P.C.C.I.’s PRESIDENT, VASSILIS KORKIDIS, INFORMS ON THE APPLICATION OF THE NEW ECONOMIC MEASURES IN GREECE

The President of P.C.C.I. & of the Regional Chamber Council of Attica, Vassilis Korkidis, believes that the financial staff of the Government, with the new package of measures at the right time, is using for the economy and society all the existing fuel of 17.5 billion euro in the tank of a total 24 billion euro. He states that the Greek government is dealing with the crisis aggressively and is moving quickly, methodically towards the problem, instead of holding a wait-and-see attitude, waiting for the European aid package after June 1st. He believes that the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy are using every financial means for the required liquidity in the market with guarantee mechanisms, interest rate subsidies and working capitals. “TEPIX II”, the Guarantee Fund and the new Development Law’s cycle will dispose to SMEs, within the next period, at least 7 billion euro. The strong point is the extension of the protection of the first residence and the subsidy of the red loans. Respectively, the Ministry of Labor is taking measures to support the employment, loss of income and the health and safety of workers in their workplaces. Finally, the president of P.C.C.I. emphasizes the dynamic approach of the package of measures that supports all the victims without wrongdoing the consistent ones.

Attention, responsibility and strict adherence to the rules of hygiene and safety instructions are the big bet for the many SMEs of trade and services, who take on the great responsibility to restart the Greek market dynamically but safely. Let us all be informed carefully and meticulously follow both the mandatory guidelines and the optional recommendations for public health protection measures. Tomorrow, a new day begins, but also a new daily routine. Let’s seize it safely. Good start with Attention!

THE NEW PACKAGE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO BUSINESSES

The new package of measures for dealing with the effects of the corona pandemic was announced, for May, by the competent ministers of Finance, Labor and Development, Mr. Staikouras, Vroutsis and Georgiadis.

The protection of the first residence is extended, with the characteristics of the existing Law, for 3 more months, until the end of July 2020. At the same time, a new borrower support program is launched and will be implemented. The State will subsidize, for a certain period of time, a significant part of the monthly installments of those affected by the effects of the coronation, and have mortgage loans in the first residence. All "red loans" are covered, both those created before the end of 2018 and those that emerged later, until today, for the citizens affected by the effects of the health crisis. The serviced loans of all those affected by the pandemic are covered. At the same time, safety valves are being installed so that strategic defaulters do not benefit from the subsidy. The State, with specific initiatives, will, for a
period of time, undertake a large part of the obligations of the borrowers who have been hit by the pandemic of coronary heart disease. With the new program, in the middle of the coroner’s pandemic, in addition to the extension of the existing framework:

1. For the first time, consistent borrowers are being strengthened with serviced loans, which have been hit by the pandemic.
2. All borrowers affected by the health crisis are supported, and they have a "red" loan, even after the end of 2018.
3. Payment culture is cultivated.
4. The exploitation of the framework by strategic defaulters is prevented.
5. The risk of creating a new generation of "red" loans is reduced.
6. Social cohesion is strengthened.
7. Multiple borrowers are covered in relation to the existing framework.

The tools that the government will allocate to businesses in order to survive the crisis of the new corona virus will be developed by the Ministry of Development to increase the production of sanitary materials and at the same time emphasize the financial tools, subsidized lending tools for business liquidity. Analytically:

1. The first tool set up through TEPIX II, ie the provision of working capital of up to half a million euros to all informed companies that are committed to maintaining jobs. Within 3 days, 8,336 loan applications have been submitted to the banks and the amount of 1,286 billion euros for liquidity has been committed. The program continues, with subsidized interest rates for businesses with up to 250 employees.
2. At the beginning of May, the second tool will be put into operation, providing guaranteed capital at 25% of the annual turnover or up to double the payroll, regardless of size. For this program, there is approval from the Commission to increase the budget, so that the cost of borrowing falls even lower. And there is a commitment to jobs.
3. 5,205 business applications have already been approved on the MOD platform and another 25,000 applications are already being processed, with 600,000 employees.

Interest subsidies to businesses will never be refunded. Next week, there will be two new rounds of development law and 350m euro in new entrepreneurship. In consultation with the Commission, the tax relief and subsidy programs of the development law for small businesses (up to 50 employees) will be expanded by increasing subsidies. All applications made by private companies that want to implement their business plans will be covered. With these tools, providing liquidity for small and large businesses, by subsidizing interest rates, with the approval of all development plans and the announcement of a new cycle of applications for development, a very strong network of financial protection is being made that will offset the reduction in activity.

Employee support has been announced through special purpose compensation for the duration of employment contracts. The ban on layoffs for those companies that use the measure remains in force. Also, in May, the 40% discount is maintained on the rent of the company that is affected and on the rent of its employees. The suspension of confirmed debts to the Tax and Funds for the affected companies is extended for May. Specifically:

1. The special purpose compensation will continue for those employees who remain in temporary suspension of their contract, depending on how long the suspension will last. Businesses that use this measure are obliged not to make reductions in their staff, in order to ensure the maintenance of jobs and the type of employment contract.
2. The suspension of confirmed debts to the tax authorities and insurance funds still exists, in May, for all the companies affected so far.

3. The 40% discount on the company’s rent, as well as the first residence and the student residence of the children of its employees, continues to exist in the month of May, for all the companies that have been affected so far. For businesses that will open in May, this measure will not be repeated in the coming months.

4. Depending on the timing of the implementation of the relevant European decisions, a mechanism to support employment in the form of financial support for employment will be established, with the aim of stimulating workers’ incomes. To this end, the new European SURE program will be used primarily.

5. Within the next two months, a second refundable down payment will be launched, in which all companies can participate.

6. Targeted sectoral policies are being implemented in May, in areas with the biggest economic shocks, such as tourism, transport and primary sectors.

In addition, every available financial asset is being mobilized, such as reimbursable advance payments, guarantee mechanisms, interest rate subsidies, working capital, in order to boost corporate liquidity. Indicatively, in terms of reimbursable advance payment, more than 90,000 companies, with 430,000 employees, who have been closed by government order or affected, will be strengthened, we estimate by the end of next week, with about 1 billion euros. Of these, the vast majority, 99% of them, employ up to 50 people. And small and medium-sized enterprises will be significantly helped, earning at least 2,000, 4,000, 8,000 and 15,000 euros, depending on the number of their employees.

The Ministry of Labor, at this new phase of the economy, will move within 3 axes:

1. Will continue to support the jobs in the companies
2. Will support the income through a new mechanism for replenishing any loss of income of employees
3. Will protect the health and safety of workers by fully implementing measures to prevent the spread of the virus at the workplace.

#WE STAY SAFE!
VASSILIS KORKIDIS