

I would hereby like to share The Netherlands position on the draft implementing regulation making the exportation of certain personal protective equipment subject to the production of an export authorization (sent to the Committee on Safeguards and Common Rules for Exports on 14 April). Member States are requested to submit their written opinion concerning the proposal to the Commission by Monday 20 April 16:00 hrs.

As you know, since 14 March there is a Commission implementing regulation that requires export authorisation for certain types of PPE. This regulation concerns 5 product types, being protective spectacles and visors, face shields, mouth-nose protection equipment, protective garment and gloves.

The Commission has now proposed to narrow the product scope to only mouth-nose protection equipment. According to the Commission there is sufficient availability of the other personal protection equipment in the EU and enough related possibilities for intra- EU supply of the products. The Commission based this conclusion on information from the Clearing House Initiative.

The Netherlands does not fully share the Commission's assessment on the sufficient availability of other personal protection equipment in the EU.

The Netherlands still experiences a severe shortage of not only mouth nose masks but also gloves and protective garments. The need for these products is felt across the health care system, including emergency/ hospital care, nursing homes, home care, GP's, etc. The COVID-19 crisis has increased demand for these products enormously. The prolonged hospital care and aftercare of COVID-19 patients requires large numbers of PPE materials. Demand in the Netherlands for FFP1/ 2 masks is estimated at app. 4.5 mln. pieces per week, for surgical masks 8 mln. pcs per week, for coats and gowns 6 mln. a week and for gloves at 30 mln. pcs per week. The central sourcing and purchasing through existing and new purchasing channels is challenging and only provides for a time horizon of days to 2 weeks at maximum, while various deliveries may not arrive at all or arrive with delays. Stocks in hospitals and other health care institutions are limited to a number of days at the most. We have established a distribution model for our national health care system that provides PPE equipment to health care institutions on the basis of potential exposure of medical staff to the Corona virus and/ or the protection of vulnerable patients from getting infected. For mouth nose masks, but also for protective garment and gloves, demand consistently outweighs supply. The demand is updated on a weekly or – if necessary – daily basis.

This shortage seems widespread in the EU as indicated by the recent call for NATO assistance by the Italian and Spanish governments. Also the UK is experiencing a severe shortage of gowns, as illustrated in this article https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-52335561, dated 18 April 2020 and a tweet of Chris Hopson (Chairman of NHS Provides, which represents healthcare trusts across England): "We have now reached the point where the national stock of fully fluid-repellent gowns and long-sleeved laboratory coats will be exhausted in the next 24 to 48 hours"." Supply does not meet demand at this moment._

The Netherlands therefore urges the Commission to also include protective garments and gloves in Annex I of the proposal for the implementing regulation.

Your support would be most appreciated.



