

Beat: Politics

## EUROPEAN FUNDS: THE STATE AND THE REGIONS TOGETHER RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

### OVER THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

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**USPA NEWS** - Jacqueline Gourault, Minister for Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Local Authorities, Amelie de Montchalin, Secretary of State for European Affairs and Renaud Muselier, President of Regions of France, co-chaired the State-Regions Interfund Committee of the May 20, 2020. They agreed on the negotiation elements to be brought together with the European Commission to meet the next deadlines. On the mobilization of European funds made possible by the European Commission in the context of the crisis after the publication of the CRII regulations 1 and 2, Renaud Muselier and Jacqueline Gourault confirmed that more than 500 million euros are already mobilized by European funds for the purchase of health materials - masks, respirators, other medical equipment linked to the crisis - and for support to working capital of SMEs. Jacqueline Gourault clarified that "the State has done everything possible with the European Commission so that this type of support is eligible and simplified as quickly and as widely as possible given the scale of the crisis, whether through the existing financial tools that some of the Regions were able to mobilize quickly or the rebound loan that Bpifrance could

#### MOBILISATION OF EUROPEAN FUNDS | RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS-----

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It was particularly important to ensure that the loans granted could be small in order to also reach the world of crafts and commerce. "

#### PREPARE THE 2021-2027 PROGRAMMING FUNDS IN THE CONTEXT OF A HEALTH CRISIS-----

Amelie de Montchalin recalled the total mobilization of the President of the Republic to obtain an "ambitious European budget through the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 which must be an essential vector of territorial solidarity by benefiting all the Regions and an essential component of recovery plan to come "[2]. A first version of the partnership agreement, before the precise definition of the budgets, should make it possible to negotiate the eligibility of the main actions that the State and the Regions wish to see included in the 21-27 programs, in particular by anticipating the related needs in the context of the crisis. The ability to help all sectors of activity is one of the most immediate expectations, as is the fact of facilitating productive relocations whose strategic importance has been highlighted by the crisis. Priorities such as sustainable mobility, the completion of very high speed digital coverage, the development of training and health infrastructures and the revival of tourist activity will be the subject of points to be negotiated, beyond priorities already shared with the commission: research and development, innovation, ecological and energy transition, territorial development. To allow each region to work on its financial models, while taking into account the lack of a budgetary agreement to date at European level, the State has communicated the key for distributing the future France envelope between the programs, in order to stabilize the orders of magnitude of future regional envelopes. Likewise, a proposal to widen the just transition fund was discussed to allow for wider consideration of decarbonation issues in the industry, focusing on the main sources of emissions for the benefit of the surrounding populations.

These discussion points are part of the initial schedule for the preparation of the partnership agreement and European programs 21/27, sent to the European Commission last July, in order to start the new programming cycle from the start of 2021. These work will be carried out in parallel with the negotiation of the future generation of State-Regions plan contracts (CPER), which covers the same programming period. In this regard, President Muselier underlines "the importance for the Regions to respect this calendar so that European funds constitute, in the same way as the CPERs, pillars of a reconstruction plan for the country, articulated with the recovery plan European "[2]. It also calls for "the conclusion of an enlarged political agreement between the State and the Regions before summer on the main axes and the modalities of implementation of this plan. "

#### SIMPLIFY TO BETTER PROGRAM-----

A final major point of discussion concerned the simplification of European funds for project leaders, a topic of concern for all the actors in the chain. As European rules remain demanding, the State and the Regions are committed to bringing the issue of simplification in negotiations with Brussels and to doing everything in their power to facilitate access to funds in France to the extent that this allows their regulations. It is indeed essential that the implementation To allow each region to work on its financial models, while taking into account the lack of a budgetary agreement to date at European level, the State has communicated the key for distributing the future France envelope between the programs, in order to stabilize the orders of magnitude of future regional envelopes. Likewise, a proposal to widen the just transition fund was discussed to allow for wider consideration of decarbonation issues in the industry, focusing on the main sources of emissions for the benefit of the surrounding populations.

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UPA United Press Agency LTD  
483 Green Lanes  
UK, London N13NV 4BS  
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com  
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