

COVID-19 EU Briefing 03 July 2020

Synopsis

The expectations of the German Council Presidency are high and include nothing less than to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Read the [briefing](#) that DeHavilland has produced for an in-depth policy analysis of all goals of the presidency and watch this [video](#) that we prepared for a summary of what to expect from the next six months. Additionally, the German Presidency is expected to reach a compromise regarding the MFF. Chancellor Merkel has called upon the fellow European leaders to strike a deal at the upcoming Council summit on 17-18 July.

General

Recovery

MFF

- Chancellor Merkel has advised fellow European leaders to come together and strike a deal at the Council summit on 17-18 July, adding that she couldn't "imagine any other option."
 - Should a political agreement be achieved by EU leaders, there will be an extraordinary plenary session with debate and single vote on a resolution on either 23 or on 30 July in Brussels.
- Chairman of the EPP, Manfred Weber, told Politico that he wanted a Parliament that was stronger on budgetary control.
 - Mr Weber outlined that the European Commission's budgetary proposals are "widely supported" within the EPP, with only Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz yet to be convinced as an EPP head of government.

Bailout Fund

- Euractiv reported that Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has deferred a decision on the use of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) until "after the European negotiation on the Recovery Fund is finished".

Assistance

- The EU - through its Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) - has [adopted](#) a new assistance package to protect migrants, stabilise local communities and respond to COVID-19 in North Africa. This package includes €80 million in new funds as well as €30 million reallocated from non-contracted actions under the EUTF.

Infringement Proceedings

- Yesterday the **European Commission** [began](#) infringement proceedings against Czechia, Cyprus, Greece, France, Italy, Croatia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Slovakia on the grounds that their national rules have infringed EU law on consumers' and travellers' rights.

- The **European Commission** also launched infringement proceedings to Greece and Italy on the basis of alleged infringements relating to Air, Waterborne, Bus/Coach & Rail Passenger Rights.

Member States

Spain

- The tourist sector took a huge hit in May due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The country lost a total of 8 million tourists and more than €8.1 billion in May, according to fresh stats published on Thursday.
- Meanwhile, the Spanish coalition government will hold an extraordinary meeting today to approve a special “economic package” to alleviate the impact of the crisis for the most vulnerable.

Austria

- As Austria recorded its first three-figure-rise in weeks with more than 100 coronavirus cases from Tuesday to Wednesday mostly due to new clusters in Upper Austria and Salzburg, Health Minister Rudolf Anschober (Greens) announced a new screening programme to contain the spread.
 - The new programme will entail up to 30,000 voluntary tests per week, which will also be available to persons without symptoms who work in potential high-risk areas.

Belgium

- Belgium is among one of several states seeking to host EU-bought reserves of masks and protective equipment due to be piled up in case of a second wave of coronavirus. An EU task-force will decide in August where to locate reserves.

Source: DeHavilland EU