

Press release – Sassoli to EU governments: Rise to the challenge. Find new shared ways to finance our recovery.



“In this moment there is a need to do much more. Our citizens, businesses, families, young people are worried about an uncertain future because in all our countries this crisis, and health emergency, will destroy millions of jobs. In recent weeks, when Europe has acted, its responses have been up to the challenge. Think of the relaxation of state aid rules, that has allowed our countries to make powerful interventions to support their citizens and businesses. However, where Europe has not intervened, the answer has been weak or there has been no answer at all. For this, national governments must take great responsibility. Because it is now that we need the tools to overcome this emergency and start with a reconstruction plan. We must be prepared for the effects of this crisis and not be overwhelmed.

“The International Labour Organisation (ILO) yesterday said that 2.5 billion people worldwide will experience negative effects due to the crisis. How many millions of people will be affected in Europe? We have a duty to protect them, in the north, south, east and west. So far we have implemented significant measures: Support for national systems to limit unemployment (SURE); improved conditions for using the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), for countries that want to use it; European Investment Bank (EIB) refinancing aimed primarily at protecting small and medium-sized businesses; and the ‘bazooka’ from the ECB in support of bank liquidity and for the purchase of public and private bonds.

“However, today we need more: we need to create a fund for economic recovery to share the costs of restarting our economies. This will take a lot of money, the EU budget is too limited and will not be enough. We need to find new, extraordinary, and shared, ways to finance it. It is not just a matter of solidarity, it is in the interests of all, given how profoundly European economies are interconnected. The collapse of one country would inevitably have dramatic consequences for all the others. In this context, the Eurogroup’s response must be up to the challenge.

“Governments and citizens must believe in the power of Europe, which has given us 70 years of collaboration and peace. Today more than ever we must invest in our common future.”