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## **COVID-19 Coronavirus: Jahier (EESC), “the only effective response to a crisis that affects us all is to act together, quickly”**

“The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has today issued a clear message on the COVID-19 emergency in view of the extraordinary Council of the EU heads of state and government. In the face of a crisis of these proportions, we need exceptional policy coordination and coherence at European level”, EESC President Luca Jahier told SIR news agency. “No government can solve this emergency alone, by closing its borders and undermining the European Union. All EU Member States should agree on a consistent and coordinated action. The only effective response to a crisis that affects us all is to act together, quickly. Europe’s integrity depends on it”. “All governments - Jahier argued - should be able to deploy necessary measures, irrespective of their current debt level; and at the same time, we need to adopt a comprehensive emergency package through which the EU would take responsibility for a meaningful share of the overall emergency effort”. The goal of such measures should be to “save as many lives as possible, and to protect citizens and residents, as well as workers and businesses”. The Commission “has done and is doing its part. Member States should do theirs by changing their modus operandi. It is crucially important to ensure an equal distribution of medical equipment in all affected Member States. We should prevent an overburdening of our national healthcare systems, while also buying time for the development of a vaccine and potential treatments”. The EESC President explained: “A Golden rule is necessary to exempt all expenses needed now from the fiscal rules on an EU level to overcome the present situation and to bring the European economy as fast as possible back on the right track”.

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