

Press release – Parliament to allow COVID-19 vaccines to be developed more quickly



Parliament today adopted a new Regulation by 505 votes to 67 and 109 abstentions, via the [urgent procedure](#), that will allow COVID-19 vaccines and treatments to be developed more quickly.

Developing and deploying an effective and safe vaccine against the virus is the most likely permanent solution to stop the pandemic. To this end, the Commission has proposed an [EU vaccines strategy for COVID-19](#) including a temporary and strictly COVID-19-related derogation from certain rules for clinical trials.

Clinical trials for COVID-19 vaccines are a time-consuming step before authorisation, as they need to be carried out in several member states to ensure the populations for whom the vaccines are intended are represented and to generate robust and conclusive data.

Some COVID-19 vaccines and treatments already being developed may be defined genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and are thus covered by the relevant EU GMO Directives. As national requirements to assess the environmental risks of clinical trials on medicinal products that contain or consist of GMOs vary considerably across member states, a derogation from these rules is needed to avoid significant delay in developing life-saving vaccines and treatments.

Background

The Commission has proposed a Regulation to derogate temporarily – only for the period during which COVID-19 is a public health emergency – from certain provisions of the [GMO Directive for clinical trials](#) on COVID-19 vaccines and treatments that contain or consist of GMOs. The derogation should apply only

to operations necessary to conduct the clinical trial phase and for compassionate or emergency use in the context of COVID-19.

The derogation will facilitate the development, authorisation and consequently availability of COVID-19 vaccines and treatments. When [debated](#) last week in the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, members agreed on the need to adapt the rules but stressed that standards for vaccine quality, safety and efficacy must be maintained.

[Media Advisory – Special European Council on 17 and 18 July 2020 \(update 10/07/2020\)](#)



The Special European Council will take place on 17 and 18 July in the Europa building in Brussels.

Due to the current COVID-19 measures, no press will be allowed on site. Only a strictly limited pool of TV/photo agencies will be allowed for photo opportunities.

The Council will provide live host broadcasting services and cover the following:

- 1. Arrivals and possible statements on arrival from leaders (live)**
Leaders will have the possibility to deliver a statement on arrival in front of a host camera, no possibility for press to ask questions.
- 2. Roundtable footage at the beginning of the meeting (live)**
- 3. Statements on departure (live)**
Leaders will have the possibility to deliver a statement on departure in front of a host camera, no possibility for press to ask questions.
- 4. Press conferences and national briefings (live)**
Press will be able to participate in virtual press conferences/national briefings remotely (via Zoom).

More details to follow on how to participate in the virtual press conferences/national briefings;

EU accredited journalists (holders of Council annual badges and journalists who got an accreditation for the June 2019 European Council meeting or later meetings) will be able to watch and listen to national briefings and ask questions remotely.

Host TV/photo live and on demand:

EBU NEWS EVENTS DISTRIBUTION OF HOST POOL SIGNALS:

EBU News Events will be distributing all host broadcaster pool signals, access to all, free of rights and free of charge. Signals will be available LIVE via satellite and on our NEWSDIRECT platform.

To access the pool signals via satellite, please click on <https://www.eurovision.net/events/news/politics/46761> and follow the instructions.

Provisional programme:

FEED 1 – PRIMARY POOL LIVE SIGNAL (Arrivals and declarations on arrival, Round Table, Final EU Presidents Presser, Exit doorsteps)

FEED 2 – SECONDARY POOL SIGNAL (Simultaneous LIVE events (arrival/exit doorsteps) & Cutaways)

FEED 3 to FEED 10 – LIVE NATIONAL BRIEFINGS TBA

All content will be available in broadcast quality for TV and Radios on the Eurovision News Event NEWSDIRECT platform. Log on here to download the content you need: <https://newsdirect.ebu.ch/>

For more information and user's guide, please click here:

<https://workspace.ebu.ch/spaces/viewspace.action?key=NEWDIRECT>

For all inquiries: [\[email protected\]](#)

For more details on the Special European Council, see [the meeting page](#).

[Enhanced front office goes live in Ireland](#)

July 10, 2020 [News](#)

Enhanced front office goes live in Ireland



The Intellectual Property Office of Ireland ([IPOI](#)) has successfully implemented a new version of front office as well as various improvements on e-filing and e-services for both trade marks and designs.

This important milestone has been achieved through the **fruitful collaboration between the IPOI and the EUIPO**, in the framework of the [European Cooperation Projects](#) (ECP1).

The IPOI implemented the Technical Stack Upgrade (TSU) of Software Package Front Office (SPFO) and the improvements on 30 June 2020.

The enhanced digital platform brings to the IPOI the full benefits of the latest version of front office, including a more modern portal functionality and improved performance, which contribute to a **better user experience**.

E-filing and e-services improvements for trade marks and designs have also been developed and implemented with the EUIPO support. IPOI users can now electronically **submit their applications in a user-friendly and simple way with improved registration times**.

In addition to significant operational efficiencies to processing fees, the IPOI can now electronically accept 58 different types of fees (34 for trade marks and 24 for designs).

EUIPO and its stakeholders are collaborating on eight major European Cooperation Projects. These projects aim to benefit users across the EU by providing modern, state-of-the-art tools and services for intellectual property offices.

Press release – Energy: EU funding for priority projects should reflect 2050 climate objectives



The revision of the TEN-E guidelines, to be proposed by the European Commission later this year, should be consistent with EU energy and climate targets for 2030, its long-term commitment on decarbonisation and the energy-efficiency-first principle, said MEPs in a resolution adopted on Friday by 548 votes in favour, 100 against, and 4 abstentions.

In order to ensure that the projects selected for the next PCI (projects of common interest) list are in line with the EU's climate commitments, MEPs call on the Commission to also propose transitional guidance before the end of 2020. To be granted PCI status, projects must contribute to keep the energy supply affordable, in keeping with the five principles of the Energy Union.

The TEN-E regulation was set up in 2013, before the Paris Agreement was adopted, and several developments have since significantly changed the landscape of energy policy, MEPs recall.

Background

The European Parliament rejected an objection to the 4th PCI list last year, following a debate with the European Commission.

Under the Trans-European Network-Energy (TEN-E) Regulation, adopted in 2013, the Commission identifies the most important PCIs across the EU, so that these projects can benefit from simplified permits and the right to apply for EU funding from the Connecting Europe Facility.

Most projects aim at ensuring uninterrupted delivery of electricity and gas to

all parts of the EU, by closing cross-border gaps in the network and enhancing local storage capacity.

[Press release – EU must prioritise fight against youth unemployment, homelessness and poverty](#)



Parliament adopted a resolution to feed into the forthcoming EU [Employment Guidelines](#) on Friday with 550 votes in favour, 128 against and 10 abstentions, calling for radical measures to cushion the employment and social shock caused by the pandemic.

Quote

Rapporteur [José Gusmão](#) (GUE/NGL, PT) said: *“The report on the employment guidelines adopted today shows a complete reversal of the positions that have dominated the European institutions for many years. In a context in which the problems caused by the Covid-19 pandemic are further aggravated by precarious employment relations and the deregulation of the labour market, this report proposes an alternative path that is as clear as it is urgent.”*

The fight against youth unemployment, homelessness and poverty must be prioritised through a reinforced [Youth Guarantee](#), a strong [Child Guarantee](#) for tackling child poverty and the [Housing First](#) approach, the text says. MEPs insist that more efforts are needed to close the [gender pay](#) -, [pension and employment gaps](#) and that the gender impact of social and employment policies should be closely monitored.

In light of the social and employment consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, and to strengthen the EU response to similar future crises, MEPs call for a revision of the [EU Employment Guidelines](#), which underpin the country-specific recommendations of the [European Semester](#).

Allow for fiscal flexibility as long as needed

MEPs consider that the so-called '[General escape clause](#)', that gives member states unprecedented fiscal flexibility to protect employment and finance public health and social services, has to reflect the scale and duration of the COVID-19 crisis.

Only companies that are not registered in tax havens, that respect the applicable collective agreements and that do not pay dividends or bonuses should be allowed to apply for financial assistance from the [SURE](#) mechanism for short-time work, they add.

Background

The Employment Guidelines ([Article 148 of the TFEU](#)) present strategic objectives for national employment policies in the fields of employment, education and social inclusion. The Council will adopt the act after consulting the European Parliament. The Guidelines serve as a basis for [country-specific recommendations](#) (part of the [European Semester](#)) in the different areas concerned.

The European Commission presented this year's revision of the Employment Guidelines in February 2020, in order to integrate the four dimensions of the [Annual Strategy for Sustainable Growth](#) (ASGS) and, in particular, the dimension of environmental sustainability to reflect the vision of a [strong social Europe for just transitions](#).