

Myanmar	
Policy responses	
Containment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 13. 94,18 tests have been conducted. • Lockdown for New Year. 11-19 April. • During the lockdown, the government will distribute basic food packages to families without income, although there is no guarantee everyone who needs one will receive it • In late April, lockdown introduced for 10 townships which have reported the majority of cases. The lockdown was extended on 13 May. No one was allowed to travel in or out of the townships except for when going to work. This lockdown has now been eased. • On 14 July, restrictions were extended on gatherings, social distancing and protective measures, and a curfew between 12 am and 4 am. Public gatherings of more than five at government offices, companies, factories, schools are permitted. Restaurants and teashops are already open with limited customers. • On 14 July, enrolment began at high schools with high schools due to reopen on July 21. Middle and primary schools and universities and training schools are still closed. • Currently, highway buses and domestic flights are allowed with limited numbers. Domestic travel has resumed with pagodas and monasteries reopening in recent weeks. • On 14 July, temporary bans on all kinds of visa, except for urgent diplomatic and United Nations visits, were extended until the end of July. International flights, apart from cargo and relief flights, are also banned until the end of July. • On August 16 social restrictions relaxed, allowing outdoor gatherings of fewer than 30 people. • On August 27 government and private high schools closed due to a surge in Covid-19 cases. • Oct 28. The Government announced extension of effective period for preventive measures against COVID-19 which include curfew orders, restriction of mass gatherings and others until Nov 30. • Oct 28. The Government announced the temporary entry restrictions for visitors from all countries and the suspension of operating all international commercial passenger flights at the Yangon International Airport until Nov 30. • Myanmar became one of the first countries in Southeast Asia to begin its vaccination programme in January 2021. • After the coup d'état on 1 February 2021, testing collapsed and the medical response to COVID-19 in the country became severely hampered as part of the ongoing protests and civil disobedience movement in the country, including from health workers. It is thought that infection rates have been underestimated and vaccination programme slowed since the coup.
Fiscal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government announced an initial stimulus package to cushion the impact of COVID-19 on the country's economy, including 100 billion kyats (nearly \$70 million) of loans, eased deadlines for tax payments,

	<p>and tax exemptions for Myanmar-owned businesses that have been hit by the global pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fund draws 50 billion kyats from the country's revolving fund and another 50 billion kyats from the social welfare fund. • The Government said qualifying businesses now have until the end of September to make their quarterly income tax and monthly commercial tax payments. Income tax was supposed to be paid by March 31 for the second quarter and by June 30 for the third quarter. • The Government has also announced that businesses will be exempted from paying the 2 percent advance income tax on exports until the end of current fiscal year on Sep 30. • Parliament on July 17 approved Covid-19 tax relief measures, including a 10 percent non-refundable tax credit on incremental wage increases and investments in capital equipment and a 125 percent tax deduction for incremental wage increases paid during the previous fiscal year. • The application period for the government's second tranche of loans aimed primarily at agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and food industries closed on August 10. More than 700 businesses applied. • Oct 14. The government will provide a K21.122 billion (\$14 million) loan to 1,200 businesses that suffered from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic • 13 Jan 2021. To address Myanmar's urgent balance-of-payments needs, the IMF approved the second emergency financial assistance equivalent to about US\$350 million under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) and the Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI). The IMF assistance will aid Myanmar's COVID-19 policy measures aimed at minimizing the pandemic's economic and social impact while supporting the vulnerable.
Monetary/financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Central Bank of Myanmar announced on March 25 that it would slash the country's benchmark interest rate by 100 basis points to 8.5%, effective April 1. This decision follows an earlier 50-basis-point cut on March 12. • Temporary reduction in banks' required reserve requirement ratio from 5.0% to 3.5% of deposits till September 30. • The interest rate on loans provided by the 100 billion kyat fund will be only 1 percent with a loan period of one year.
Trade measures ¹	<p>Restrictive: N/A</p> <p>Liberalizing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive specific goods tax for critical medical supplies and products related to the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19.
SME measures(last update 22 January 2021)	<p>Deferral of tax payment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government has extended the income and business taxes payable in the second and third quarters of 2020 to the end of the year. <p>Other fiscal support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Commerce announced that since April 2020,

¹ <https://www.macmap.org/covid19>

	<p>applications for import and export licenses for more than 100 commodities, such as consumer products, fertilizers, and petroleum products, must be issued using online procedures. Although such a digital transformation does not cover all types of goods, this can prevent the spread of the COVID-19 in the country.²</p> <p>Loan support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 29 March 2020, the government provided an MMK 100 billion COVID-19 Fund through the state-owned Myanmar Economic Bank to offer loans of a 1 per cent interest rate for a one-year period to affected companies such as garment and tourism sectors, and SMEs, and adjust flexibly as needed.³ • Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) announced it will allow banks to restructure and reschedule MSME loans that regularly pay interest and principal for a longer period no more than 3 years.⁴ • The Ministry of Planning, Finance, and Industry (MoPFI) announced that it will guarantee 50 per cent of any new loans made by banks to enterprises not beneficiaries of the low-cost fund for working capital.⁵ • In June 2020, the government has provided MMK 31.8 billion of loans to the most vulnerable business affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶ • Starting from June 2020 until September 2020, the government will provide local farmers with COVID-19 Special Relief loans. Each farmer is eligible for an MMK 50,000 loan with a 5 per cent annual interest rate.⁷ <p>Deferral of loan repayment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government has asked microfinance and other non-bank financial institutions to allow borrowers to defer loan repayments until 15 May 2020.⁸ <p>Employment support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 12 June, an order of the President Office granted further tax relief on additional salary and wage expenses.
Other policy measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households without a regular income are being provided with food during the long holidays. • Electric bills, for up to 150 units, are exempt for most households until the end of April.

² <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/govt-go-fully-online-importexport-licences.html>

³ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-govt-announces-loan-package-coronavirus-hit-businesses-key-sectors.html>

⁴ <https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/myanmar-government-and-institution-measures-in-response-to-covid.html>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ <https://www.mizzima.com/article/myanmar-provides-318-billion-kyats-loans-vulnerable-business-affected-covid-19>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/myanmar-govt-extends-temporary-suspension-microfinance-operations-may-15.html>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing 40 percent of the social security fees for about 1.3 million insured workers from factories and workshops that are temporarily suspended for health inspections. • Fee for renewal license of hotels and tourism businesses will be exempted for one year up to end of March 2021.
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