

APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF COVID-19

INITIATIVES



**MEETING OUR
COMMITMENTS**

**Accountability
report of the
Government of Spain**

December 2020



APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF COVID-19 INITIATIVES

1. SUPPORT MEASURES FOR HEALTHCARE RESPONSE

GENERAL MEASURES

- Declaration of a **state of emergency** and approval of its extensions.
- Approval of the **Transition Plan towards the New Normal**.
- Regulation of the **co-governance process**, bolstered by the Interterritorial Council of Spain's National Health System.
- Approval, together with the Autonomous Communities, of the **Early Response Plan in a Covid-19 pandemic control scenario**.
- Development of the **National Second-Wave Strategy**.
- ENECovid19 **seroprevalence study**, conducted by the Ministry of Health and the Carlos III Health Institute, together with the Autonomous Communities, to estimate the prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 infection among the Spanish population.
- Approval of the **Covid-19 Vaccination Strategy** in Spain, and authorization of the corresponding **acquisition of vaccines** against Covid-19.

RESOURCES

- Distribution of medical supplies and devices to support the Autonomous Communities' purchases. Since 10 March, more than **220 million units of medical supplies** have been distributed.
- Strengthening of the National Health System, making more than **81,000 healthcare professionals** available to the Autonomous Communities.
- Creation of a **strategic reserve** and allocation of the **Framework Agreement on supply of materials** (e.g., facemasks, tests, goggles, gloves, gowns, coveralls, shoe covers, hydroalcoholic solutions, ventilators).
- **Strengthening of the National Health System** with privately owned centres and resources, as well as industrial accident mutual insurance societies.
- Launch of Operation **BALMIS** and Operation **BALUARTE** for cleaning, disinfecting, and ensuring the safety of streets, nursing homes, and health centres, and making members of the Armed Forces available to the Autonomous Communities for duties involving tracking.
- Promotion of the incorporation of healthcare professionals, streamlining the **recognition of university degrees and renewing the contracts of medical residents** in their last year of residency.
- Launch of the **Radar Covid App**.
- Creation of a **psychological assistance hotline** to support people with difficulties deriving from Covid-19.

- Extraordinary acquisition of nearly **5 million flu vaccines**, distributed among the Autonomous Communities to supplement their own purchases.
- Establishment of special measures for the use of bioethanol in the manufacturing of hydroalcoholic solutions and gels for **hand disinfection**.
- Establishment of special measures to **award operating licences** for installations, and for the launch of certain medical devices, without CE marking.

MOBILITY

- **Temporary closing of borders** and intensification of internal and sea border controls.
- Regulation of the authorization of a pilot programme to **open safe tourism corridors**.
- Establishment of **quarantine conditions for people coming from other countries** upon arriving in Spain.

PROTECTION AND INFORMATION

- Establishment of a **ceiling on the price of masks, and gels and hydroalcoholic solutions**.
- **Reduction of VAT on facemasks to 4%**.
- Design and publication of three **UNE standards** to facilitate the manufacturing of **medical facemasks**.
- Regulation of the conditions for the **mandatory use of facemasks**.
- Production of **public information materials** and **technical documents for professionals**. Moreover, **many information and awareness-raising campaigns** have been carried out.

OTHER HEALTHCARE NEEDS

- Establishment of measures to **ensure access to pharmaceutical benefits** in the National Health System for people under the Social Security's Special Schemes.

HEALTH SUPPLIES

- Establishment of obligations regarding **information, supply, manufacture, and delivery of essential Covid-19 medicines**.
- Issuance of instructions regarding **waste management**.
- **Establishment of a 0% VAT rate** on intra-EU deliveries, imports, and acquisitions of essential medical supplies to combat Covid-19.

SUPPLY DURING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY

- Adoption of measures related to **water supply for human consumption** and to **wastewater treatment**, as well as **other essential goods and services**.
- Establishment of the necessary measures to **ensure the provision of essential services**.

RESEARCH

- Validation of **PCR kits** made by four Spanish companies, to increase Spain's diagnostic capacity. Approval of the **Urgent Plan for science and innovation**.
- Financing of **numerous R&D&i projects** through the Covid-19 Fund, modification of the Cervera Programme Fund aimed at R&D&i projects, and inclusion of the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) among the bodies that can streamline assistance to the business sector.
- Participation of Spain in the research projects of the US pharmaceutical company **Moderna** and of the **University of Oxford's** Jenner Institute.
- **Monitoring of Covid-19 projects**, including the Carlos III Health Institute's scientific projects and CDTI innovation projects.
- **Extension of the temporary contracts of research staff** during the state of emergency.

2. ECONOMIC IMPACT REDUCTION

- Approval of a line of **ICO** (Official Credit Institute) **guarantees** for financing granted to companies and the self-employed.
- Approval of a **line of financing** to assist companies and the self-employed in the **tourism sector and related activities** affected by Covid-19 (e.g. expansion of the Thomas Cook line).
- Launch of an **extraordinary line of insurance coverage for export companies** through the Spanish Export Credit Agency (ECA).
- Launch of a Covid-19 **line of guarantees** by the Spanish reinsurance company CERSA.
- Approval of **financial measures for agricultural holdings**.
- **Deferral of the repayment of loans, and flexibilization of assistance** by the Secretariat-General for Industry and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.
- **Flexibilization of payments of loan programmes** of the General State Administration, the Autonomous Communities, and local entities.

- Reimbursement of assistance for cancellation of activities to promote international trade and other international events.
- Approval of measures to make payment flexible and provide exemptions, reductions, and rebates with regard to taxes and Social Security contributions, to prevent liquidity problems.
- Reduction in contributions for certain agricultural workers during periods of inactivity in 2020.
- Reorientation of Spain's industry towards manufacturing medical devices and establishment of a 0% VAT rate for national manufacturers of medical supplies aimed at public entities, non-profit-making entities, and hospitals.
- Authorization to defer rent payment on commercial premises for the self-employed and SMEs.
- Flexibilization of electricity and natural gas supply contracts for the self-employed and for companies.
- Recognition of self-employed persons' entitlement to a discount rate [known as the *bono social*].
- Launch of the Plan to Promote the Tourism Industry.
- Approval of a plan to promote the automotive industry value chain.
- Approval of measures to promote the digitalization of SMEs.
- Streamlining of customs formalities.
- Extension and suspension of tax-related, administrative and procedural deadlines.
- Regulation of the suspension of public contracts for services and supplies whose execution has been affected by Covid-19.
- Approval of specific measures for the cultural sector, the financial sector, and the energy sector.
- Approval of assistance for the mandatory coverage of nationwide digital terrestrial television services.
- Flexibilization of use of the fund for promoting and training cooperatives.
- Suspension of the liberalization scheme for foreign direct investments made in certain strategic sectors in Spain.
- Authorization granted to the Insurance Compensation Consortium to act as a reinsurer of credit insurance risks.

- Approval of **measures in the realm of bankruptcy and corporate law**.
- Approval of the **Covid-19 De-escalation Plan for the Justice Administration**.
- Adoption of **organizational and procedural measures to enable the reactivation of the justice system after the lifting of the suspension of procedural deadlines** set forth in additional provision two of Royal Decree 463/2020 of 14 March.
- Regulation of a new **special abbreviated procedure** to resolve **family law** cases deriving directly from the health crisis.
- Provision that persons participating in **judicial proceedings** must preferably do so **online**, and **access by the public** to all hearings has been **limited**. Provision of a **hotline and an email address for service to the public**, thus limiting in-person service.
- Provision that those **procedural periods suspended due to the declaration of the state of emergency restart from zero**. Extension of periods for filing appeals, by a period equal to that stipulated by law, and abolishing of the suspension of procedural periods on 4 June 2020, lifting the suspension on that date.
- **Creation of 33 new judicial units** to streamline and reactivate the ordinary judicial activity which was disrupted by the pandemic.
- Approval of an **Urgent Plan to address post-Covid-19 litigation**.

3. THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET, MEASURES TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND, AND CITIZEN SUPPORT MEASURES

- Approval of the **Minimum Income Scheme**.
- Adoption of measures to foster the use of **short-time work schemes (ERTEs)** instead of other external flexibilization measures and to **increase the protection of those affected**. Moreover, dismissals for reasons relating to Covid-19 are not justified.
- Implementation of **recoverable paid leave** from 30 March to 9 April for workers in non-essential sectors.
- Launch of the **Mecuida Plan** to facilitate work-life balance.
- Approval of a **special unemployment allowance** for individuals whose entitlement to a benefit expired between 14 March and 30 June 2020, and who do not have access to other assistance or possibilities of entering the job market.

- Approval of measures to **extend the coverage of benefits for cessation of activity to the self-employed**.
- Recognition of **periods of confinement or infection** resulting from Covid-19 as **situations assimilated to that of an industrial accident** for the purposes of the Social Security system's financial benefits for temporary incapacity.
- Definition of **situations that justify absence from work**, establishing alternative entitlements such as adapted working hours, leading to fewer adverse effects for workers and companies than absence from work for a whole day.
- **Regulation and encouragement of telework**, both in the General State Administration and in the private sector.
- Flexibilization of processes to **extend entitlement to unemployment allowances** in cases of six-month extensions, and to file tax returns for those receiving the allowance for persons over 52.
- Establishment of **unemployment benefits for people working under part-time contracts and permanent seasonal contracts**, recovering benefits received during the period of inactivity resulting from Covid-19.
- **Automatic extension of unemployment benefits and allowances**, without the need to go to a public office in person.
- Creation of an **extraordinary temporary allowance** for **domestic workers** and an allowance for exceptional circumstances applicable to **temporary workers**.
- Production of **information materials** about best practices and occupational health and safety, as well as about legislation approved.
- Provision of the possibility to draw from **pension plans** in the event of unemployment or cessation of activity resulting from Covid-19.
- Adoption of specific assistance for **workers in the cultural sector**.
- Adoption of measures regarding **agricultural employment** to foster the temporary hiring of workers.
- **Hiring of more than 1,500 persons in essential areas of the General State Administration**, to address work overload, mainly in the areas of employment and health.
- Enabling banks to offer **financing to vulnerable individuals** to help them pay their rent.
- Establishment of a **moratorium on the payment of mortgage fees** for vulnerable individuals, and **suspension of eviction procedures**. In this regard, the suspension of evictions of vulnerable debtors has been extended by 4 additional years.
- **Extension of the deadline for vulnerable tenants to apply for and formalize loans for rent payment** as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and **extension of the period for granting rent support due to vulnerability** caused by Covid-19.

- **Extended coverage for vulnerable groups as regards the supply of essential public services**—in particular, water, natural gas, and electricity—and a freeze on the price of liquefied petroleum gas.
- **Ban**, during the state of emergency, on **cutting off domestic consumers' supply in their habitual residence** for reasons other than the safety of the supply, of persons, or of installations.
- Approval of the **Early Response Plan**, in a scenario of Covid-19 pandemic control, for **non-residential social services and residential social centres**.
- Declaration as **essential services of assistance and comprehensive protection for victims of gender violence**.
- Establishment of measures to guarantee the proper functioning of protection services for victims of gender violence: **round-the-clock legal advisory services, shelter services for victims of gender violence, monitoring systems for precautionary measures and sentences**.
- Extension of the **Contingency Plan against gender violence** given the Covid-19 crisis, with additional measures for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, and women in situations of prostitution.
- Guaranteed **continuous implementation and provision** of assistance and protection services for victims of gender violence **during the 5-year period of the State Pact**.
- **Ban**, during the state of emergency, on **increasing prices for services**, and approval of the **interruption of periods for returning products**.
- **Extension of consumers' and users' right to terminate** certain **sales contracts or service contracts without penalties**, extending it to contracts that may be impossible to perform after the state of emergency is over.
- **Establishment of voluntary acceptance of vouchers by travellers**, as an alternative to reimbursement for cancelled package holidays and transport services (e.g. honeymoons), and an automatic 14-day period for reimbursement of the value of vouchers at the end of their validity, if they were not redeemed.
- **Suspension of telephone and internet portability**, fostering a procedure for operators to collect defaults.
- Approval of **measures to restrict the advertising and promoting of online gambling**.
- **Suspension of limitation and prescription periods** for actions and rights during the state of emergency.
- Procurement of air transport services for the **repatriation of Spaniards**, and implementation of a non-profit peer-to-peer accommodation system for Spaniards abroad (ALOJA).

- Drafting of a **Spanish Cooperation Joint Response Strategy** for Covid-19.
- Continuous provision of consular assistance for Covid-19, implementing consular support measures.

4. MEASURES TO RESTORE ACADEMIC ACTIVITY

- **Modification of the school calendar** to achieve a flexible organization of the academic year.
- Drafting, in agreement with the Autonomous Communities, of a **Declaration on coordinated public health actions** for schools as regards Covid-19.
- Significant investment in digitalization and in restoring and strengthening the functioning of schools.
- Drafting of **Guidelines for cases of Covid-19 in schools**.
- Approval of Covid-19-related **prevention, hygiene, and health promotion measures** for schools in the 2020-2021 academic year.
- Approval of **recommendations by the Ministry of Universities** for the university community, to adapt universities' 2020-2021 academic year to adapted face-to-face teaching, and guidelines for universities in the event of suspected or positive cases of Covid-19.
- Approval of a **Modernization Plan for Vocational Training**.
- Establishment of the **extension of contracts for teaching assistants, assistant professors with PhDs, associate professors, and visiting professors** formalized pursuant to the Organic Law on Universities, for a length of time equivalent to the duration of the state of alarm and, as the case may be, its extensions.
- Provision of facilities for students' payment of **University Income Loans** (*Préstamos Renta-Universidad*).

5. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES

- Creation and distribution of a 16-billion-euro **Covid Fund** for the Autonomous Communities.
- Enlargement of the **Contingency Fund** to meet expenses incurred due to healthcare needs.
- Provision of the possibility for Autonomous Communities to allocate **ERDF 2014-2020** funds to health expenditure.
- Creation of the **Social Reconstruction Fund**.

- Provision of assistance to guarantee the basic right to food for vulnerable children affected by the closure of schools, through Spain's **Children's Food Fund**.
- Suspension of **fiscal rules** in 2020 and 2021.

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