

Meeting our commitments

*Accountability report
of the Government of Spain*

July 2021

Appendix II

Summary of COVID-19
initiatives



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**Meeting
our commitments** – *Appendix II. Summary of Covid-19 initiatives*

1. Measures supporting the health response

General

- Maintenance of the state of emergency until 00:00 hours on 9 May.
- Amendment of the law so that the Supreme Court can examine and establish case-law on healthcare legislation that enables the authorities to set limitations or restrictions on fundamental rights despite the state of emergency having been lifted.
- Holding of 29 meetings by the National Health System's Interterritorial Council during the first half of 2021.
- Inclusion in component 18 of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan of the creation of the State Public Health Centre within the framework of the reform of the public health system.

Vaccination

- Approval of seven updates to the Vaccination Strategy in the framework of the National Health System's Interterritorial Council.
- Distribution of 47 million vaccine doses to Spain's Autonomous Communities during the first six months of the year, thereby enabling them to administer 44 million doses. At 30 June 2021, 53.4% of the Spanish population has received at least one dose of the vaccine: 17.5 million citizens have been fully vaccinated and 7.8 million have received one dose.
- Undertaking of a clinical trial to assess the option of administering a dose of the Pfizer vaccine to people who have already been vaccinated with one dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine.
- Signing of a protocol to make it easier for the private health insurance companies that collaborate with the Social Security system to provide their human and material resources to help with the vaccination process.

Material, health and human resources

- Legislative amendment enabling retired health professionals to voluntarily enter the health services of the Autonomous Communities and of the Autonomous Cities, making their appointment as health professionals compatible with continuing to receive their retirement pension.
- Retroactive recognition of contagion with Covid-19 as an occupational disease for health workers rendering services at health centres, and health and social care centres, who have contracted the virus.



- Extension until 31 December 2021 of a zero VAT rate on intra-Community deliveries, purchases and importations of health protection materials (face masks, disinfectant gel and other personal protection products) by public administrations, public or private health centres, and social entities to manage the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Distribution of over 13 million surgical face masks to social entities and to the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), aimed at the most vulnerable population groups.
- Organization of corridors to enable convoys of trucks to complete their itineraries and deliver their goods in order to guarantee the supply of items necessary for health reasons—especially of vaccines against Covid-19 and of food—and to ensure that personnel assigned to critical infrastructure and essential services were present in their places of work.
- Development of digital health services, promoting the inter-operability of health data in the European and national spheres. In particular, the VALTERMED information system of the Spanish national health system has evolved and scorecards have been made available for the monitoring of the Comprehensive Vaccination Management Plan.

Mobility

- Approval of the digital Covid certificate agreed jointly by the European Commission, the Council and the European Parliament. The certificate entered into force on 7 June in Spain and on 1 July in the EU. By the end of June, 3.2 million certificates had been issued.
- Establishment of health screening measures for international passengers to prevent the introduction of infection vectors for SARS-CoV-2 and its variants, with the aim of ensuring that, while maintaining the levels of security in the checks carried out on people arriving in Spain, especially those coming from risk countries, these checks are carried out as efficiently as possible.
- Establishment of exceptional measures to limit the spread of and contagion with Covid-19, with the limitation of direct flights and passenger ships between the United Kingdom and Spanish airports and ports; and of flights between the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa and Spanish airports.
- Establishment of quarantine conditions for people travelling from the Republic of India upon their arrival in Spain.
- Development of the Spain Travel Health-SpTH information system that will permit the verification of the digital certificates that may be activated in the framework of the European Union.

Protection and information

- Government approval of a certain degree of flexibility with regard to the use of face masks in outdoor spaces.
- Promotion by the National Health System's Interterritorial Council of coordinated response actions for controlling the pandemic.
- Establishment of the information and commercialization requirements regarding hygienic face masks.
- Launch of a mobile app improving the Face Mask Purchasing Guide and adding new functionalities, such as that of monitoring the product's usage.
- Description, in an agreement, of activities that are incompatible with the use of face masks.
- Updating, in March 2021, of the general Covid-19 hygiene and prevention recommendations for universities.
- Approval, in the framework of the National Health System's Interterritorial Council together with the Sectoral Conference on Education, of the protocol of health and hygiene measures for a safe school year and for 100% face-to-face learning in 2021-2022, which can be adapted as the pandemic evolves.
- Updating of prevention, hygiene and health promotion measures against Covid-19 at universities, with a view, also, to preparing preventive measures against Covid-19 for the 2021 university entrance exams.
- Organization of three seminars in a local web environment in collaboration with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces and the Spanish Network of Healthy Cities on: Covid-19 vaccination, pandemic fatigue, and community action on health.
- Publication of the Community Action on Health guide, in which different social and municipal agents and agents from the sphere of health have participated.

Research unrelated to vaccination

- Continuation of work by the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) on three prototypes of Covid-19 vaccines.
- Contribution of funds by the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) to a project related to the development of a vaccine against Covid-19.
- Approval of the Protocol for Integrating Genome Sequencing into SARS-CoV-2 surveillance.

- Participation by Spain, through the Carlos III Health Institute (ISCIII), in a European project for research into variants of SARS-CoV-2 and vaccine development.
- Increase in the budget for ISCIII's Strategic Action on Health and strengthening of the National Centre of Epidemiology and the National Centre of Microbiology.
- Financing by CDTI of 24 corporate R&D&i projects dedicated to combating the pandemic.
- Promotion of data analytics, which has enabled the preparation of predictive models for monitoring the positive test rate for the SARS-COV-2 virus in Spain and of scorecards for monitoring the Comprehensive Vaccination Management Plan.
- Decision by CSIC to provide the World Health Organization with a non-exclusive licence permitting it to use a highly reliable antibody test developed by the Spanish National Centre for Biotechnology (CNB).
- Initiation by ISCIII of the procedure for installing a Biosafety Level-4 laboratory, and creation of the National Centre for Advanced Therapies and of the Spanish Biobank Network.

Other measures

- Decision by the Interterritorial Council to create a Digital Health Committee that will contribute to co-governance with the Autonomous Communities and the inter-operability of all projects in this sphere.
- Approval of a plan for universal access to “vaccine solidarity” to contribute to the vaccination of the global population.
- Efforts are being made to obtain data on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Spain's national defence industrial base, to identify and evaluate the consequences of the health crisis for the sector and how it might affect its industrial capacities—paying particular attention to the areas of knowledge of strategic interest for defence—and, where applicable, to propose measures to counter any undesirable effects.
- Commitment by Spain to contribute a total of 22.5 million doses to Team Europe in 2021, which shall be available for distribution via the COVAX mechanism, and promotion of the “Vaccines For All” initiative, which has the following three pillars: transfer of knowledge and technology; increased production of vaccines at the global level; and faster distribution.
- Announcement at the 27th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Andorra, that Spain will allocate 7.5 million doses of

Covid-19 vaccines to Latin America and the Caribbean through the multilateral COVAX mechanism and in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization. This will amount to a donation of between 5% and 10% of the total vaccines received in 2021.

2. Employment and social measures

- Conclusion of two labour agreements protecting employment reached between the Government and social agents: Agreement IV, in January, and Agreement V. Thanks to these agreements, the furlough schemes (ERTEs) have been extended until 30 September as a mechanism for protecting jobs and avoiding other, external measures for providing greater flexibility. These Agreements entail a commitment to maintaining jobs and while availing of the aforementioned furlough schemes companies may not distribute dividends, nor dismiss workers on the grounds of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Amendment of the minimum income scheme, extending its coverage to a greater number of people and to include situations not initially envisaged.
- Extension of the *MECUIDA* plan, which sets forth measures for work-life balance, until 31 May 2021.
- Extension of the interruption of the calculation of the duration of suspended temporary contracts.
- Permission extended to furloughed taxpayers to settle any personal income tax payable in instalments.
- Regulation of remote working in the Justice Administration followed by the formalization of an agreement with the trade unions of the sector: STAJ and CCOO.
- Formalization with the trade unions of the general principles for greater adoption of remote working in the General State Administration. Remote working shall be voluntary and reversible, and any personnel who opt to work remotely shall have the same rights and duties as personnel working on site.
- Adoption of measures aimed at streamlining the processing of citizens' Social Security applications and at preventing delays in the recognition of benefits to which they may be entitled.
- Extension of the period in which unemployment protection measures are applied.
- Extension of the moratoria period granted to families on mortgage and non-mortgage debt, improving the sufficiency of their resources.

- Extension of the periods during which people living in rental property as their main residence can have access to loans guaranteed and subsidized by the State.
- Extension, on two occasions, of the suspension of proceedings to evict tenants in vulnerable situations, of the extraordinary extension of lease contract periods and of the option to apply for a moratorium or partial pardoning of rental payments, when the lessor is a public company or public housing entity or is an owner of 10 or more properties.
- Approval of a regulation establishing the procedure for the use of the resources of the 2018-2021 State Housing Plan to award compensation to housing property owners in certain circumstances involving the suspension of evictions of tenants in vulnerable situations with no alternative accommodation options during the pandemic.
- Extension of the guarantee of supply of water, electricity and natural gas to vulnerable consumers, which was conditional upon the state of emergency remaining in force. The time period corresponding to the right to a subsidized rate (*bono social*) has also been extended.
- Maintenance of the consideration as essential services—after the state of emergency has been lifted—of public information services, advisory services, tele-assistance, comprehensive social assistance, shelter for victims of all forms of violence against women, including victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and the online monitoring system relating to gender violence.
- Extension of the period during which entertainers, technical and auxiliary personnel of the cultural sector and bull-fighting professionals are entitled to unemployment benefit.
- Renewal of associate professors' contracts, exempting them—on an exceptional basis—from the requirement to provide accreditation of having carried out a non-university-related activity during the 2021-2022 academic year.

Specific measures aimed at self-employed workers

- Extension of the extraordinary benefit for cessation of activity for self-employed workers.
- Introduction of measures making it easier for self-employed workers who pay tax following the objective assessment method to receive the benefit for cessation of activity, on considering, in principle, that their revenues will have fallen, eliminating the requirement to provide evidence of said fall in revenues.

- Exoneration of self-employed workers from the obligation to pay Social Security contributions from the first day of the month in which they applied for the extraordinary benefit for cessation of activity.

3. Economic reactivation measures

General measures

- Extension of the moratorium on the automatic triggering of insolvency proceedings, in order to give those companies experiencing the greatest difficulties as a result of the pandemic additional time in which to restore their equity balance, thus preventing avoidable insolvency proceedings.
- Approval of the 2021-2022 Action Plan for the internationalization of the Spanish economy.
- Regulation of the option, for those limited liability companies that have not been able to amend their statutes, to continue to hold general shareholders' meetings online during 2021, provided that the identity of any shareholders exercising their right to vote is guaranteed and that shareholders are offered the option of participating in the meeting via different channels.

Direct aid, financial aid and guarantees

- Creation of a new line of direct aid furnished with 7 billion euros for self-employed workers and companies whose activity has been negatively affected by the pandemic and whose income has fallen by more than 30% with respect to 2019. This aid will be used to settle debts and to make payments to suppliers and other creditors.
- Activation of a line of financing of 3 billion euros to enable the conversion into transfers of a certain volume of State-guaranteed loans for those companies and self-employed workers hit hardest by the crisis.
- Creation of a new, 1-billion-euro recapitalization fund to support companies that are viable but that are facing solvency problems due to the Covid-19 pandemic and that are not eligible to receive funding from the Spanish state-owned industrial holding company *Sociedad Estatal de Participaciones Industriales*.
- Extension to four months of the interest-free deferral of tax debts and extension of the repayment periods for public loans managed by the Secretariat-General for Industry and SMEs.
- Adoption of exceptional measures during 2021 and 2022 as regards the settlement of debt obligations with the State (excluding tax or customs duties),



- allowing debtors to defer loan repayments or to pay in instalments, and waiving the requirement for a guarantee.
- Extension of the application period and adaptation of the conditions regarding guarantees regulated in earlier legislation, and implementation of the scheme for collecting the guarantees executed.
 - Decisions authorizing the Management Board of the Fund for Supporting the Solvency of Strategic Companies.
 - Decision approving the Code of Good Practices for the renegotiation framework for clients with guaranteed financing provided for in prevailing legislation.

Sectoral measures

- Reactivation of all control and coordination measures with the Autonomous Communities, to minimize the health risks deriving from Covid-19 during the coming agricultural seasons.
- Approval of an Urgent Plan for the national aeronautical sector and publication of the first call for grant applications of the Technological Aeronautical Programme, with 35 million euros in grants.
- Improvement of the conditions of the financing awarded to the cultural sector by the Mutual Guarantee Society for the Audiovisual Sector.
- Extension of the periods for implementing projects financed by the Secretariat-General for Industry and SMEs, and for the loans awarded by Emprendetur to companies in the tourism sector, with the aim of strengthening companies' solvency.
- Approval of domestic legislation reflecting the flexibility introduced by the CAP transitional regulation in respect of vine planting authorizations, with the aim of helping winegrowers to overcome the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Adoption of vineyard restructuring and reconversion measures, investments in wineries and promotion in third countries, incorporating the new, more flexible scenario established in EU law.
- Extension of measures to restore the levels of activity recorded by the courts at the time of declaring the state of emergency.
- Implementation of a mechanism to offset the decline in income suffered in 2020 by urban public transport service operators as a result of the pandemic and of the measures adopted to contain the spread of the virus.

- Lifting of the ban prohibiting international cruise ships from docking at Spanish ports, with effect as of 7 June. In parallel, healthcare measures have been adopted to guarantee the safety of cruise ship activity.
- Roll-out of the "Travel safe" campaign.
- Launch of the "Te Mereces España" promotion campaign.

4. Financial support and measures aimed at Spain's Autonomous Communities

- Decision regarding the distribution of the Autonomous Communities Financing Fund for the second quarter of the year, amounting to 3.9 billion euros. The purpose of this financing is to help Spain's Autonomous Communities address the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, strengthening their liquidity and public services.
- Approval of the procedure and conditions for the different territories to avail of the REACT-EU Liquidity Fund compartment, which will facilitate the use of the EU funds envisaged in the REACT-EU programme. The purpose of the 10-billion-euro fund is to help the territories to strengthen the Welfare State, safeguard public services, and reboot the economy following the impact of the pandemic caused by Covid-19.
- Development of different procedures to provide assistance from the 7-billion-euro Covid Line. Specifically, the Ministry of Finance has published a Ministerial Order to distribute the funds between the Autonomous Communities and the Autonomous Cities of Ceuta and Melilla, and collaboration agreements have been sent.
- Extension of permission to the Autonomous Communities to award Covid Line subsidies to companies and professionals in sectors not initially considered to have been among those worst affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, provided that they have been affected in the territory of said Autonomous Community. In addition, assistance may be awarded to viable companies that incurred losses in 2019 or that have corporate income tax losses, as a result of exceptional circumstances.



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