

SET Q&As

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NL en solidariteit

Q: Why has the Netherlands shown limited solidarity?

A:

- It is my view that we have shown a great deal of solidarity and we are strongly committed to continue to do so.
- I have fully supported the various initiatives and proposals to ensure that European citizens can receive the medical care they need during this COVID-19 crisis.
- I have supported the full use of existing flexibility within the state aid and fiscal framework.
- I have given full support to the large package agreed on by the Eurogroup (ESM, EIB, SURE).
- I am very open to discuss a recovery strategy and recovery fund to increase the resilience of our economies and make them ready to face the challenges of the 21st century.
- We have been supportive to all these proposals and measures that allow member states to protect jobs and prevent viable companies from running into liquidity problems.

ESM

Q: What is the position of the NL regarding Pandemic Crisis Support (ECCL)?

A:

- It is important that this specific ECCL is able to support member states in financing their direct and indirect healthcare, cure and prevention related costs due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- Since this is a specialized instrument, it should only be available for the duration of the crisis.
- It is important that the procedures as put forward in the ESM treaty, are followed.
- For example, specific underlying assessments are needed for the BoG resolution, e.g. regarding risk financial stability and debt sustainability.

ESM

Q: Isn't it unethical to ask for macro-economic conditions during the COVID-19 crisis?

A:

- The Pandemic Crisis Support ECCL is without macro-economic conditions, to underscore the exceptional circumstances.
- ECCL is directed to healthcare and available during the COVID-19 crisis.
- If after or during the crisis Member States want support from the ESM, other instruments stand ready to used, as agreed upon in the ESM treaty.

ESM

Q: Aren't you blocking the Eurogroup agreement, by demanding a DSA etc?

A:

- A DSA is one of requirements of the ESM Treaty on the basis of which a BoG resolution can be made.
- There is no discussion that this is a necessary requirement and assessments are being prepared.
- The Netherlands is not demanding extra's additional to what has been agreed.

EIB

Q: What is the position of the NL regarding measures by the EIB?

A:

- Positive about the support program set up by the Commission and the EIB to support SMEs in Europe by mobilizing investments between 28 and 40 billion euros.
- Since this is done by using existing instruments and budget this means it can be fast deployed, which is needed in this crisis. Also, the EIB's expertise can be used.
- NL supports these measures as a welcome addition to national measures.
- At this moment, the EIB is also setting up a Pan-European Guarantee Fund in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

EIB

Q: What is the position of the NL regarding measures by the EIB?

A:

- In addition to the support program by the Commission and EIB, the EIB is also setting up a Pan-European Guarantee Fund in response to the COVID-19 crisis.
- The purpose of the 25 billion Fund is to support financing for companies with a focus on SMEs.
- As many of companies are severely hit by the crisis, we support such an initiative.
- As I said, the Fund is currently being set up after it was welcomed by the Eurogroup at the 9th of April.

SURE

Q: What is the position of the NL regarding SURE?

A:

- Glad that we have been able to reach an agreement
- First, we will provide this instrument due to the exceptional circumstances. Therefore, a clear sunset clause not too far in the future is justified to underline its temporary nature.
- Second, to make the instrument as effective as possible we as agreed that the instrument can also finance health measures.
- Third, we agreed in the Eurogroup report to build on the EU budget as much as possible. This includes the headroom under the Own Resources Ceiling. But we stand ready to deliver some additional guarantees.

SURE

Q: Do you think there should be a permanent European Unemployment Reinsurance Fund?

A:

- The Eurogroup has indicated that the position on SURE does not pre-judge the position of member states on future proposals related to unemployment insurance
- I can only comment a future proposal once there is one.
- In general we think social security schemes are a national prerogative.
- While we support SURE we have insisted on its temporary and exceptional nature and we argue for a clear sunset clause. We do not see SURE as a starting point for a permanent scheme.
- The Dutch government does not see the need for a stabilization function [for the euro area].

SURE

Q: Why do you insist on financing health care related expenditures instead of temporary part time work schemes (only)

A:

- I do not doubt unemployment effects of the COVID-19 crisis are large.
- At the same time challenges of the crisis are much broader. Member states will have large costs for medical care.
- Hence to make the instrument as effective as possible we have insisted in the negotiations that the instrument can also finance some health measures.
- We support SURE out of solidarity and due to the exceptional nature of the crisis. A broader scope for the instrument fits better with solidarity than a narrow scope.

Recovery fund/MFF

Q: What is NL position on Recovery Fund/higher MFF?

A:

- NL agrees that the next MFF should play an important role in the recovery effort.
- At the same time, beyond temporary recovery measures, we need to keep in mind the original role of the MFF and its key policy priorities like innovation, climate and migration.
- The European Council has tasked the Commission to analyze the needs of different sectors and regions. Where an EU response has clear added value to a sustainable economic recovery, temporary top-ups of the MFF can be discussed. NL willing to contribute to these top-ups.
- We also need to look at frontloading and reprioritization.
- NL is against using EU borrowing for the purpose of topping up the EU-budget as this is not in line with the principles in the Treaty that the MFF should be wholly financed by own resources and that income should equal expenditure.

Eurobonds/Coronabonds

Q: This is the time to introduce Eurobonds. Why are you still against Eurobonds?

A:

- Structural mutualisation of the debt of EMU members is no solution of tackling problems caused by the Corona-crisis
- Such joint issuance would be inconsistent with the original agreement of Maastricht in 1992. EMU Members are sovereigns with regard to their budgets. Without this agreement there would never have been an EMU
- Mutualised debt would require a far reaching transfer of budgetary competences to Brussels. I think no country would be prepared to do that.
- Setting aside the Corona-crisis for a moment, mutualized debt would not help countries to solve their structural challenges.

Eurobonds/Coronabonds

Q: If you support SURE, which resemble Eurobonds, why can you not support Eurobonds?

A:

- For me Eurobonds means that countries would finance or guarantee one's debt and deficits in regular times
- We support SURE as it uses an article of the treaty (art 122) intended for exceptional circumstances such as the Corona outburst.
- It is difficult to plan for this kind of thing in the regular EU-budget, hence we can accept temporary borrowing by the Commission on capital markets
- This is not without precedent. As you know we have EFSM and the Balance of Payment Facility.
- An important feature of EFSM and SURE, but also of the Balance of Payments Facility, is that financial assistance takes the form of loans. This means that countries remain individually responsible for the repayment of this financial assistance.

Spreeklijn tbv. vragen over NL als belastingparadijs

Valt buiten verzoek

Valt buiten verzoek