable tenants whose landlord is a large public or private housing holder; moratorium on non-mortgage loans and credits, including consumer credits, for the most vulnerable; suspension of interest and repayment of loans granted by the Secretariat of State for Tourism for one year with no need for prior request; deferred repayment of loans granted to businesses by the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Tourism; enhanced capacity of the mutual guarantee societies of the autonomous communities; deferral of payments on certain loans granted by the Institute for the Diversification and Saving of Energy (IDAE); adoption of a mechanism for renegotiation and deferment of business premises rent; reduced notary fees for novation of non-mortgage loans; ban of short-selling Spanish shares in the stock market from March 16-May 18; authorization for special government screening of FDI in strategic sectors; adoption of a new macroprudential liquidity tool empowering the National Securities Market Commission to modify requirements applicable to management companies of Collective Investment Schemes; empowering the Consorcio de Compensación de Seguros to act as a reinsurer of credit insurance risks; and time-bound changes to corporate resolution frameworks in order to reduce insolvency cases. Furthermore, the Bank of Spain will apply to the banks it supervises the flexibility provided by the legal system in relation to the setting of transition periods and the intermediate minimum requirements for own funds and eligible liabilities (MREL) targets; and banks will be allowed to apply expert judgement for the credit-risk classification of forborne exposures. (source: imf.org)
- Spain announced EUR 4.25 billion plan to aid tourism industry. The bulk of the aid package is comprised of EUR 2.5 billion in loans through the state-owned bank Instituto de Crédito Oficial (ICO) for tourism businesses. In other words, 60%

is aimed at facilitating funding, and will not take the shape of direct grants. Direct investment represents around EUR 300 million, or 7% of the plan. Another EUR 850 million is earmarked for sustainability and digitization projects. As part of the recovery strategy, the prime minister said that Spain's airport operator Aena had agreed to reduce the tariffs airlines must pay when they land in a Spanish airport. The government plan also includes a campaign to promote national tourism.



### III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Measures to support the extension of the period of activity of workers with discontinuous permanent contracts in the tourism and commerce and hospitality sectors linked to tourism.
- 50% bonus in Social Security contributions for tourism companies and tourism related business (commerce and hospitality) who start or keep the occupation of workers with discontinuous fixed-term contracts.
- Delay up to 30K tax payment during six months for SMEs and self-employed and delay in mortgage payments, easing social security contributions and allowances for employees caring for dependent relatives.



### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Secretary of State for Tourism, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, has prepared the specification guides for the reduction of contagion by the SARS-COV-2 coronavirus. The guides contain service, cleaning and disinfection, maintenance and risk management specifications for the different subsectors of the tourism sector. The Autonomous Communities, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), the social agents, the associations of each subsector, experts participating in the working groups and the Spanish Association of Labor Prevention Services (AESPLA), coordinated, have participated in its preparation (the documents are available by <https://www.mincotur.gob.es/es-es/COVID-19/Paginas/Guias-sector-turistico.aspx>).



### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Spain's national tourism agency Turespaña has launched a new 'Travel Safe' campaign. This aims to contribute to a recovery of confidence in tourism, providing information about conditions for safe travel and encouraging tourist travel to Spain.



### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- The Board of Directors of the Institute for Spanish Tourist Quality (ICTE), made up of the National Employers of the tourism sector, the Secretary of State for Tourism, the Autonomous Communities and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) has approved the creation of an ICTE seal, Safe Tourism Certified, -a transversal tourism seal, covering 21 subsectors- and to which companies, organizations and tourism resources may voluntarily choose, as a guarantee mark and certification of the implementation of the Risk Prevention System for the Health versus COVID-19, a mark that would be reached after having passed an audit carried out by independent companies.



### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

- For the first time ever, Spain has launched a domestic tourism campaign with the #DescubreLoIncreible (Discover the Unbelievable) being promoted in social media.



### IX. OTHER

- Authorities previously announced that Spain will be under a national state of emergency until early May 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the emergency measures, local authorities maintain the legal backing to ban travel between regions and modify the nationwide curfew locally.

- Spain extends restrictions on travel from UK, Brazil and South Africa until March 30

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Sweden**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The European Commission has approved under EU state aid rules an approximately EUR9.5 million (SEK 100m) Swedish scheme to compensate passenger ferry companies for damages suffered due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- For 2021 and 2022, the Government proposed extensive fiscal stimulus measures and reforms worth SEK 105 billion and SEK 85 billion (2.1 and 1.7 percent of 2019 GDP, respectively).
- On November 9, the Government proposed the extension of short-term lay-offs by seven months (until June 30, 2021), reorientation support and turnover-based support to sole traders by three months (until October 2020), and tax deferrals by one year (until March 2022).
- On December 10, the Government proposed to extend the state credit guarantee program for loans to companies until June 30, 2021.
- On December 22, the turnover-based support to sole traders was extended until February 2021 (later further prolonged until April 2021). On February 24, the government announced that extended turnover-based support will also be available to sole traders who have received unemployment benefits and have taken parental or sick leave during the reference period. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- The Riksbank has announced that it is loaning up to SEK 500 billion to companies via the banks to safeguard credit supply. Finansinspektionen (the Swedish financial supervisory authority) has announced that it is lowering the countercyclical capital buffer to zero to safeguard a well-functioning credit supply.
- As part of a SEK 300 billion crisis package to help struggling businesses, the government has offered credit guarantees for airlines in 2020 amounting to a maximum of SEK 5 billion, of which SEK 1.5 billion is intended for SAS.
- Reduction of the lending rate for overnight loans by 55 basis points to 0.2.
- Lending of up to SEK 500 billion to companies via banks.
- Introduction of a new lending facility whereby banks can borrow unlimited amounts (given adequate collateral) with 3-month maturity.
- Increase of purchases of securities of up to SEK 300 billion this year (where securities may include government and municipal bonds, covered bonds and securities issued by non-financial corporations).
- Establishment of a swap facility of US\$ 60 billion between the Riksbank and the US Federal Reserve.
- Possibility for banks to borrow in US dollars against collateral of up to US\$ 60 billion.
- Easing rules for the use of covered bonds as collateral.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Deferred payment of social security contributions for companies.
- Self-employed will receive a reduction of individual contributions as that proposed for firms.
- Possibility of short-term layoffs, which means that the employers' pay costs can be reduced by half, while the worker gets at least 90 percent of the pay. Three quarters of the costs will be covered by the state.
- The period during which a person may have a subsidized job (extra job, new start job or introductory job) will be extended by an additional year for those who already have such jobs.
- Municipalities will receive grants for more summer jobs for young people and funding for green jobs.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Switzerland**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- Federal measures for the economy -
  1. For Companies:
    - Short-time working compensation to cover labour costs in case of work absence
    - Hardship assistance: total amount of support 2.5 billion swiss francs, a case of hardship exists if the annual turnover is below 60 percent of the multi-year average.
    - Further financial assistance: Impulse Programme “Innovative Power Switzerland”, Financial assistance for regional development, loan guarantees for SMEs
    - Support for the tourism sector:
      - I. A federal funding of CHF 40 million for Switzerland Tourism (ST) was approved. The additional funds are used for the promotion of sustainable tourism and with a focus on domestic tourism.
      - II. Within the framework of regional policy, federal loans amounting to around CHF 530 million are currently invested in projects, of which around 60 % are in the tourism sector.
      - III. The Confederation makes an additional CHF 5.5 million available to the Swiss Society for Hotel Credit SGH for loans to retroactively finance investments by accommodation businesses that they have financed from cash flow in the past two years.
      - IV. The Federal Council has issued a temporary legal standstill for the travel industry. Accordingly, travel agencies cannot operate for refunds after a trip cancellation until 31 December 2020.
      - V. The Federal Council supports the airlines Swiss and Edelweiss with guarantees to bridge liquidity bottlenecks.
  2. For individuals:
    - Short-time working compensation for employees in case of work loss
    - Compensation for loss of income for self-employed or in case of loss of childcare or and quarantine



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Swiss Society for Hotel Credit SGH grants amortization deferrals of up to one year to existing customers and finances investments of customers who have financed them from cash flow in the past two years.
- The government has launched a broad-based information offensive and advises tourism service providers on how to deal with COVID-19. ST has also reallocated existing financial and personnel resources, staggered campaigns and is now implementing targeted measures to promote demand within the framework of the available financial resources.
- Extensive measures to support SMEs focus on bridging loans: to ensure that affected SMEs receive bridging loans from the banks, the Federal Council will set up a guarantee programme worth CHF 20 billion. Affected companies should be able to obtain credit amounts of up to 10% of turnover or a maximum of CHF 20 million quickly and easily. Amounts of up to CHF 0.5 million are to be paid out immediately by the banks and 100% guaranteed by the Confederation. The credit amounts of up to CHF 0.5 million should cover over 90% of the companies affected by COVID.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Since March 1, Outdoor gatherings of 15 people are allowed – an increase from the current 5-person limit; Recreational facilities that take place outdoors such as ice skating are allowed as long as they comply with hygiene restrictions. Shops, zoos, museums and libraries are open.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- The Swiss tourism industry launched 'Clean & Safe' campaign. The campaign, consisting of an information platform and a label, was initiated by Switzerland Tourism (ST) as part of its 'Recovery Plan'. The 'Clean & Safe' label signifies to guests that tourism service providers have made a conscious commitment to comply with protection guidelines. The information platform provides deeper insights into concrete measures taken. The aim is to strengthen guests' confidence in Switzerland as a safe and clean travel destination.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

- Switzerland has updated its coronavirus quarantine list to remove holiday destinations Spain and Portugal.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Tajikistan

Last update: 12 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The authorities have requested disbursement under IMF Rapid Credit Facility instrument. On May 6, The IMF Executive Board approved a disbursement of US \$ 189.5 million for budget support to help Tajikistan.
- The Government is providing VAT exemptions on essential imports, lump-sum assistance equivalent to minimum wage to vulnerable households and other socially disadvantaged groups.
- Anti-COVID measures also include financial support to SMEs and subsidizing food for population. Recently, Tajikistan was granted a debt relief around USD50 million under G20 DSSI initiative. These funds were also included to anti-COVID envelop under supplementary budget currently being discussed in the Parliament.  
(source: imf.org)
- February 2021, In addition to \$8.63 million approved for COVID-19 vaccines, theWorld Bank is provided another \$12.57 million in grant financing for the Tajikistan Emergency COVID-19 Project, to further strengthen Tajikistan's health care capacity and protect vulnerable population groups in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Turkey**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- On March 18 the government declared a US\$15.4 billion economic relief package to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 health crisis.
- The Credit Guarantee Fund limit were increased from TL 25 billion to TL 50 billion and provided to (small- and medium-sized enterprises) SMEs and companies with liquidity needs and collateral deficit.
- Lowest pension amount has also been increased to 1,500 Turkish Liras
- Introduction of loan packages for social purposes under favorable and advantageous conditions for our citizens will be encouraged.
- VAT rate on domestic flights is reduced to 1% from 18% for 3 months.
- Municipalities established help-lines to assist citizens and provides food and cash supports.
- The monthly amount that was being transferred to Social Benevolent and Solidarity Associations was increased to TRY 180 mln from TRY 135 mln to protect the most disadvantaged groups.
- As of January, the entire discretionary fiscal support amounted to TL646 billion (12.8 percent of GDP). Of this, around TL173 billion (3.4 percent of GDP) is in the form of 'on-budget' measures. Key fiscal measures include – i) loan guarantees to firms and households (6.4 percent of GDP); ii) loan service deferrals by state-owned banks (2.6 percent of GDP); iii) tax deferrals for businesses (1.4 percent of GDP); iv) equity injections into public banks (0.4 percent of GDP); and, v) a short-term work scheme (0.7 percent of GDP), which was reopened in December and extended into March 2021. In addition, VAT has been reduced on certain goods (e.g. food and accommodation services) until May 2021. Finally, alongside the short-term work scheme, a nationwide ban on employee layoffs is in force until March 2021. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Turkey's central bank has slashed its benchmark interest rate by 1 percentage point as part of emergency measures (9.75% from 10.75%). The central bank postponed US\$7.6 billion of foreign-exchange debt repayments by exporters by another three months, easing the short-term need for dollars in the domestic market.
- The Central Bank of Turkey took measures to secure an uninterrupted flow of credit to the hardest-hit corporate sector and strengthen the monetary transmission mechanism.
- Public banks introduced long-term credit mechanisms targeting the households.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- Turkey adopted a new tourism promotion strategy in 2021 with its "Go Turkey" platform, using the latest technology and communication models, as well as focusing on advanced public relations that will bring 81 provinces under one roof and boost Turkey's tourism performance



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Accommodation tax suspended until the end of January 2021.
- "Immunity Certification System" will be introduced to to open tourism season.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

• Turkey has launched the 'Safe Tourism Certification Program' that defines and advises an extensive series of measures to be taken with regards to transportation and accommodation of all Turkish citizens and international visitors who will spend their holidays in Turkey as well as the well-being and health conditions of passengers/guests and of employees working at touristic facilities. Further information is available in <https://tga.gov.tr/home/> and <https://www.tga.gov.tr/about-safe-tourism-program/>



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Turkmenistan**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- State budget includes increased health spending for controlling an outbreak of COVID-19 and to provide support to businesses (possibly through tax relief, bank loans, and assistance in providing raw materials) affected by the containment measures.
  - The government announced that the bonus salary of 20, 15, and 10 percent will be given to healthcare professionals working in the remote rural facilities, frontline facilities, and other rural facilities, respectively.
  - The authorities raised excises on both tobacco and alcohol products with varying rates based on the origin and type of product.
- (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

The authorities provided temporary suspension of loan repayments to businesses affected by the COVID containment measures.



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

Not available



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: Ukraine**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The government has expanded the subsidized loans program—the so-called 5-7-9 program—and credit guarantee scheme (launched in February 2020). The maximum amount of a loan has been increased to the equivalent of about Euro400,000, the annual income limit to UAH100 million (US\$3.7 million), and the eligibility criteria have been expanded to include COVID-19 crisis related production as well as production costs (e.g., wages and rent). The government has further expanded the program to make it more generous and accessible (for example if loans are used for refinancing outstanding credit to banks). As of the end of March 1, 2021, 9,490 loans were extended under the program worth UAH 22.6 billion. The program continues into 2021.
- In preparing for the January 2021 lockdown, the legislature supported a set of measures to prop up small businesses. If certain conditions are met (e.g. a history of contribution to the pension system is in place), eligible entrepreneurs can count on UAH 8,000 in a one-off state aid and a single tax holidays through December 2020-May 2021. Employers affected by a lockdown can be reimbursed from the budget the amount equal to an average monthly payment of the social security which they have been making on behalf of their employees in the 10 months of 2020. Also, tax debts (up to UAH 3,030) are written off. Penalties charged on overdue taxes are forgiven if the principle is paid. Around 40 percent of expected applicants among self-employed entrepreneurs used their right to access the government's aid of UAH 8,000. Half a million small entrepreneurs reportedly received the payment, with the cost to the budget of around UAH 3.4 billion. (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Emergency package of measures to protect the Ukrainian economy and the country's most vulnerable people amid the COVID-19 pandemic:

- National Bank of Ukraine, the Ministry of Finance and Ukraine's state-owned banks to act in the national interest.
- Some businesses and citizens should have access to a program of emergency loans, debt repayment holidays and tax breaks.
- Pensioners with pensions below Hr 5,000 (\$200) should be paid an extra Hr 1,000 (\$40).
- Begin talks with the International Monetary Fund and other international partners on possible financial aid to Ukraine amid the coronavirus crisis.
- Consider a ban on food exports, except on some food products.
- The National Bank sold \$130 million on March 16, in an attempt to stabilize the national currency sold over \$1 billion of state reserves to stabilize the hryvnia. The panic disposal of the national currency is happening amid news of a looming economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- State-owned PrivatBank, Ukraine's largest bank is ready to support its own customers and the country and announced donations of respirator machines to hospitals in Kyiv, Odesa and Lysychanska.

Additionally, the country has introduced the following measures:

- Ban to increase lending interest rates by the banks during the quarantine.
- All citizens shall be exempted from fines and late fees for protracting repayment on consumer loans. The debt shall not be forgiven, it'll have to be repaid



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Online registration of unemployment status and unemployment benefit introduced at the State Employment Service based on electronically submitted documents.
  - Additional UAH 1,27 billion (US\$ 47.7 million) allocated from the state budget to finance unemployment benefits.
  - For those workers whose employment was terminated by resignation, the deferment of unemployment benefit has been lifted.
  - During quarantine, the unemployment benefit for persons without contributory record has increased by 54 per cent to UAH 1000 (US\$ 38).
  - Automatic extension of social benefits, incl. unemployment, until the end of quarantine
  - State Employment Service introduced online registration of clients [www.dcz.gov.ua](http://www.dcz.gov.ua)
- Every pensioner whose old-age benefit is under UAH 5.000 (~US\$183) shall be paid a lump sum of UAH 1.000 (~US\$37) in April. Those pensioners aged over 80 will receive an additional UAH 500 (~US\$ 18).



#### IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



#### V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



#### VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

Not available



#### VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



#### VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



#### IX. OTHER

- Severe restrictions on the usage of public transport have been limited to workers in health care, social and municipal services as well as for workers employed in critical infrastructure and strategic enterprises to ensure continuity of production and services. These categories were issued special passes for public transport.
- The Ukrainian government has tightened lockdown measures, including closing its borders to foreigners, in an effort to contain the country's coronavirus outbreak to at least September 28. In addition, current quarantine measures were extended by two months, until October 31, and the division of the country into zones based on risk level will be maintained. Foreigners who have permission to work in Ukraine and those transiting the country for less than a two-day stay will be allowed to enter. Foreign students and military personnel will also be allowed entry, as will members of foreign delegations as employees of international organizations.

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

**Country: United Kingdom**

**Last update: 12 March 2021**



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- The UK unveiled an unprecedented £350 billion (EUR400 billion) financial rescue package to “support jobs, incomes and businesses”.
- The stimulus package, which includes a massive new government loan guarantee scheme for businesses hit by COVID-19, a three month mortgage holiday, is worth around 15% of the UK’s total GDP and far exceeds the scale of the rescue measures taken in the wake of the 2008 financial crash.
- All shops and pubs will be given a one-year exemption from paying business tax, while a three-month mortgage break will be offered to those in difficulty.



## II. MONETARY POLICY

- Small businesses will be able to tap an expanded business interruption loan scheme offering up to £5 million with no interest.
- Reducing Bank Rate by 65 basis points to 0.1 percent.
- Expanding the central bank’s holding of UK government bonds and non-financial corporate bonds by £200 billion.
- Introducing a new Term Funding Scheme to reinforce the transmission of the rate cut, with additional incentives for lending to the real economy, and especially SMEs.
- £330bn of loans and guarantees available to businesses (15 percent of GDP); (v) activating a Contingent Term Repo Facility to complement the Bank’s existing sterling liquidity facilities.
- Together with central banks from Canada, Japan, Euro Area, U.S., and Switzerland, further enhancing the provision of liquidity via the standing US dollar liquidity swap line arrangements.
- The Prudential Regulatory Authority (PRA) set out supervisory expectation that banks should not increase dividends or other distributions, such as bonuses, in response to policy actions.
- Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs through the British Business Bank.
- Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loans Scheme: all firms with a turnover of more than £45 million will now be able to apply for up to £25 million of finance, and up to £50 million for firms with a turnover of more than £250 million (complements existing support including the Covid Corporate Financing Facility and the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme).



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

- Statutory sick pay (SSP) for individuals. SSP existed previously but the government is legislating for it to be paid from day 1, rather than day 4, of absence from work.
- Easing of rules governing use of sick notes (ie can be obtained online).
- Rules governing access to social protection (Universal Credit) are also eased for the self-employed. Claimants of benefits who are staying at home as a result of coronavirus will have their mandatory work search and work availability requirements removed to account for a period of sickness.
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme where the Government pays 80 per cent of the wages of furloughed workers, up to £2,500 per month.
- Statutory Sick Pay relief package for small and medium sized businesses (SMEs).



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

- The Tourism Industry Events Response Group (TIER) is the key forum for gathering information on impact and response to the pandemic, and feed into the Government and sharing any practical advice as soon as it becomes available. TIER is a group Chaired by VisitBritain, it is made up of key tourism industry organizations, businesses, DMOs and government, including the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. It provides a forum for industry to raise concerns, challenges and observations for discussion with the UK Government.



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- UK Maritime Minister Robert Courts announced domestic cruises in England could restart on May 17, 2021



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Not available



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available

# COVID-19: MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR

Country: Uzbekistan

Last update: 12 March 2021



## I. FISCAL POLICY

- To deal with the crisis, Uzbekistan's government created an Anti-Crisis Fund of US\$ 1 billion (about 2 percent of GDP) to fund support to the economy and help those most affected by the crisis. In addition to the Anti-Crisis Fund, the government temporary reduced some taxes and the Fund for Reconstruction and Development increased lending. Specific crisis response measures have included: (i) expanded funding for healthcare, including for medicines, the costs of quarantines, and salary supplements for healthcare works; (ii) an increase in the number of families with children and low-income families receiving social benefits; (iii) assistance to affected businesses via interest subsidies; and (iv) additional public works for infrastructure and to support employment. The authorities also temporary reduced social contributions for individual entrepreneurs, postponed the payment of property and land taxes, extended a moratorium on tax audits, and delayed tax declarations for 2019 income taxes. The central government also asked local governments to reduce taxes by 30 percent and provide a grace period on paying property tax.
  - In early 2021, after disbursing the funds through the budget, the government closed the Anti-Crisis Fund. The government's 2021 budget includes higher expenditures on healthcare and social assistance as well as policy lending to support the economy, primarily through the Fund for Reconstruction and Development.
- (source: imf.org)



## II. MONETARY POLICY

Not available



## III. JOBS & SKILLS

The following measures to support employment have been adopted:

- 200 billion soums have been allocated to provide jobs to the population, construction of additional infrastructure facilities in local communities areas.
- An additional 500 billion soums has been allocated to assist business entities that create jobs.
- Parents who have to look after their children while quarantine will be paid 100 % temporary disability allowance.
- The rights of employees of quarantined institutions, citizens under quarantine and caretakers will be ensured, and the number of the recipients of social benefits will be increased by at least 10% to 60 000.
- Increasing the number of social benefit recipients by 10%, including beneficiaries of new measures. (For example, 100% of the average salary will be paid to workers taking care of their children during the quarantine period.)
- Providing of an extra UZS 5–25 million (US\$ 500–2,600) to employees in quarantined hospitals as additional salary.
- Continuing provision of salaries for 1.04 million employees of state educational, sports and cultural institutions that have suspended their activities.
- Provision of basic food and hygiene products free of charge to elderly people who are alone and persons with disabilities.
- Collection of charity assistance at Uzexpocentre in Tashkent and based on the calls received at the call centre, and its delivery to families in need through makhalla representatives and volunteer groups.
- Prohibiting the firing quarantined employees or their family members.
- Allowing businesses to export goods without payment guarantee, and removing other barriers to export.
- Implementing a zero-rent policy for businesses using 3,600 government-owned properties.



## IV. MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Not available



## V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Not available



## VI. RESTARTING TOURISM

- Fund for bonus subsidies to tour operators and travel agents will provide:
  - US\$ 15 will be paid to tour company for each foreign tourist brought and served in Uzbekistan with the condition of his stay in the country for at least five days, starting from the beginning of the resumption of inbound tourism and until the total number of incoming foreign tourists will reach 500 thousand people;
  - subsidizing the costs of tour operators on air and train tickets in the amount of 30 percent of their cost, provided that a tour to the Uzbekistan for foreign tourist groups of at least 10 people and their stay is not less than five nights in accommodation facilities with the beginning of the resumption of inbound tourism until December 31, 2020;
  - until June 1, 2021 allocating funds to compensate for hotel expenses for renovation and reconstruction of the hotels.



## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- The Uzbek government stated that any tourist who contracted the virus within the country will be given US\$ 4370 to cover medical expenses in a local hospital.



## VIII. DOMESTIC TOURISM

Not available



## IX. OTHER

Not available