



Von der Leyen outlines a path to European recovery

Brussels, 16 April 2020



"The coronavirus crisis will likely redefine our politics, our geopolitics and possibly globalisation itself. And in this new world Europe will need to stick together through thick and thin", President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen [said at the European Parliament session](#) that on 16 April discussed **EU's coordinated response to the coronavirus** and its consequences.

Von der Leyen honoured those **who lost their lives**, promising that 'we would tell their stories'. "We will remember Julie, the French teenager with her whole life ahead of her, Jan, the veteran Czech historian who always fought for what he believed in, and Gino, the Italian doctor who came out of retirement to save lives."

Von der Leyen also used the opportunity to pay tribute to all those fighting the battle against the virus across Europe which had become 'the world's **beating heart of solidarity**'. "We have seen medical supplies go from Lithuania to Spain and respirators go from Denmark to Italy. In fact, we have seen every piece of equipment go in every direction across Europe, from whoever can spare it to whoever that needs it", she said.

She reminded of the [Commission's actions since the outbreak](#): from creating common stockpile of medical equipment, to organising joint procurements, to pledging every euro left to save lives and livelihoods of Europeans.

"We proposed to direct all our remaining budget for the year into an **emergency instrument**. This will allow almost 3 billion euro to go directly to where it needs to go – from securing new ventilators and protective gear, to scaling up testing efforts and providing medical assistance to the most

vulnerable, including those in refugee camps”, she explained in more detail. This means ‘Europe is putting everything it has into doing everything it can’, she told the Members of the Parliament as they were about to vote on these measures.

Speaking of the **economic shutdown**, von der Leyen stressed that we needed unprecedented measures to make sure our economy is ‘ready to bounce forward as soon as it can’. The steps already taken – from relaxing the state aid rules to introducing 100 billion euro-worth SURE initiative – make Europe’s collective response well above 3 trillion euros. “This is the most impressive response anywhere in the world”, she noted.

Focusing on the way forward, von der Leyen highlighted in particular the **potential of the EU budget**, calling it ‘the mothership of our recovery’. “We will use the power of the whole European budget to leverage the huge amount of investment we need to rebuild the Single Market after Corona”, she said, adding that the EU would frontload it so it can power the investment in the crucial first years of recovery. This was equally stressed at the [presentation of the European roadmap towards lifting the containment measures](#), which the President gave together with the President of the European Council Charles Michel the previous day.

Describing a ‘new reality’ for Europe, von der Leyen underlined that our recovery should be driven towards a **more resilient, green and digital Europe**. She spoke of solutions that are not only good for the economy, but also for the environment. “A more modern and circular economy will make us less dependent and boost our resilience. This is the lesson we need to learn from this crisis”, she added.

In her strong call to ‘stand up for Europe’, von der Leyen reminded of **solidarity, humanity and ingenuity** one can see in Europe today. “This Union of ours will get us through. And it will be as strong tomorrow as we make it today”, she said.

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