

## COCIR feedback to the evaluation of the Recovery & Resilience Facility

The Recovery & Resilience Facility (RRF) makes €672.5 billion in grants and loans available to EU Member States until 2024. As outlined in COCIR's recommendations in April 2021<sup>1</sup>, a lack of capacity at various stages of national healthcare systems became apparent during Covid-19. Unforeseen external shock factors showed a lack of flexibility and pandemic preparedness. We are glad to provide our members' concrete experiences during the implementation of this historic programme as part of the evaluation process<sup>2</sup>.

**Collaboration and coordination:** we had hoped that the development of national recovery plans would encourage more collaboration between regions and Member States in aligning their investment priorities and sharing best practices. In practice, member states have taken very different approaches to the national plans, with common indicators at European level rather high-level. **Instead, COCIR recommends that common goals should be set based on concrete measurable and widely accepted indicators**, such as the COCIR Golden Rules, which address best practices for the renewal of ageing medical imaging equipment<sup>3</sup>. These rules are supported by the European Society of Radiology and have already been used in some countries (e.g., Spain).

**Financial pressures:** healthcare budgets are put under pressure by rising energy prices. In 2023 energy costs are expected to double, and sometimes triple for many hospitals, who are expected to shoulder this burden. In addition, already concluded contracts and on-going procurement processes for equipment are impacted by the current inflationary pressures, as the costs for producing medical equipment increase. **COCIR recommends that these economic pressures are considered when setting budgets for procurement and contracting processes.**

**Timelines:** we have previously noted that the implementation deadline of 2024 may be difficult in such a complex and multilayered sector as healthcare. Both authorities and industry are struggling to meet these timelines, as procurement authorities face challenges due to lack of capacity and resources and companies are struggling with the impact of COVID-19 on supply chains (including shortages of critical components like semiconductors). **COCIR recommends that the European Commission adopts guidance to allow for the case-by-case extension of deadlines for the activation of EU funds at national and regional level.**

**Supporting digital transformation of healthcare:** healthcare IT is specific, considering medical devices and clinical workflows. Digitising healthcare systems does not only include investment in infrastructure, medical devices and technology, but also into strategic change to digitize hospital and patient management to create more transparency and organisational efficiency. Nevertheless, we have seen that procurement of digital infrastructure for healthcare systems and healthcare delivery organisations under the RRF is often not sufficiently attuned to clinical content and insights. **COCIR therefore recommends that tenders for digital solutions in a healthcare setting are based on extensive consultation of the health and clinical community.**

**Future investments in healthcare systems:** the Recovery & Resilience Facility has shown the need for investments in European healthcare systems, including more coordination at European level. **We expect that these learnings will be considered in the set-up of the next Multiannual Financial Framework to move from ad-hoc crisis response towards a more sustainable approach to EU funding in healthcare.**

COCIR remains available for more detailed input and contributions to the evaluation of the RRF as well as more forward-looking discussions on funding and investment for healthcare.

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<sup>1</sup> Recovery from COVID-19 – Driving Healthcare Resilience in the EU ([link](#))

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13608-Recovery-and-Resilience-Facility-2020-2024-mid-term-evaluation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13608-Recovery-and-Resilience-Facility-2020-2024-mid-term-evaluation_en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cocir.org/media-centre/publications/article/cocir-medical-imaging-equipment-age-profile-density-2021-edition.html>



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### **About COCIR**

COCIR is the European Trade Association representing the medical imaging, radiotherapy, health ICT and electromedical industries. Founded in 1959, COCIR is a non-profit association headquartered in Brussels (Belgium) with a China Desk based in Beijing since 2007. Our members strive to create innovative solutions throughout the continuum of healthcare to allow European citizens to benefit from sustainable outcomes and added value. Our innovations enable better clinical outcomes, improve patient experience, increase satisfaction of health professionals, and contribute to overall cost containment. [www.cocir.org](http://www.cocir.org)