

Recovery and Resilience Facility

As mentioned some time ago, your country will receive funding in the form of grants and loans that can be combined with national funding and other EU funding to boost the recovery. **The obtention of such funding is conditional upon the presentation of a national recovery and resilience plan** to the European Commission, **proposing a set of reforms and public investment** to boost the economy and recover from the crisis. These reforms and public investment projects need to be implemented by the end of 2026 and comply with the green and digital transition. **Member States must submit their national plans by the 30th of April.**

The European Commission **has highlighted the important role of civil society in the design and implementation of the national recovery plans.** Your **government will have to report to the European Commission on how they have interacted with civil society and other stakeholders in the preparation of the plans.** However, civil society organisations have denounced the **lack of participation of CSOs in consultations** and the **lack of transparency.** There is **no public access to the draft plans which does not allow for public scrutiny.** The plans will become available only after they will be submitted to the European Commission.

Timeline:

- Member States submit their plans by the 30th of April
- The European Commission assesses the national plans within 2 months
- The Council approves the national plans on a case-by-case basis within 1 month
- The EU pays 13% of the total support upfront to kick-start the recovery plans, within two months after the approval of the plans.
- Twice a year, Member States can ask further disbursement upon reaching agreed targets

What can you do?

- Check if your government has already submitted the national plan. If not, we strongly encourage you to **contact NOW your national authority** (your economy/finance minister or European Affairs Ministry) **to ensure that you are consulted.**
- If your government has already finalised its plan, please let us know whether you have been involved and if not who has been consulted.

As OBESSU, we would like to draw your attention to a few essential points that should be addressed with concrete measures in the national recovery and resilience plans.

The preliminary findings of OBESSU's research project on the impact of Covid-19 on secondary school students in Europe suggest a few areas of interest for **students and student unions who seek to enter discussion and negotiations with their national governments:**

Quality and accessibility of learning:

- An average of 2-3 students per class have completely or almost completely disengaged from learning during the pandemic, raising the alarm on the issue of Early School Leavers;
- An overwhelming majority of students report **higher workloads**, which can be particularly challenging for those already struggling to keep up prior to the pandemic and can lead to anxiety, burnout and disengagement. Regardless of student performance, subjects which were already challenging become even more difficult in the online classroom;
- While innovation in learning is essential to adapt to the crisis, project-based learning has mixed opinions, and the introduction of new teaching methods **should always incorporate feedback from students**;
- Teachers need more support, from a financial, logistical and training point of view;

Mental health:

- An overwhelming majority of students report a **perceived reduction of their attention span** due to the online learning setting and its implications.
- Many students also report a range of **negative feelings** such as anxiety (social, public speaking), loneliness and depression;

Assessments:

- In the context of the pandemic, continuous assessment methods are preferable to assess-all final examinations. The stress and **anxiety related to the outcomes of examinations is higher in countries where these are fundamental for university admission** and future work opportunities. Students also acknowledge that **many exam modalities are not fair**, and they want an opportunity to be measured on more than just notions.

Students in some countries think the government has not done/ is not doing enough to reopen schools, and denounce a systematic lack of communication between teachers and governments on the way forward (including assessments)

Government and society:

- There is a growing divide between students depending on their individual financial, familiar, and geographical circumstances. A first step to address it would be to provide free and fair internet access and digital tools to all.

- More autonomy is needed for schools at the local level to address the crisis in the way that is most realistic and effective for their territory and social reality;
- More involvement of students in decision-making is needed, at a national, regional, school AND class levels.

Additionally, they should also ensure that the plans mention explicitly that measures are also eligible to associations and NGOs, in addition to business and SMEs.

Further resources :

- [European Parliament briefing on the Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)
- [European Parliament involvement in scrutinising the Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)
- [LLL statement - Investing in Education and Training for the Recovery of Europe](#)
- [Participation of civil society organisations in the preparation of the EU National Recovery and Resilience Plans](#)
- [Commission Staff working document - Guidance to Member States Recovery and Resilience Plans \(Part1\)](#)
- [Commission Staff working document - Guidance to Member States Recovery and Resilience Plans \(Part2\)](#)
- [Country specific recommendations 2020](#)