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Plenary sitting

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DRAFT JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on EU coordinated action to combat the Covid19
Pandemic and its Consequences ([2020/0000](RSP))

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Whereas this is a moment of truth for the European Union that will determine its future and that can only pull through this crisis if Member States and European institutions stand together in solidarity and responsibility, and when a strong and united voice of the European Parliament is needed more than ever

European Parliament resolution on EU action Combatting the COVID-19 Pandemic and its Consequences ([2020/0000](RSP))

The European Parliament,

- A. Having regard to Articles 2 and 21 of the consolidated Treaty that enshrines solidarity as a value of respect in the European Union and article 3 that states that the Union aims to promote its values, namely economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member States as well as the well-being of its people;
- B. Having regard to the resolution of the European Parliament of 15 January 2020 on the European Green Deal (2019/2956(RSP));
- C. Whereas the global and European spread of COVID-19 has already tragically cost the lives of many thousands of people in Europe and the world, causing irreparable damage and confining over a billion people to their homes;
- D. Whereas the provision of healthcare is above all a national competence, public health is a competence shared between Member States and the ;
- E. Whereas the EU response to the COVID-19 pandemic has so far exhibited a lack of coordination between Member States in terms of public health measures including the restriction of movement of people within and across borders and the suspension of other rights and laws; Whereas our economy has been put on hold and the effect that disruption on European citizens, self-employed, businesses and workers will be both dramatic;
- F. Whereas health care systems in the pandemic are under great pressure to ensure adequate care for all patients;
- G. Whereas the measures taken by governments should always respect the fundamental rights of each and every one, whereas these measures should be necessary, proportional and temporary;
- H. Whereas solidarity between Member States is not an option but a Treaty obligation and part of our European values;
- I. Whereas the Commission has already taken initial action, including a package of measures voted on by the European Parliament during its plenary session on 26th March 2020;
- J. Whereas thus far the European Council has been unable to reach consensus on the necessary economic measures needed to tackle the crisis;
- K. Whereas the European Parliament, as co-legislator, joint budgetary authority and the only institution directly elected by universal suffrage, must be included as an integral and essential part of all discussions on the EU response to this crisis and the subsequent recovery;
- L.

A united and decisive response to a shared crisis

1. Expresses its deepest sorrow at the loss of lives and the human tragedy that the pandemic has brought to Europeans and their families and to citizens all over the globe and extends its condolences to all to those who have lost loved ones; expresses its heartfelt sympathy with all those affected by the virus and who are fighting for their lives as well as with their families and friends;
2. Stands in awe and admiration of all those that stand in the frontline fighting the pandemic and have worked tirelessly such as doctors and nurses but also is deeply grateful to all the anonymous heroes, who fulfil essential duties such as those working in the fields of food retail and delivery, education, agriculture, transport, members of emergency services, civil society, volunteers, cleaning and waste collection to maintain public life and services and to guarantee access to essential goods; considers it is the duty of the Union and its Member States to provide maximum support to these key workers and recognise the daily sacrifices they make; Urges the Member States to ensure safe working conditions for all workers in the frontline of this epidemic, in particular for frontline medical staff, through appropriate and coordinated national measures including the provision of sufficient personal protective equipment and calls on the European Commission to supervise the implementation of these measures;
3. Expresses its solidarity with the Member States hit hardest by the virus and all countries that are facing the effects of the pandemic; expresses its most sincere solidarity with those who have lost their job and whose professional lives have been disrupted by the pandemic; pulling together as a community and ensuring no country is left to fight this virus and the aftermath on its own;
4. Is concerned about the potential impacts of the crisis, including confinement, on the well-being of people around the world, notably the most vulnerable groups and people in vulnerable situations, including elderly people, people who are already suffering from poor health, populations in conflict-affected areas and settings prone to natural disasters, and migrants, and those that are exposed to domestic violence, especially women and children;
5. Is concerned by Member States' initial inability to act collectively and demand all future actions taken by Member States to be guided by the Union's founding principle of solidarity and loyal cooperation; believes that the COVID 19 crisis has shown above all the importance of joint European action; stresses that the European Union and its Member States have the common resources to fight the pandemic and its consequences but only when cooperating in a spirit of unity; Recognises that after acting unilaterally at the beginning of the crisis, Member States understand that cooperation, confidence and solidarity represent the only way to succeed in overcoming this crisis;
6. Calls on the European Commission and the Member States to act together to rise to the challenge and ensure the Union emerges stronger from this crisis; stresses that the European Parliament will cooperate with the other EU institutions to save lives, protect jobs and businesses, and drive economic and social recovery and that Parliament will stand ready to hold them accountable for their actions;

European solidarity and action in the health sector

7. Welcomes the European solidarity in action shown by Member States treating patients from other Member States, supplying health care equipment, including by EU led procurement initiatives and stock-piling, or repatriating citizens; stresses that borders must remain open within the EU for the circulation of personal protective equipment, food, medicine, medical devices, blood derived products and organs as well as supply chain in the Single Market underlines the need to facilitate the mobilisation of health professional and call for the deployment of the European Medical corps to deliver medical assistance; further emphasises the need to facilitate transportation of patients from saturate hospitals in one Member State to another where capacity is still available;
8. Calls for substantially strengthening the competences, budget and staff of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and of the European Medical Agency (EMA) so it can coordinate medical responses in times of crisis; Suggests transforming the COVID19 expert panel into a permanent independent expert team on virus outbreaks working with ECDC to develop standards, make recommendations and develop protocols to be used by the Commission and Member States in case of a crisis;
9. Calls for the creation of a European Health Response Mechanism to better prepare and respond in a common and coordinated way to any type of health or sanitary crisis that emerges at EU level protecting the health of our citizens; believes it should functioning both as an information hub as well as an emergency response team able to deliver vital supplies, medical equipment and medical staff to regions experiencing a sudden surge in infections;
10. Calls on the Commission to strengthen all components of crisis management and disaster response, and to further strengthen instruments such as RescEU to ensure a truly common, coordinated and effective response at EU level; believes that European disaster risk management, preparedness and prevention should be enhanced as well as common equipment, materials and medicines stocks, to allow for their quick mobilisation to protect lives and livelihoods of EU citizens; Believes that the EU's civil Protection Mechanism should be strengthened to facilitate the joint repatriation of EU citizens;
11. Welcomes the Commission's initiative to directing funds from the EU research programme towards the fight against the virus by ensuring that the treatments, vaccines and diagnostics are globally available, accessible and affordable; Calls on the establishment of additional measures for a "COVID-19 R&I Fund" to boost its efforts to fund a speedy research on vaccine and/or treatment; Believes that Europe's researchers, innovative SMEs and industry should get every support they need to find a cure; calls on the Member States to significantly increase support for research, development and innovation programmes which can help to understand the disease, speed up diagnosis and testing and development of a vaccine; calls on hospitals and researchers to share data with the European Medicines Agency, and to enter into large-scale European clinical trials; highlights the need to support measures favouring open science in order to accelerate the sharing of data and research results within the scientific community in Europe and beyond insists that any publicly funded research must stay in the public domain;
12. Is concerned that Member States pay sufficient attention to the mental health implications of the crisis and organise an EU-wide mental health campaign, advising citizens how to

on the Commission to further develop its capacity for cloud services, while complying with the ePrivacy Directive and the GDPR, to facilitate the exchange at EU level of research and health data by entities working on the development of treatment and/or vaccines;

safeguard mental wellbeing under these new circumstances and informing them where to seek advice when needed;

- 13.
14. Highlights the crucial importance of policies to ensure reliable and quality food supplies from agriculture, fisheries and food business during and beyond the immediate health crisis, and the need to support these sectors and safeguard their continued production and barrier-free transport across the Single Market;
15. Calls for a coordinated post-lockdown approach in the Union, in order to avoid a rebound of the virus; urges the Member States to jointly develop criteria for lifting the quarantine and other the emergency measures, based on the preservation of human life; Calls on the Commission to launch an effective exit strategy that includes large-scale testing, and personal protective equipment for the largest possible number of citizens; Encourages the Member States to develop a more systematic testing on infection and exposure to the virus and share best practise standards;

European solutions to overcome the economic and social consequences

16. Welcomes the measures that have been taken so far at Union level in terms of fiscal measures and liquidity support;
17. Calls on the European Commission to propose a massive recovery and reconstruction package for investment to support the European economy after the crisis, beyond what the European Stability Mechanism, the European Investment Bank and the European Central Bank are already doing, that is part of the new Multiannual Financial framework; believes that such a package should be in place while the economic disruption caused by this crisis lasts; the necessary investment would be financed by an increased MFF, the existing EU funds and financial instruments, and recovery bonds guaranteed by the EU budget; this package should not involve the mutualisation of existing debt and should be oriented to future investment;
18. Stresses that this recovery and reconstruction package should have at its core the Green Deal and the digital transformation in order to kick start the economy, improve its resilience and create jobs while at the same time assist in the ecological transition, the sustainable economic and social development, including the strategic autonomy of our continent and implementing an industrial strategy that preserves core industrial sectors in Europe, and the need to align our answers with the climate neutrality objective;
19. Support the European Commission in its objective to design a new industrial strategy for the EU for a more competitive and resilient industry in the face of global shocks; supporting the re-integration of supply chains inside the EU and increasing European production of key products such as medicines, pharmaceutical ingredients, medical devices, equipment and materials;
20. Insists therefore on the adoption of an ambitious MFF with an increased budget in line with the Union's objectives, the projected impact on EU economies by the crisis and

citizens' expectations on European added value, with more flexibility and simplicity in the way we use the funds to respond to crises and equipped with the necessary flexibility; calls, furthermore, for a revision of the Commission's proposal on the reform of the own resources system to get an adequate fiscal room for manoeuvre and ensuring better predictability, capacity to act and less exposure to national hazards; new own resources would be needed for the EU budget to guarantee the recovery and reconstruction package;

21. Calls on the Member States for a quick agreement on this new MFF proposal, as an instrument of solidarity and cohesion; Calls on the Commission to present a contingency plan in case of non-agreement, extending the duration of ongoing financing programmes beyond 31 December 2020;
22. Calls on the use of all available means and unused money in the current EU budget, including the surplus and unspent margins and the Globalisation Adjustment Fund to deploy financial assistance quickly to the most affected regions and businesses, and allow for the greatest flexibility possible in the use of funds, while continuing to respect the principle of sound financial management and ensuring that funds reach those most in need; we welcome, to this end, the recent Commission proposal to create an Emergency Support Instrument;
23. Calls on the Euro area Member States to activate the €410 billion of the European
Recalls that this crisis is not the responsibility of any particular Member State and that the main objective there should be to fight the consequences of the outbreak; stresses that, as a short term measure the European Stability Mechanism should immediately extend precautionary credit lines to countries that seek access to it in order to address short-term financing needs to tackle the immediate consequences of the COVID-19 and with long-term maturities, competitive pricing and repayment conditions linked to the recovery of Member States' economies;
24. Urges EU Member States to rapidly agree on a significant injection of capital into the European Investment Bank to enable it to rapidly contribute its substantial firepower to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19, including the creation of a new EIB credit line to guarantee liquidity to small and medium-sized companies;
25. Insist on a pro-active role of the banking sector in this crisis, allowing companies and citizens who are suffering financially as a result of COVID-19 to temporarily lower or halt debt or mortgage repayments, providing maximum flexibility in the treatment of non-performing loans, temporarily suspending dividend payments and lowering the often excessive interest rates on current account overdrafts; supervisors must demonstrate a high degree of flexibility to this end;
26. Stresses the immediate need to do more for SMEs, help them maintain jobs and manage their liquidity; urges European prudential and supervisory authorities, as well as Member States, to explore all options to relieve the burden on SMEs; calls for a European horizontal strategy for SME recovery to support them by reducing red tape, costs for access to finance, and by fostering investments in strategic value chains;
27. Believes the EU must seize the opportunity and propose a Health Autonomy Action in strategic areas such as the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) essential for the manufacture of medicine and thus reduce its dependence on third countries without undermining the rewards that open economies derive from international trade; This

action plan should help produce, store and co-ordinate the production of critical medicine and pharmaceutical products and equipment, notably sanitising gel, ventilators and masks in the European Union; as well as pool and coordinate digital manufacturing capabilities such as 3D printing which can contribute to substituting necessary equipment;

28. Underlines that besides the health dimension, the crisis is dramatically impacting on workers, employees, self-employed and SME's, the backbone of our societies; Considers that the Commission together with Member States must take all measure to keep as many jobs as possible, as well as to ensure that the recovery is based on upward social economic convergence, social dialogue and improved social rights and working conditions with targeted measures for those in precarious forms of work;

29. Insists that EU institutions and Member States ensure that conditions attached to public financial support provided to firms in order to combat the economic effects of COVID- 19 ensure that they are used to benefit employees and that recipient firms refrain from dividend pay-outs or share buy backs for as long as they receive such support;

30. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to prioritise aid and crisis-mitigation measures for the most vulnerable citizens, women and children exposed to domestic violence), the elderly, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and people from remote and isolated regions, including the Overseas Countries and Territories and outermost regions by means of a dedicated exceptional support fund focused on the healthcare system and sectors hit by the COVID19-19 outbreak, as well as people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, who all run the greatest risk of infection with COVID-19 but also to

31. incorporate a gender analysis across all response efforts to avoid to exacerbate gender inequalities as well as to ensure that services for victims of violence remain open and to reinforce helpline services, emergency shelters for victims, online legal support and reporting services to combat and protect all women and children from domestic and gender-based violence;

Believes that Member States must take measures to ensure that workers in Europe, including the self-employed, are shielded from income loss and that the most affected companies, in particular SMEs, and sectors have the necessary support and financial liquidity; welcomes in this respect the new SURE proposal from the European Commission and calls for its swift implementation; Encourages Member States to better coordinate social and fiscal legislation in order to avoid a switch in social security and fiscal systems for cross-border workers as a result of emergency measures;

Considers it is of utmost importance to keep the internal EU borders open for goods; recalls that the Single Market is the source of both our collective prosperity and well- being and that it is a key element of the immediate and continuous response to face the COVID-19 outbreak; Strongly supports the Commission in its call on the Member States to allow frontier workers to continue crossing borders in particular in sectors for which continued free movement in the EU is deemed essential and urges to establish 'green lane' border crossings for land (road and rail), maritime, inland waterways and air transport

31. Supports measures in favour of the EU agri-food sector and the viability of farms during the crisis, namely through liquidity support via the timely (pre-)payment of direct and second pillar payments, flexibility in the management of aid schemes and in the

submission of claims, market monitoring and crisis management (private storage, promotion measures and exceptional measures to allow the Commission to propose additional market measures and time-limited derogations from competition law);

34. Considers that the transport and tourism sectors have been severely affected and calls for action to ensure the health, safety and working conditions of transport workers and that transport companies can survive the crisis. In the tourism sector, a prevention and management mechanism should be developed at Union level to protect our workers, help our companies and ensure safety of passengers;
35. Calls on the Commission to co-ordinate Member States' action to crack down on internet- fraudsters and cybercriminals exploiting people's fears by selling overpriced or counterfeited medical material;

Protecting democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights

36. that the Charter of Fundamental Rights and compliance with the Rule of Law must continue to apply, and that in the context of emergency measures, the authorities must ensure that everyone enjoys the same rights and protection; Underlines that all measures taken on national and/or European level must be in line with the rule of law, strictly proportionate to the exigencies of the situation, clearly connected to the ongoing health crisis, limited in time and subject to regular scrutiny; deems totally incompatible with the European values both the decision of the Hungarian government to prolong the state of emergency indefinitely, to authorise the government to rule by decree without time limit, and to weaken the emergency oversight of the Parliament, and the steps taken by the Polish government, namely changing the electoral code against the judgment of Constitutional Tribunal and provisions laid by law, to hold Presidential elections in the middle of a pandemic, which may endanger the lives of Polish citizens and undermine the concept of free, equal, direct and secret elections as ensured in Polish Constitution;
37. Calls therefore on the Commission to urgently assess whether the emergency measures are in conformity with the EU Treaties and to make full use of all available Union tools and sanctions to address this serious and persistent breach, including budgetary ones, underlining once again the imminent need for an EU mechanism on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights; Urges the Council to put back on its agenda the discussions and procedures related to the ongoing Article 7 procedures;
38. Urges the Member States to adopt only necessary, coordinated and proportionate measures when restricting travel or introducing and prolonging internal border controls, after careful evaluation of their effectiveness to address the public health issue and based on existing legal provisions, namely the Schengen Borders Code and the Freedom of Movement Directive and in full observance of the Charter of Fundamental Rights; stresses that border controls and movement restrictions must remain proportionate and exceptional and that all freedoms of movement inside the Schengen area should be re- established as soon as deemed feasible; Insists that cross border travel of front-line workers in sectors key to the fight against COVID-19, in particular healthcare and elderly care professionals, but also those working in the agri-food sector such as seasonal farm workers, must not be limited; Emphasises the need to get back to a fully functioning Schengen area of free movement with no internal border controls as part of a crisis exit strategy;

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the Commission's recommendation to develop a common EU approach for the use of these applications; points out that any use of applications developed by national and European authorities may not be obligatory and that the generated data may not be stored in centralised databases, prone to potential risk of abuse and loss of trust that may endanger uptake throughout the Union; demands that all storage of data is decentral on the device, full transparency is given on (non-EU) commercial interests of developers of these applications, and that clear projections must be demonstrated that the use of contact tracing apps by a part of the population, in combination with specific other measures, will lead to a significantly lower number of infected people; demands that the Commission and Member States are fully transparent on the functioning of contact tracing apps, so that people can verify both the underlying protocol for security and privacy, and check the code itself to see whether the application functions as the authorities are claiming; recommends that concrete sunset clauses are set and the principles of data protection by design and data minimisation are fully respected;

40. Calls on the Commission and Member States to publish the details of these schemes and allow for public scrutiny and full oversight by data protection authorities; Notes that mobile location data can only be processed, in compliance with the ePrivacy Directive and the GDPR; National and European authorities must fully comply with data protection and privacy legislation, and national DPA oversight and guidance;

41. Stresses that disinformation about COVID 19 at this time is a major public health problem; Urges the EU to establish a European information source, in all the official languages, to ensure that all citizens have access to accurate and verified information; believes the ECDC should be in charge of coordinating and aligning Member States' data to improve quality and comparability; Calls on social media companies to proactively take the necessary measures to stop disinformation and hate speech regarding the Coronavirus;

External Action, International Solidarity and Cooperation

44. Calls for a swift update of the EU Global Strategy in the light of the global impact of the crisis; draws in particular attention to the so-called "corona-diplomacy"; reiterates that the EU must be ready to strategically communicate and fight external disinformation and adapt continuously to the changing geopolitical landscape, without ever compromising its core values; Calls upon the Commission and Council to act strategically in the world and within Europe to put into motion the ambition of a geopolitical Union;

45. Stresses that the EU must become more resilient against crises in general, to stay free of undue political and economic influence, such as from China and Russia, and must be ready to strategically communicate, fight external disinformation, fake news and cyberattacks, and adapt continuously to the changing geopolitical landscape; [Therefore urges the Commission to counter aggressive Russian and Chinese propaganda efforts that are exploiting the COVID19 pandemic with the aim to undermine the EU and to sow mistrust in the local population towards the EU; believes it is crucial to effectively assist and communicate about EU's financial, technical and medical support;

46. Insists that the use of export authorisations must not, under any circumstances, turn into de facto export bans; emphasises the

importance of maintaining access to scarce medical products for developing countries; taking into account that the export of Personal Protective Equipment must get to those who need it most and not those who can afford to pay the highest price; considers that to this end, a global catalogue of essential emergency healthcare products must be agreed within the WTO and WHO, in order to stop price speculation and facilitate their trade; strongly encourages all countries to join the WTO Pharmaceutical Tariff Elimination Agreement (Zero for Zero) and to extend its scope to all pharmaceuticals and medicinal products to ensure worldwide cross-border trade; calls on the WTO members to put this topic on the agenda of the next WTO Ministerial Meeting as a matter of priority; expresses its deep concern at the warning jointly issued by the WTO, WHO and FAO that global restrictive trade measures could lead to food shortages around the world; calls for measures to minimise disruption to food supply chains, preventing the exacerbation of food insecurity or price volatility; calls on all Member States to use all available tools to ensure effective mechanisms are in place to assess potential investment and acquisitions of critical infrastructure and strategic industrial capacities in the EU, and to take mitigating or blocking measures as needed; calls on the Commission to quickly advance the WTO e-commerce negotiations to guarantee rules for rapidly increasing online trade, especially for goods;

47. Underlines that the pandemic knows no borders or ideologies and that it requires cooperation and solidarity of the entire international community and a strengthening of the UN system, more specifically WHO: Considers it essential for the EU to ask China to shed full light on this pandemic, the timing of its emergence and its real human toll; Emphasizes the importance of cooperation and support for the Western Balkan countries, for our closest neighbours in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods and partners and for developing countries, in particular Africa and Latin America, and express our strong solidarity with the UK, our neighbouring country, which is currently very strongly hit by the pandemic and offer all cooperation to fight the pandemic and its consequences;
48. Welcomes the initiatives taken by the Secretary General of the United Nations for a multilateral approach of the COVID-19 crisis and its global consequences and calls for an internationally coordinated approach; Calls on the Commission, the Council and Member States to politically and financially support UN initiatives to coordinate efforts

at international level, primarily through the “COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan” and “ COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund”;

49. Acknowledges the importance of a globally coordinated response to the drastic economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, such as stressed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and urges the Commission, the Council and Member States to develop a comprehensive approach and to take initiatives to help the developing countries to face the sanitary and economic consequences of the pandemic;

A post-crisis European Union that is stronger, and delivers more effective action to its citizens

50. Recalls that this crisis is no one’s doing and that it should not be everyone’s undoing; Expresses its firm intention to do whatever it takes for the Union and its citizens to come out of the crisis and calls on all EU Institutions and Member States to make an immediate use of all relevant Treaty provisions the spirit of solidarity;

with new and strengthened instruments to ensure that in future the Union can act without delay to coordinate the response at European level, and direct the necessary resources to where they are most needed, be they material (face masks, respirators, medicines) or financial and enable the collection of quality, standardised data;

Believes that the pandemic has shown the limits of the Union’s capacity to act decisively and exposed the lack of the Commission’s executive and budgetary powers; Believes that the Union must reform accordingly and profoundly; considers it necessary amid of the urgency to complete the Economic and Monetary Union, to activate the general passerelle clause to ease the decision-making process in all matters which could help to cope with

the challenges of the current health crisis;

51. Urges Member states to put aside their differences and to act in the general interest and in the spirit of solidarity; calls on them to make an immediate use of the dedicated treaty provisions to act accordingly;
52. Calls on the European Commission to take its Treaty-based responsibility to heart and take bold initiatives;
53. Stresses that the Union must be prepared to start an in-depth reflection on how to become more effective and democratic and that the current crisis only adds to the urgency of it; believe that the planned Conference on the Future of Europe is the appropriate forum for this; is therefore of the opinion that the Conference needs to start at the first opportunity and that it has to come forward with clear proposals, including by engaging directly with citizens, to profoundly reform the European Union, making it more effective, united, democratic, sovereign and resilient;
54. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the Commission, the President of the European Council and the presidency in office of the Council.