

EUROPE DIRECT WEEKLY

Monday morning news for the Europe Direct network

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Weekly message from DG COMM

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Dear European EDICs,
you are entering another week where the pandemic bites harder and harder, but don't give in! You are not fighting an impossible battle: **the first Eurobarometer (n. 93) after Covid-19**, released on Friday, says that in 15 Member States a majority of respondents trust the EU, and overall trust in the EU has remained stable since before Covid.

The EU is keeping up pace in delivering on its massive coronavirus response: you can spread the word. For example, let people know that the first emission of **bonds under the SURE scheme** was a huge success on the market, and this is a great sign because European trust-based bonds are the cornerstone on which NGEU will be based. But of course debate remains lively on all this, and you may have heard last week that some Member States are considering whether or not to resort to the loans under the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

This was also the week of the **Commission work programme for 2021**, don't miss a glance to it.

Finally, we know that many of you are operating in a **semi-lockdown mode** due to the virus; we are all with you, and please once more switch online should the physical part of your plan prove impossible to implement. Keep your spirits up, this crisis will not last forever!

The big picture

Roll up your sleeves. Last Monday, the Commission published its [work programme for 2021](#), which has two parallel goals: managing the current crisis and triggering a two-pronged recovery based on digitalization and green economy (remember, it is called the "*twin transition*"). Make room then for new projects, such as a European health data space, the new 2030 digital targets and a Circular Economy package! You can find more details, clustered around the six Political Guidelines of President Ursula von der Leyen, [here](#).

For SURE I want it! The first emission of [bonds to finance the SURE scheme](#), last Tuesday, was a huge success. Demand was over 13 times the €17 billion the EU raised from the issue – with a record-setting order book worth a [grand total of €233 billion](#). Some good news, finally.

Not a rosy outlook. The [second wave of coronavirus](#) is here. To help keeping track of the pandemic, the Commission introduced last week a new [interoperability gateway](#), which will link together contact tracing apps from different Member States and make cross-border contact tracing possible. The first countries to join the system are Germany, Ireland and Italy.

What's in it for you?



Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič presents
the EC work programme for 2021

1. A *work programme* may sound like a boring, bureaucratic document. This year, however, is special: the political priorities have been modulated to fight the pandemic. So, the list of goals saw some recent additions, such as the quest for a safe, accessible vaccine and the creation of a European Health Union. **It is important that you keep the attention high on all these fronts** – the Commission work programme is the place where things happen.
2. On Covid-19, Europe lends a hand. The launch of the new *interoperability gateway* offers the opportunity to stress once again with citizens how important it is to **download and activate contact-tracing apps** on their phones, a tool that can effectively complement other measures like increased testing and manual contact tracing.
3. As conspiracy theories drawing links between the coronavirus and **5G** networks abound, **some serious debunking is needed**. The Commission uploaded a comprehensive [FAQ webpage](#), with explanatory videos and informative materials. It's there for you to use, let's respond!

Life of our network

As the future of Europe looks set to be digital, a conference about this very topic couldn't lack its own **online platform**. The top candidate to host the **Conference on the Future of Europe** will probably be a participatory democracy tool for citizens, organisations and public institutions. Event organizers as well as citizens taking part in the COFE will be able to interact on the platform – to upload events on the programme and have an overview of what's on offer, to put forward their proposals and have a say on other participants' ideas. This is particularly relevant for **Hub EDICs**, as they may use the platform to organise their events and provide a structured service to stakeholders in their catchment area.

Back to School/University initiatives and tours at the **Visitors' Centre** have not disappeared – they just **moved online** (for the time being). Tell schools that they can book a virtual visit [here](#), and promote them through your outreach channels.



What will the Conference on the Future of Europe look like? Your inputs will be part of the answer.

Looking ahead

25-27.10

[World Health Summit, Berlin](#)

29.10

[European Migration Network annual conference, online](#)

29.10

[Informal videoconference of the members of the European Council on Covid-19, online](#)



Q&A



After our first issue, some of you have been asking if it would be possible to use the newsletter to **share some examples of good practices and successful projects** among the EDIC network. The proposal sounds great, and very useful for you to get inspiration from colleagues all across Europe. So, from now on we invite you to send your stories (with related audio-visual material) to your Network Correspondents, which will collect them and forward them in our direction. We will be sharing them with you from time to time as an add-on to this newsletter.