

**Amcham Newsletter 6th April 2020**

Dear AMCHAM members and friends,

In our last newsletter we asked you to fill out a survey that we have compiled with Chronicle.lu; looking at all sized companies (large, medium, small, freelance) concerning both Business Disruption and Business Continuity in these crisis times of COVID-19 / Coronavirus. The survey questionnaire comprises a total of 23 questions and should just take a few minutes to complete (most questions are multi-choice), with all companies in Luxembourg, no matter how large or small, invited to participate.

The link here should be copy/pasted to a new window:

<https://survey.sogosurvey.com/r/QnC2yU>

**Luxinnovation** have come up with a novel idea: COVID-19: CONTEST FOR INNOVATIVE START UPS, whilst everyone is thinking that now is really not the time to be thinking of doing a "start up" think again... backed by Franz Fayot our Minister of Economy, have joined forces to launch a "Startups vs. Covid19" competition for young, innovative enterprises that are working on innovative technology aimed at limiting or overcoming the economic, health or social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. The call officially launches on 9 April, and projects can be submitted up until the end of the month.

A jury will select up to 20 projects, each of which can receive financial support of up to €150,000. Winning projects must be developed and placed on the market within a period of 6 months. Minister of the economy Franz Fayot (LSAP) is fully behind the idea. "By launching the Startups vs. Covid19 competition I would like to support and mobilise all the talent and innovation of our startup ecosystem to help Luxembourg's economy and society to overcome these difficult times," he said. An introduction to the competition can be found here: <https://www.startupluxembourg.com/startups-vs-covid19>

**Webinars:** The ministry, again with the support of Luxinnovation, is also launching a series of webinars, in English, to inform startups of the main support measures for which they are eligible under the government's economic stabilisation programme. The series will launch on 8 April and will feature experts answering questions. Information on the schedule and registration process for the webinars is available here: <https://www.startupluxembourg.com/webinars>

During the week we received a communication from the European Commission;

The European Commission has adopted today an extended State Aid Temporary Framework to support the economy in the context of the coronavirus outbreak. The update is based on a consultation of the Member States which has been done within just a few days to also receive feedback on the [previous version](#) of the framework.

The extended framework newly allows for:

more support for coronavirus-related R&D,

more support for testing and/or manufacturing products relevant for the fight of the outbreak (such as medical equipment or devices, protective material, disinfectants),

support by tax deferrals and/or suspension of social security contributions,

support by wage subsidies for employees.

The extended framework, in force until end-December 2020, also newly enables Member States to give zero-interest loans, guarantees on loans covering 100% of the risk, or provide equity up to the nominal value of € 800 000 per company. This can be combined with so-called *de minimis* aid.

Full text may be found

here: [https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state\\_aid/what\\_is\\_new/covid\\_19.html](https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/what_is_new/covid_19.html)

**Allen & Overy** have been extremely proactive when it comes down to labour laws here in Luxembourg, their guidelines can be found

here: [https://comms.allenoverly.com/66/4431/uploads/covid--19---a-snapshot-of-national-employment-law-responses\(2000879240.1\).pdf](https://comms.allenoverly.com/66/4431/uploads/covid--19---a-snapshot-of-national-employment-law-responses(2000879240.1).pdf)

We at Amcham asked the Department of Public works a question:

**Amcham** : " *should persons using public transport wear gloves and which ones to avoid contact with at-risk surfaces?*"

**DPW:**

Upon recommendation by the Health Department, following protective and preventive measures must be observed by all operators and users of public transport for the health of all, travelers and drivers, until further notice:

- The front door of the bus remains closed. The driver does not open the door. Travelers are asked to get in and out using the doors at the rear.
- The 1st row of passenger seats should be kept unoccupied as far as possible. The driver is requested to put on a barrier tape or similar.
- The driver does not sell tickets (RegioZone).

- Users are requested to keep their distance.
- Vulnerable people should no use public transport

**Amcham** : *Contact points of highest risk on public transport and how to deal with them?* Buses, trams and trains are cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis. Air conditioning and / or heating do not pose a threat, according to the Health Department.

\*social distancing practices on public transport: see above

\* individual responsible actions to protect others in your environment? <https://coronavirus.gouvernement.lu/en.html>

\* advise on wearing or not wearing masks <https://coronavirus.gouvernement.lu/en.html>

A unique way to look at the " germ" problem is to be found in a very interesting video: <https://youtu.be/I5-dI74zxPg>

**We in Luxembourg should all be grateful that we live in this small and wonderful country in the heart of Europe. The government is being smart and taking wise decisions during this crisis. The public is remaining calm and maintaining a spirit of solidarity. Xenophobia and social turmoil are largely absent. Friends are maintaining contact and support for friend. We are very lucky to be where we are and to have what we have.**

**AMCHAM offers to each of you and your families our best wishes for your health and happiness. Be strong. Stay connected with your families and friends by phone and email. Use this time wisely and productively so you come out of this crisis stronger than when you started.**

**If you need us, we are here and will do all we can do to help.**

**With respect and our very best regards,**

**Your AMCHAM team**