



COVID-19: Commission creates first ever rescEU stockpile of medical equipment

Brussels, 19 March 2020

Today, the European Commission has decided to create a strategic **rescEU stockpile** of medical equipment such as ventilators and protective masks to help EU countries in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

President Ursula **von der Leyen** said: *"With the first ever common European reserve of emergency medical equipment we put EU solidarity into action. It will benefit all our Member States and all our citizens. Helping one another is the only way forward."*

Medical equipment part of the stockpile will include items such as:

- intensive care medical equipment such as ventilators,
- personal protective equipment such as reusable masks,
- vaccines and therapeutics,
- laboratory supplies.

Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez **Lenarčič** said: *"The EU is taking action to get more equipment to Member States. We are setting up a rescEU stockpile to rapidly get the supplies needed to fight the coronavirus. It will be used to support Member States facing shortages of equipment needed to treat infected patients, protect health care workers and help slow the spread of the virus. Our plan is to move ahead without delay."*

How the rescEU stockpile works

- The stockpile will be hosted by one or several Member States. The hosting State will be responsible for procuring the equipment.
- The Commission will finance 90% of the stockpile. The [Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) will manage the distribution of the equipment to ensure it goes where it is needed most.
- The initial EU budget of the stockpile is €50 million, of which €40 million is subject to the approval of the budgetary authorities.

In addition, under the [Joint Procurement Agreement](#), Member States are in the process of purchasing personal protective equipment, respiratory ventilators and items necessary for coronavirus testing. This coordinated approach gives Member States a strong position when negotiating with the industry on availability and price of medical products.

Next steps

Once the measure enters into law on Friday 20 March, the Member State wishing to host rescEU stockpiles can apply for a direct grant from the European Commission. The direct grant covers 90 % of the costs of the stockpile while the remaining 10 % are borne by the Member State.

Background

rescEU is part of the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) which strengthens cooperation between Participating States in the field of civil protection, with a view to improving prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. The proposal upgrades the EU Civil Protection Mechanism's rescEU reserve of assets that already includes firefighting planes and helicopters. Through the Mechanism, the European Commission plays a key role in coordinating the response to disasters in Europe and beyond.

When the scale of an emergency overwhelms the response capabilities of a country, it can request assistance via the Mechanism.

To date, all EU Member States participate in the Mechanism, as well as Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey. Since its inception in 2001, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has responded to over 330 requests for assistance inside and outside the EU.

For more information

Factsheet: [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

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