

COVID-19 EU Briefing 18 November 2020

General

Recovery

MFF

- **Germany's Europe Minister** on behalf of the Presidency [told](#) a videoconference of EU affairs ministers on 17 November that: "There are many billions of euros that go to Hungary and Poland. These citizens deserve European solidarity as much as others. We've got to break this deadlock and the [EU] presidency will try to work out solutions".

Vaccine

- The European Commission [approved](#) a fifth contract with the European pharmaceutical company CureVac, which provides for the initial purchase of 225 million doses on behalf of all EU Member States, plus an option to request up to a further 180 million doses.

SURE

- The European Commission [has disbursed](#) €14 billion to nine EU countries in the second instalment of financial support to Member States under the SURE instrument.

Allocation:

- Croatia: €510 million
- Cyprus: €250 million
- Greece: €2 billion
- Italy: €6.5 billion
- Latvia: €120 million
- Lithuania: €300 million
- Malta: €120 million
- Slovenia: €200 million
- Spain: €4 billion.

Institutions

- **Politico** reported that thus far in November (up to last Friday included), there were 60 confirmed coronavirus infections in Parliament among MEPs, staffers, assistants and "externals" working at the premises. This is down from 284 last month.
- **Politico** [reported](#) that 60% of Britons have a favourable opinion of the EU, according to a new Pew Research poll. The study found that a majority of people in the U.K., Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, France, Sweden and Belgium had a favourable opinion of the EU.
- Trips to Strasbourg are expected to be cancelled for the remainder of the year.

Member States

Infection Rate (measured by positive cases per 100,000 over 14 days)

- The infection rate of France has reduced from 847.5 to 783.1 (16/11 compared to 17/11).
- The Czech Republic (1112.4 – 1076.3), Spain (581.4 – 545.8), the Netherlands (508.6 – 488.6) and Slovakia (492.1 – 466.9) have also recorded a decline.
- However, Luxembourg (1264.9 – 1301.7) and Portugal (710 – 767) have noted an increase in their infection rates.
- The average amongst the EU27+1 has decreased from 586.2 – 586.

Romania

- Romania will present its COVID-19 Vaccination strategy next week. President Klaus Iohannis announced on Tuesday.

France

- Reuters [reports](#) that French President Emmanuel Macron will speak towards the middle of next week about the conditions for a progressive easing of the French lockdown.

Belgium

- From 23 November, Covid-19 tests [will resume](#) for people who do not have any symptoms but have had a high-risk contact or returned from a red-travel zone.
- Asymptomatic people will have to get tested seven days after they were in contact with an infected person and quarantine at least until they receive their test results back.
- The reopening of Belgium's hospitality sector is rather unlikely this year, biostatistician Niel Hens [told](#) VRT.

Spain

- Spain's government approved a VAT reduction on facemasks from 21% to 4% during a cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

Source: *DeHavillandEU*