



INTRODUCTION

From 2020 to 2021: what's on the table?

2020 was a year that brought unexpected and dramatic changes and challenges for each and everyone of us in our daily lives, also on a broader political and socio-economic level. The Coronavirus pandemic is not just a health crisis, it has thrown many people into insecurity overnight, especially those who were marginalised before, and it has also disrupted our food system.

This health and socio-economic emergency call for **strong and united political responses at European level** in order to be able to recover and use this crisis as an opportunity to identify room for improvement and to build back better. The urgency of the situation and the light that the pandemic shed on longstanding political topics such as food insecurity, food losses and waste, as well as social issues lead to progress in many EU policies.

2021 will be an important year for Europe. Many things are on the table, such as the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, the new European Social Fund Plus, the Next Generation EU and the REACT-EU initiative. This is the time to reinforce Social Europe and support the most hit by this crisis. Moreover, many other opportunities are ahead such as the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, the revision of Regulation (EU) No 852/2004 and Regulation (EU) No 853/2004, the promotion of a better understanding and use of date marking (Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011), etc.

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This first 2021 FEBA EU Monitoring Report wants to cover the main highlights for January 2021 for the future of Food Banks in Europe. FEBA team will continue to be present in the Brussels political arena to better address the main challenges, needs and future opportunities of European Food Banks in the years to come. The final goal of the monthly FEBA EU Monitoring reports is to give FEBA members the possibility to have a selection of the most important issues at EU level concerning Food Banks to disseminate at national and local level useful information for Food Banks daily activities.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



FEAD: specific measures to address the COVID-19 crisis

20 JANUARY / 2020

The Coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges and put the provision of social services and basic assistance at risk, for instance because of decreased funding and staff shortages.

In April 2020, the European Commission already amended the [FEAD Regulation](#) once as part of the [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus \(CRII+\)](#) package. This opened the possibility to deliver food aid and basic material assistance by using vouchers and providing protective equipment such as masks, gloves and hand gel for partner organizations.

Moreover, the [REACT-EU initiative](#) was adopted and published on the Official Journal of the EU on 23 December 2020 (FEBA briefing [here](#)). The REACT-EU has a total budget of **€47.5 billion** – €37.5 billion in 2021 and €10 billion in 2022 – that can be used by Member States as additional resources for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)**.

On 20 January 2021, the European Parliament voted a report amending the current FEAD Regulation.

We need to show solidarity to the people who are facing poverty and social exclusion due to this crisis and are in urgent need of assistance. I welcome this agreement, which will allow Member States to direct support measures to those who need it most through the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). We are not all equal in the face of this pandemic and the most vulnerable suffer more. This agreement is a clear sign that the European Union continues to stand by those most in need.

Nicolas Schmit
Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights

Highlight of the most interesting points:

→ The main amendment regards the funding of FEAD: in the framework of the REACT-EU initiative, the total available budget remains of €47.5 billion, but this amendment opens the way to the possibility for Member States to allocate part of their REACT-EU resources for 2021 and 2022 to FEAD programmes. **The funds can be spent until the end of 2023, therefore bridging the gap between the emergency crisis response and the long-term recovery supported by the new programmes under the MFF 2021-2027 (e.g. ESF+).**

EU Member States can decide flexibly how to allocate the additional resources from the REACT-EU initiative among the 4 different funds. **Most Member States plan to devote part of these additional funds to the FEAD, allowing programmes to continue supporting those most in need.**

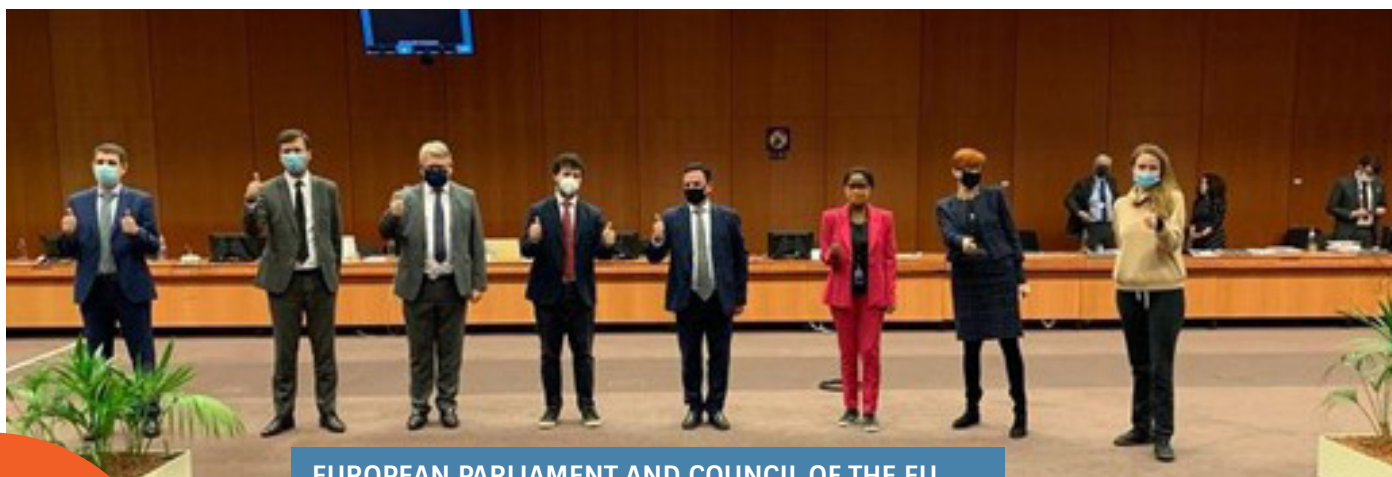
→ It is now possible to **use a EU co-financing rate of up to 100%**, in order to ensure that **Member States have sufficient financial means to swiftly implement measures to assist the most deprived.**

→ Furthermore, in alignment with the REACT-EU initiative, **11% of the additional resources for 2021 will be pre-financed.**

The political agreement on the FEAD amendments has been approved by the European Parliament. On the side of the Council of the EU, the political agreement has been confirmed by Member States at the Coreper and awaits its final approval in the Council.

For more information:

- European Parliament - [report](#)
- European Parliament – [press release](#)
- European Commission – [press release](#). We would like to underline that FEBA is mentioned in the press release of the European Commission.
- The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) - read [here](#)
- Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe (REACT-EU) - read [here](#)
- Coronavirus Response Initiative Plus (CRII+) - read [here](#)



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL OF THE EU

Political agreement on ESF+

28 JANUARY / 2020

On 28 January 2021, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU finally reached a provisional agreement on the ESF+ (see [press release](#) of the European Parliament and [tweet](#) of Commissioner Nicolas Schmit) that contributes to social inclusion, job opportunities and fighting poverty.

The new ESF+ (part of the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027) will amount to €87 995 billion in 2018 prices. The European Parliament negotiated **at least 3 % of the budget to be spent on food aid and basic material assistance.**

The negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council of the EU lasted more than 2 years and a half and were lead by the rapporteur and co-rapporteurs of the European Parliament. The next steps are that both the European Parliament as a whole and the Council of the EU now have to endorse the agreement.

Rapporteur:

David Casa (PPE)

Co-rapporteurs:

Brando Benifei (S&D)
 Monica Semedo (Renew)
 Simona Baldassarre (ID)
 Terry Reintke (Verts/ALE)
 Elzbieta Rafalska (ECR)
 José Gusmão (GUE/NGL)

European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs:

Commissioner Nicolas Schmit

To read more:

- Press release of the European Parliament - [here](#)
- Press release of the European Commission - [here](#)
- Press release of the Council of the EU - [here](#)
- Press release of the EPP Group - [here](#)
- Press release of the S&D Group - [here](#)

The political agreement on the European Social Fund Plus is a clear sign of the commitment of the European Union to consider with empathy this sanitary crisis and its impact on the most deprived. At a time of a 30% increase of food demand to fight food insecurity among European citizens, a minimum of 3% of the ESF+ budget will be spent on food aid and basic material assistance. Together with our members, we want to thank the efforts of all those who have been involved in these negotiations. The improved fund percentage to be dedicated to food and material assistance should assist to make a concrete difference and foster social cohesion in the EU. It is for the Members States to spend these funds wisely and to concentrate on efficient solutions providing the best possible assistance at the best possible cost.

Jacques Vandenschrik
 President of the European Food Banks Federation



EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Expert Group's dedicated sub-group on a contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security

In May 2020, the European Commission presented the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) (F2F) which is a key part of the [European Green Deal](#) and aims at making our food system resilient, fair, healthy and sustainable. In relation to food loss and waste, F2F sets the goal of halving food loss and waste at retail and consumer level by 2030, in line with the [UN SDG Target 12.3](#).

In the framework of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the European Commission also set up an **Expert Group's dedicated sub-group on a contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security** composed of Member States and relevant

stakeholders (as observers) in order to share insights on problems they encountered as a consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak or other crises. **FEBA is part of that Expert Group** as an observer and participated and made an intervention at the group's first meeting on 20 January 2021.

Moreover, on 13 January 2020, FEBA submitted a feedback to an open consultation of the European Commission on the roadmap on the contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security in the EU - to read FEBA feedback, click [here](#).



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