

COVID-19 pandemic: ESA approves amendments to a compensation scheme for bus and passenger boat services in Norway

The EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) has today approved amendments making it easier for eligible bus and boat service operators to access funding.

[On 20 July 2020, ESA approved](#) a scheme to compensate companies offering commercial, year-round, long-distance bus and boat services for losses incurred on specific routes as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The original scheme stated that an operator receiving compensation for public services would not be eligible to receive funding. Since very few long-distance routes in Norway are fully commercialised (not receiving any public funding), the original wording of the scheme blocked funding to most operators.

The amendment aims to make a clearer distinction between routes eligible for aid, and those routes established by and operated on behalf of public authorities, which will not be eligible for aid. Today's decision, which approves the scheme notified by the Norwegian government on 23 November, also extends the application deadline to 15 December.

ESA's decision can be found [here](#).



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