



Newsletter

April 2020

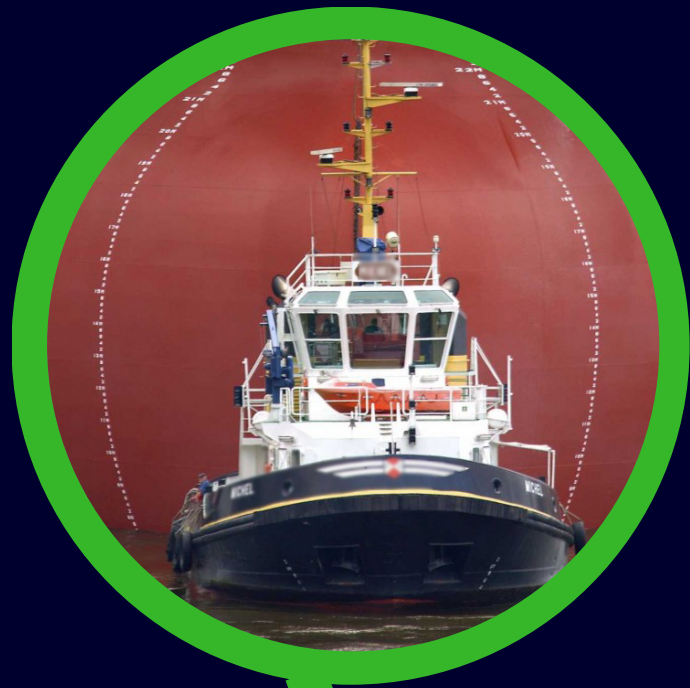
The EU takes unprecedented measures to address the impact of COVID-19 on SMEs and workers

The EU Commission has proposed the creation of the SURE instrument, a temporary loan-based programme that will offer financial assistance to Member States struggling to fund their national short-time work unemployment schemes and other protection measures.

This unprecedented measure aims at supporting employers and protecting workers by granting Member States with the sufficient liquidity to fund their unemployment schemes and address sudden increases of public expenditure. The SURE instrument should complement efforts undertaken by Member States at national level, and work together with other relevant EU-instruments dealing with specific aspects of major threats to public health, like for instance the EUSF.

The instrument will have a capacity of up to €100 billion that would be granted in the form of loans with favourable terms to EU countries that request support. These €100 billion are backed by €25 billion of guarantees voluntarily committed by Member States to the EU budget. Before these loans are disbursed the EU Commission and the Member State concerned are required to verify the extent of the increase in public expenditure that is directly related to the creation or extension of short-time work schemes and agree on the terms of the loan (amount, the maximum average maturity, pricing..).

Moreover, the EU Commission and the EIB have unlocked €8 billion in finance for 100,000 small and medium-sized companies. These funds will incentivise banks lend SMEs money in spite of the sudden increase in perceived risk. The EIB has been offering dedicated backed guarantees to the financial markets since the beginning of April to guarantee their liquidity. These guarantees will help contain the impact of the pandemic on small and medium sized enterprises.



The EC publishes its Guidelines on Seafarers Health during the COVID-19 crisis

The EC has published its Guidelines on protection of health, repatriation and travel arrangements for seafarers to advice member states and companies on this challenge. The EU Guidelines should coordinate the efforts of Member States to enable crew changes in their ports, grant seafarers health and safety and facilitate the repatriation of non national crews.

In line with the Communication on the Green Lanes, crews should be allowed to cross borders to take up their duties on board cargo vessels and return home after their contracts end. Moreover, the guidelines contain other measures to be taken in EU ports to protect maritime transport personnel, port workers and seafarers while they embark and disembark.

You can find an infosheet summing up these measures [here](#)

The EC proposes a new package of measures to support the transport sector

The European Commission published a new package of measures that will help the transport sector solve the practical challenges the pandemic is causing. The national measures implemented to protect public health have posed extra problems for transport operators.

Thus, the proposal extends the validity of documents, licences or authorisations, like boatmasters' certificates, inland navigation certificates that would expire between 1 March 2020 and 31 August 2020 ensuring that they remain valid during a reasonable period of time

during and after the COVID-19 outbreak. Time limits for relevant formalities should be extended as well and the validity of licences, certificates and similar documents should be maintained accordingly.

Concerning the maritime transport sector, the EC has proposed as well to amend the Port Services Regulation to give member states and port authorities the flexibility to defer, reduce or lift port infrastructure charges for port users, from the 1st of March until the end of the 2020. This measure would therefore help ship operators in such exceptional circumstances.

ISU published its 2019 statistic review

Members of the International Salvage Union (ISU) saved up to 2,308,756 tonnes of potentially polluting cargo and fuel in 2019 according to the recently published ISU Annual Pollution Prevention Survey. This figure represents a decrease in 900.000 tons compared to 2018 numbers, due to the unusual large amount of crude oil rescued last year.

The International Salvage Union (ISU) is the sole representative organisation for the international marine salvage industry. The organization has a membership of 55 marine salvage companies from more than 30 countries.

ETA is an affiliated member and some of ETA companies are leading members within ISU.

You can find more data regarding the ISU Annual Pollution Prevention Survey [here](#)

