



PESs are swinging into Action in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Joint survey

Editor: Thierry HUORT

June 2020

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From 2 April to 28 May 2020, WAPES together with its partners, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and SOCIEUX+, carried out a joint survey, thanks to the collective commitment of their networks.

Since the beginning of the year 2020, the world has been experiencing an unprecedented crisis that is upsetting our societies, our economies, our organizations, and affects our private lives at home, in our families.

We, the Public Employment Services (PES), like other public or private actors must address unseen challenges:

- Today, we will have to jointly anticipate the actions to support the economic recovery to limit the impact of the economic crisis caused by this pandemic.
- Tomorrow, we will promote new perspectives emerging from the lessons learnt from this difficult collective experience to contribute to repairing the social and economic damages caused to our territories.

The purpose of this survey was first and foremost to enable PES to quickly exchange experiences regarding this crisis, to assess the situation, and then to identify and anticipate the future challenges that we will have to address collectively.

Our questions focused on four areas:

- Prevention and economic support
- Measures to maintain PES services
- Adjustment of service organization
- Current or foreseeable problems

Special thanks

We owe our gratitude to all the public services, administrations and organizations that have dedicated their time during this difficult period to contribute to this survey, thus enabling us to share issues, actions and practices to face the effects of this pandemic, namely (in alphabetical order) :

- **NN** (Afghanistan)
- **NAES** (The National Agency for Employment and Skills - Albania)
- **ANEM** - Agence Nationale de l'Emploi (National Employment Agency - Algeria)
- **BA** - Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency - Germany)

- **Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social de la Nación** (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security - Argentina)
- **SESA** (State Employment Agency of Republic of Armenia - Armenia)
- **Department of Education, Skills and Employment** (Australia)
- **AMS** - Arbeits Markt Service (Labour Market Service - Austria)
- **VDAB**- Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (Flemish Service for Vocational Training and Employment Mediation - Belgium)
- **FOREM**- Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi (Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Employment- Belgium)
- **Actiris** & Bruxelles Formation (Belgium)
- **Arbeitsamt der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft** (Employment Office of the German-speaking Community - Belgium)
- **ANPE** - Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (National Employment Agency - Benin)
- **Servicio Público de Empleo** (PES of Bolivia)
- **Labour and Employment Agency** (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- **SINE**- Sistema Nacional de Emprego (National Employment System - Brazil)
- **NEA** (National Employment Agency - Bulgaria)
- **ANPE** - Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi (National Employment Agency- Burkina Faso)
- **IEFP** - Instituto do Emprego e Formacao Profissional (Employment and Vocational Training Institute - Cape Verde)
- **NEA** (National Employment Agency - Cambodia)
- **ONAPE** - Office National Pour la Promotion de l'emploi (National Office for the Promotion of Employment - Tchad)
- **SENCE**- Servicio Nacional de Capacitación y Empleo (National Training and Employment Service - Chili)
- **Ministry of Human Resources and social security of the people's Republic of China** (China)
- **Unidad Administrativa Especial del Servicio Público de Empleo** (Special Administrative Unit of the Public Employment Service - Colombia)
- **Agence Congolaise pour l'Emploi** (Congolese Employment Agency - Congo-Brazzaville)

- **Korea Employment Information Service** (South Korea)
- **Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje**, bajo la optica de SNE (National Training Institute under the supervision of the National Employment Service- Costa Rica)
- **Agence Emploi Jeunes** - Direction Générale de l'Emploi (Youth Employment Agency - Directorate General of Employment - Ivory Coast)
- **CES** - Croatian Employment Service (Croatia)
- **ONEM**- Office National de l'Emploi (National Employment Office - Democratic Republic of the Congo)
- **STAR**- Styrelsen for Arbejdsmarked og Rekruttering (The Danish Agency for Labor Market and Recruitment- Denmark)
- **Red Socio Empleo** (Social Network Employment - Ecuador)
- **Departamento Nacional de Empleo** (National Department of Employment - El Salvador)
- **SEPE**- Servicio Publico de Empleo Estatal (Public Service of State Employment - Spain)
- **EUIS** (Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund - Estonia)
- **NASWA** (National Association of State Workforce Agencies - United-States of America)
- **MINLA** (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland)
- **Pôle emploi** (Employment Division- France)
- **ONE**- Office National de l'Emploi (National Employment Office - Gabon)
- **Ministerio del Trabajo y previsión social**- Servicio Nacional de Empleo (Ministry of Labour and Social Security - National Employment Service- Guatemala)
- **Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail** (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour - Haïti)
- **Education and Training Boards Ireland** (Ireland)
- **ANPAL** – Agenzia nazionale per le Politiche Attive de Lavoro (National Agency for Active Labour Policies - Italy)
- **MHLW** (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare - Japan)
- **Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan** (Kazakhstan)
- **NEA** (National Employment Authority - Kenya)

- **Public Employment Services Malaysia** (Malaysia)
- **ANPE** - Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (National Employment Agency - Mali)
- **ANAPEC** – Agence nationale de Promotion de l’Emploi et des Compétences (National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills - Morocco)
- **ANAPEJ** -Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi des Jeunes (National Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment - Mauritania)
- **Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training** - Employment Service (Mauritius)
- **Servicio Nacional de Empleo** (National Employment Service - Mexico)
- **Employment Agency of Montenegro** (Montenegro)
- **Public Employment Services** (Namibia)
- **ANPE** - Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l’Emploi (National Agency for the Promotion of Employment - Niger)
- **NAV** (The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration Norway)
- **MITRADEL**- Ministerio de Empleo y Desarrollo social (Ministry of Employment and Social Development -Panama)
- **UWV**- Uw WERKbedrijf (Your WORK Company - The Netherlands)
- **SENCE**- Servicio Nacional del Empleo (National Employment Service - Peru)
- **IEFP**- Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profisisonal (Institute for Employment and Professional Training- Portugal)
- **ANOFM**- Agentia nationala Pentru Ocupare Fortei de Munca (National Agency for Employment - Romania)
- **ANPEJ** -Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l'Emploi des Jeunes (National Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment - Senegal)
- **Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family** (Slovakia)
- **Employment Services of Slovenia** (Slovenia)
- **Department of Employment and Employment** (Sri Lanka)
- **Arbetsförmedlingen** (Emplyment Service - Sweden)
- **SECO** - Secrétariat d’Etat à l’Economie (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs - Switzerland)

- **Urad Prace** (Employment Department - Czech Republic)
- **DoE** (Department of Employment - Thailand)
- **ANPE**- Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (National Employment Agency - Togo)
- **ANETI**- Agence nationale pour l'emploi et le travail indépendant (National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment - Tunisia)
- **İŞKUR** (Turkish Employment Agency - Turkey)
- **MTSS** – Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad social (Ministry of Labour and Social Security - Uruguay)
- **National Employment Services** (Zimbabwe)

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Preamble

We would like to recall that this synthesis report is the result of a survey based on a questionnaire developed jointly with our partners. The responses therefore reflect only the opinions and vision of those consulted. This is not a study based on observations, nor is it a statistical survey.

In the first part of the survey were included 31 questions focusing on 4 topics, mostly closed questions. In the second part, we gathered some verbatim from open-ended questions.

The data, graphs and comments presented in the following text are drawn from the survey's raw data with the sole purpose of providing a snapshot of PES practices to adjust frontline services in response to the pandemic crisis, and of identifying some major trends. Overall, the paper aims at providing food for thought and at identifying current and future challenges.

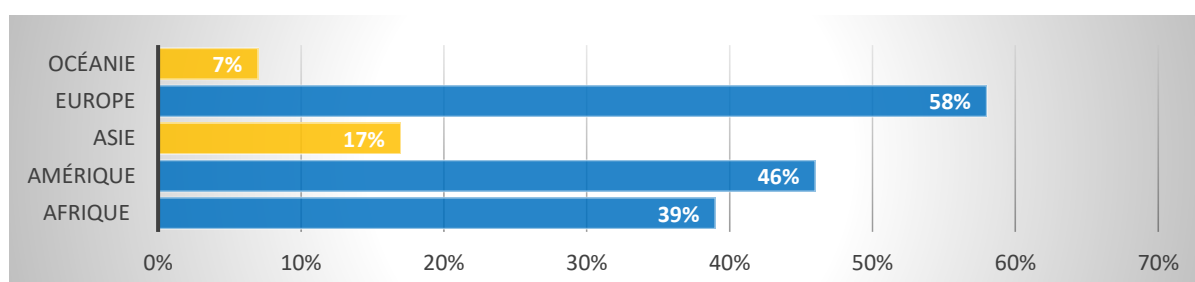
Respondents' representativeness



For Oceania, only the Department of Education, Skills and Employment of the Australian Government replied. To make comparisons between continents more relevant we therefore chose to group Oceania and Asia together in some infographics.

The survey sample consists mainly of public employment services as well as services attached to ministries and involved in employment and vocational training policies.

If we consider the total number of countries (Source United Nations) per continent and the countries present in our panel, we can say that about 1/3 of the world's countries are represented in our panel with Oceania and Asia being under-represented.



In fact, we have chosen not to systematically group the results by continent or sub-region, but rather to focus our analyses on an overall global vision, enabling each PES to identify levers for future action in line with its environment.

Survey Time Frame

Responses were collected between April 6 and May 27, 2020. Therefore, the answers (under the responsibility of their authors) only reflect the measures and actions implemented during this period.

Document Structure

To highlight and share the wide range of participants' contributions to the survey, we have decided to append to our synthesis the full details provided by the respondents on the first three questions concerning prevention and economic support measures.

You will therefore find 3 appendices at the end of this document grouping the responses by continent for the following themes:

Appendix 1 : Strengthening workers' protection **Erreur ! Signet non défini.**

Appendix 2 : Facilitate the adaptation of companies **Erreur ! Signet non défini.**

Appendix 3 : Financial support to companies experiencing a decrease in activity.... **Erreur ! Signet non défini.**

The survey raw data can be made available for research purposes by contacting the Executive Secretariat of the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES), provided that:

- For each publication or quotation, the source is cited: Joint survey "PES are swinging into Action in response to the Covid-19 pandemic » " conducted by AMSEP/ILO/IDB/SOCIEUX+ from April to May 2020
- Any publications, studies and articles produced using the data are shared with WAPES and that WAPES will be allowed to share them with its members.
- Prior agreement (by e-mail) is requested for any publications to be distributed outside your institution or organisation.

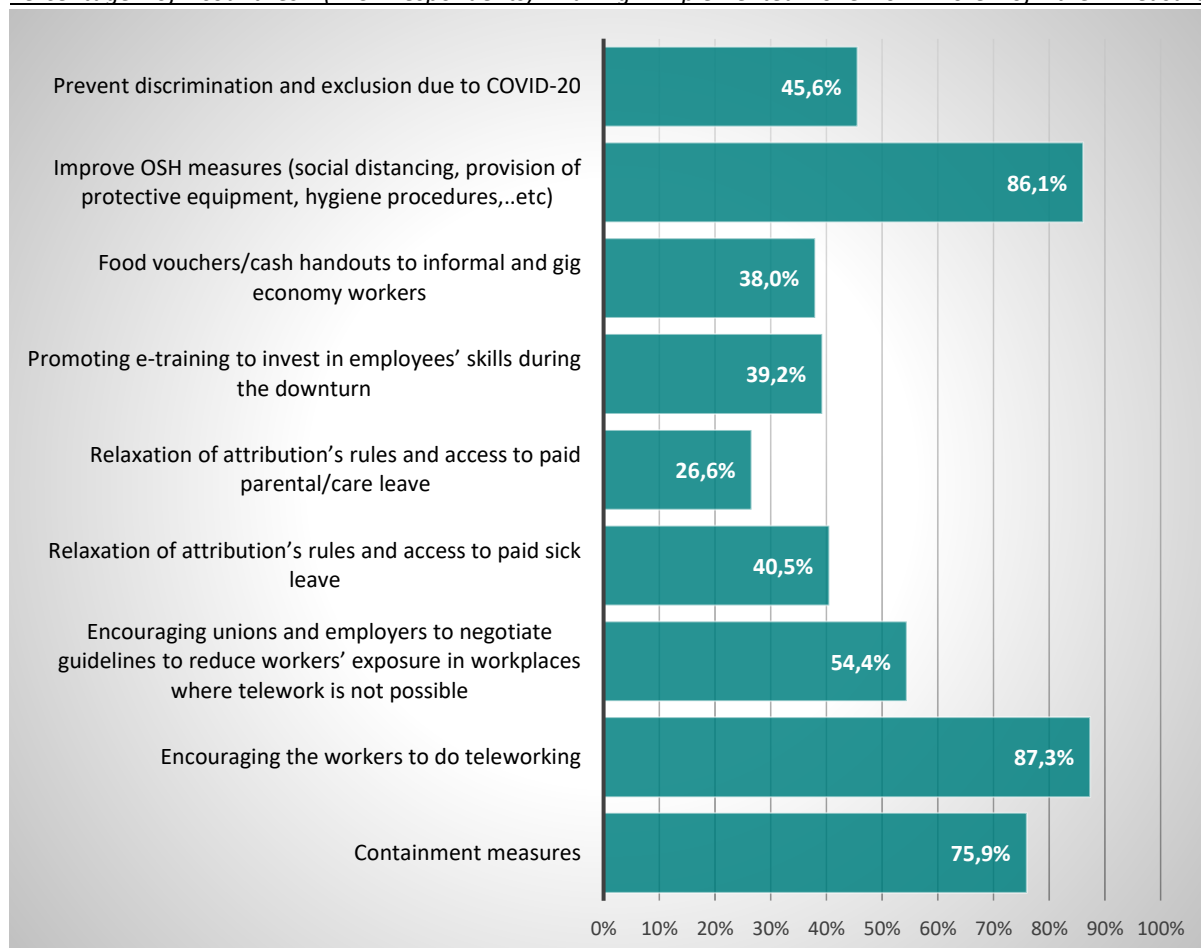
Part one: preventive and economic support measures

A. Protecting workers: A shared priority

Countries on all continents have adopted extensive measures to protect their populations, especially workers. Containment measures have spread rapidly (74.07%) but with the impact we are experiencing on the global economy, the extent and duration of the consequences are still difficult to estimate today.

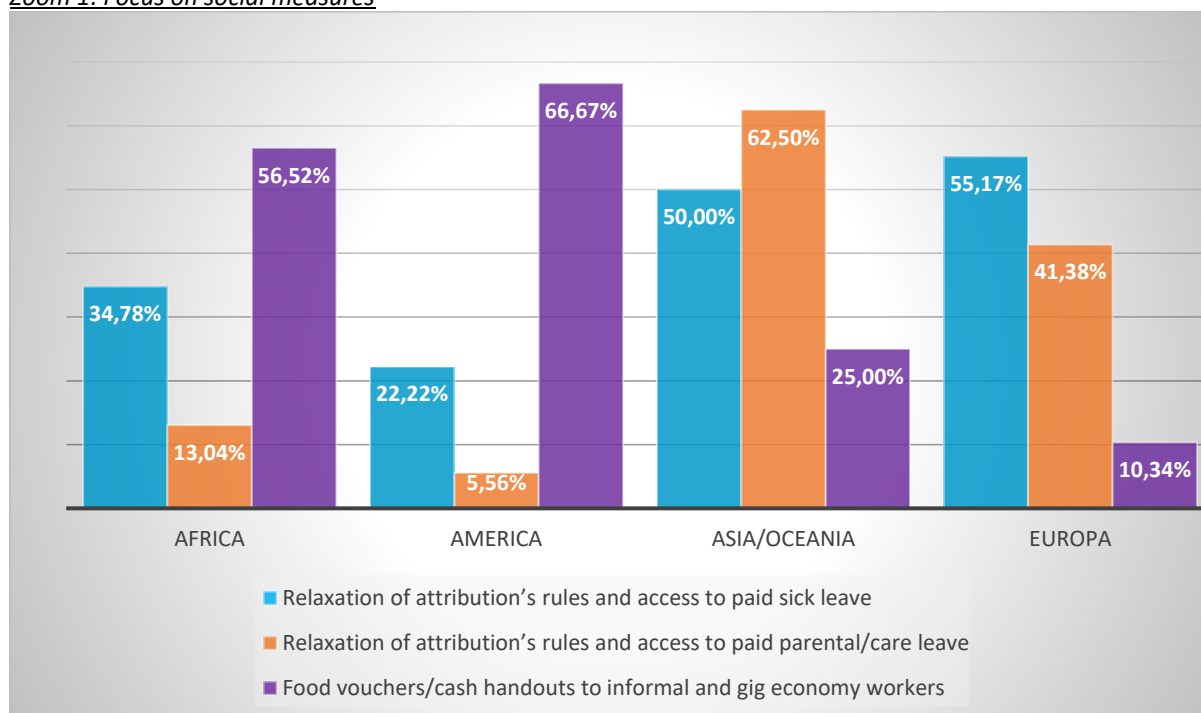
On all continents, and we will come back to this point later, telework has been fostered (87.3%) and when it was not possible, social dialogue has been encouraged to implement preventive actions in terms of health, safety and working conditions (86.1%).

Percentage of countries (PES respondents) having implemented one or more of the measures



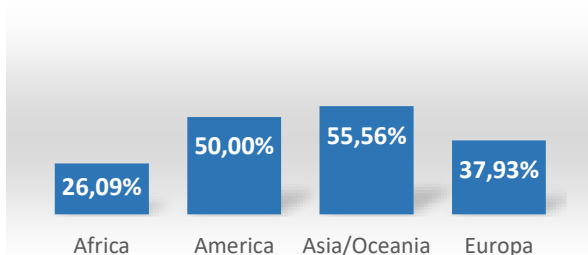
The main regional gaps can be noticed on social measures towards the working population, with the easing of access to existing social benefits, as it is happening in Europe and Asia. In America (mainly Latin America) and Africa, one-off targeted support measures are being implemented (food vouchers, cash aid) for the most vulnerable populations (workers in the informal economy and the gig economy).

Zoom 1: Focus on social measures

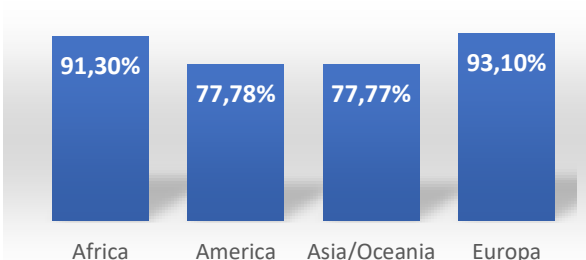


With an average of only 32.9%, promoting the use of online training to enable employees to invest in skills development during the period. However, it will be interesting to observe the impact of formal or informal "job switching" (change of professional activity, volunteering, coping with social distancing, etc.) on the skills of the working population. As the "zoom2" graph shows, America and Asia-Oceania, undoubtedly more accustomed to digital use, have made greater use of this measure.

Zoom 2: Promotion of online training to invest in employees' skills in times of downturn



Zoom 3: Encouraging teleworking among workers

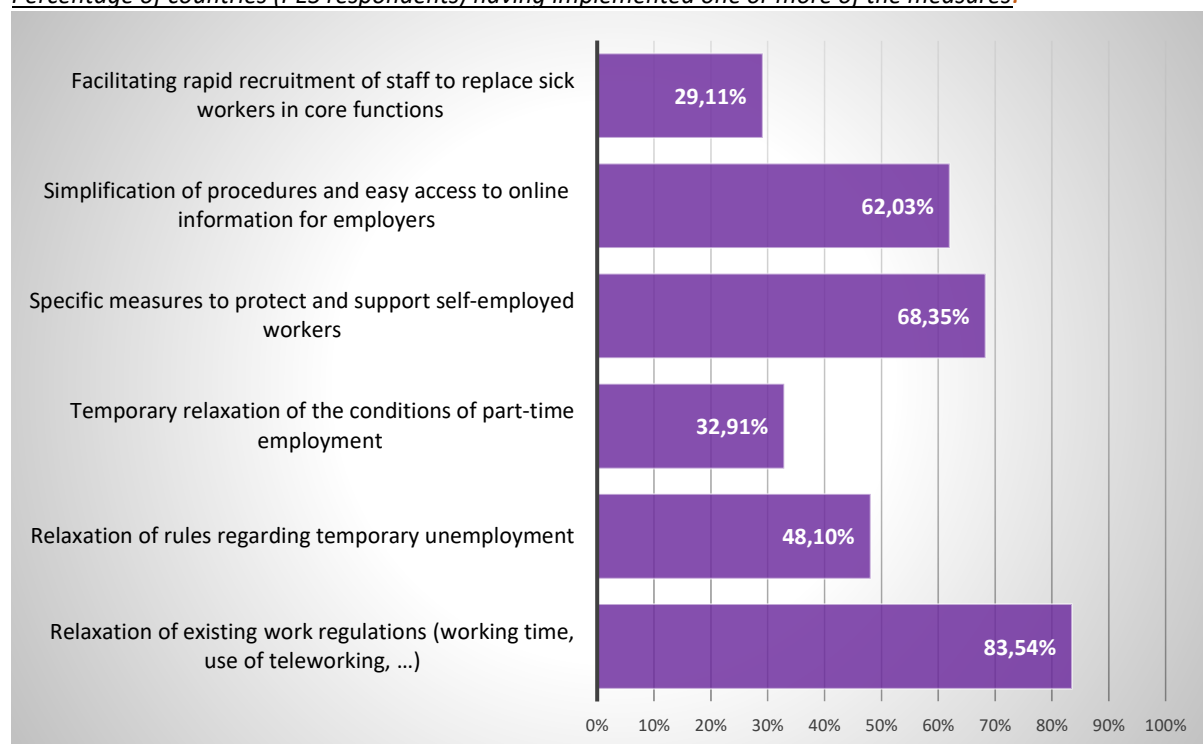


As for the encouragement of teleworking, the observation by continent (see Zoom 3 graph) shows the widespread use of this practice, with, as your statements indicated, the confrontation with heterogeneous realities of development in terms of infrastructures, facilities and cultural habits.

Many respondents now raise the question of how to make teleworking permanent in work organisations, and how to make it " legal " and " operational ", particularly as a means of taking action against pandemic risks (or other risks requiring social distancing), taking into account the diversity of contexts..

B. Facilitating Business Adjustment: Preserving the Diversity and Vitality of the Economy

Percentage of countries (PES respondents) having implemented one or more of the measures.

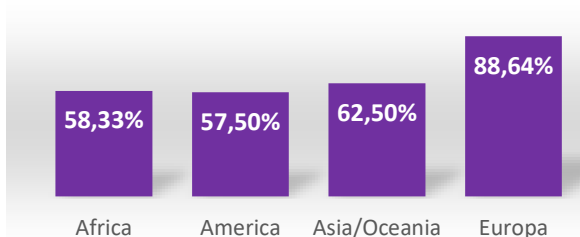


As shown in the graph above, most of our governments have taken steps to loosen up existing regulations so that companies can, for example, use telework whenever possible and adapt working hours.

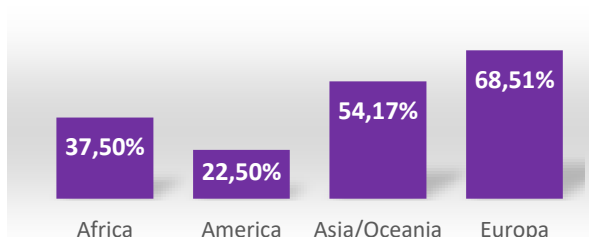
In most of the countries regardless of the region concerned (see Zoom 2 graph), measures dedicated to the protection of the self-employed were implemented to mitigate the effects of the sharp activity decrease experienced during this period.

It is mainly in Europe (41.38%) that measures have been implemented to accelerate the replacement of sick workers on essential functions. We have thus observed the implementation by some PESs and Ministries of simplified Offer-Demand matching platforms to meet this requirement (France, Belgium,).

Zoom 2: Specific measures to protect and support self-employed workers (% of countries having implemented the measure)



Zoom 3: Flexibility regarding the use of temporary unemployment (% of countries that have implemented the measure)



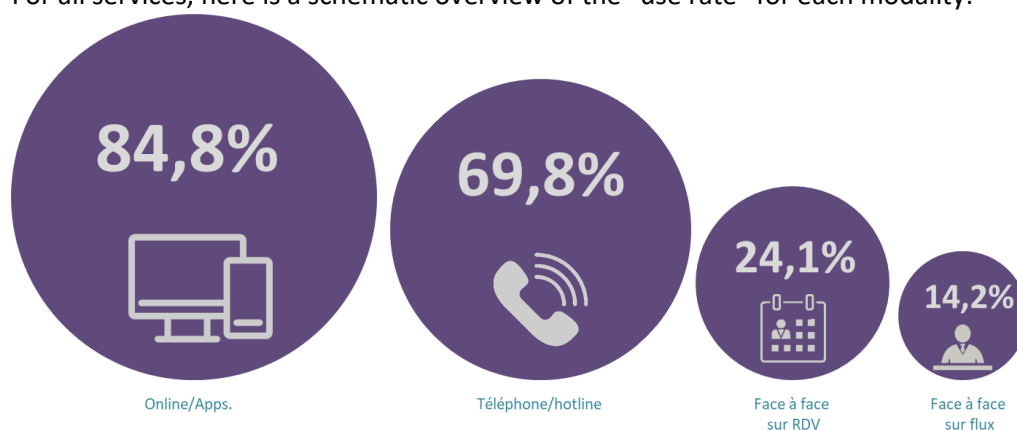
The use of temporary (partial) unemployment, an economic and social safety net, has been more favoured in Europe and in a large part of Asia-Oceania, than in America and particularly North America where fewer specific measures have been taken (45% if we consider only the Latin American countries).

Part two: Measures to maintain PES services

The responses to our survey show that most public employment services (PES), whether on a constant or on a deteriorated basis, themselves committed to measures to protect the health of their users and employees, have managed and continue to cope with the situation ensuring the maintenance of the majority of essential services.

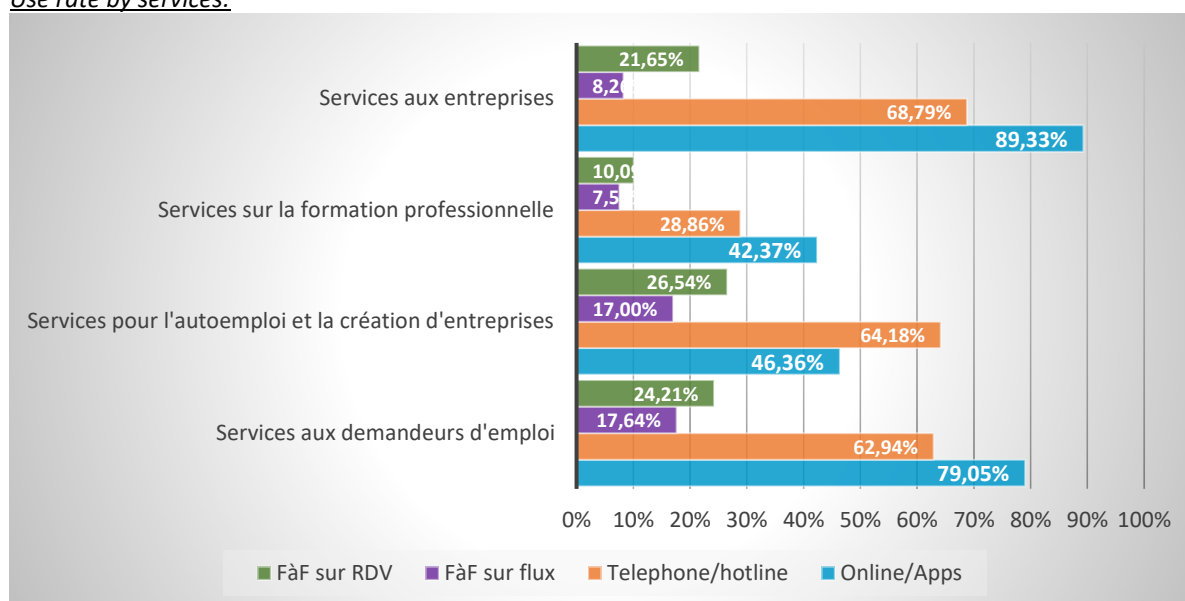
To illustrate the different scenarios, we have chosen to calculate a "use rate": corresponding to the percentage of modality used to deliver the service.

For all services, here is a schematic overview of the "use rate" for each modality:



While the use of digital is predominantly reported, it is interesting to note an important mention of the use of the telephone to deliver services to different users. The combination of all these service delivery modalities has enabled many countries to maintain a significant proportion of services by appointment and has limited flows that health restriction measures made difficult to organize.

Use rate by services:



For this purpose, the public employment services have been able to draw on their experience, particularly in providing services through digital tools and the implementation of a multi-channel approach.

Maintaining services for job seekers

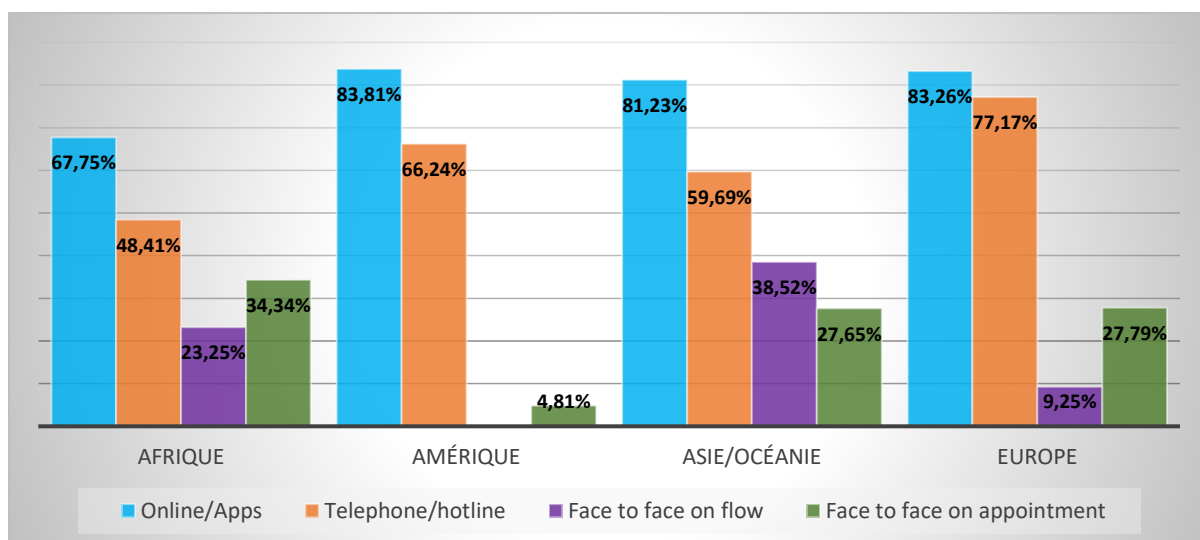
Nearly 80% (79.05%) of respondents reported using a Digital workflow to deliver all services to jobseekers and more than 62% using the telephone; only 17.6% declared having maintained face-to-face contact on workflow, and 24% by appointment.

We can see from the table below that the main services to job seekers are available mainly thanks to the widespread adoption of a multimodal approach in our PES in recent years.

Rate of use of the different delivery modalities by service (all respondents)

	Online/Apps	phone/hotline	Face to face on flow	Face to face by appointment
Registration	85,66%	60,36%	23,30%	23,77%
Information and consulting	83,17%	81,10%	24,12%	27,06%
Compensation for jobseekers	83,44%	52,18%	7,86%	17,45%
Payment of job-search aid	54,86%	41,04%	7,78%	23,40%
personalised support	82,13%	72,85%	20,93%	28,43%

On each continent remote access arrangements are available to all PES users on most of the services they normally provide. Face-to-face services, obviously linked to the different constraints of social distancing taken by each country, have been more widely maintained in Asia-Oceania and Africa. It should be noted that services provided by appointment have continued to remain in force in some European countries.



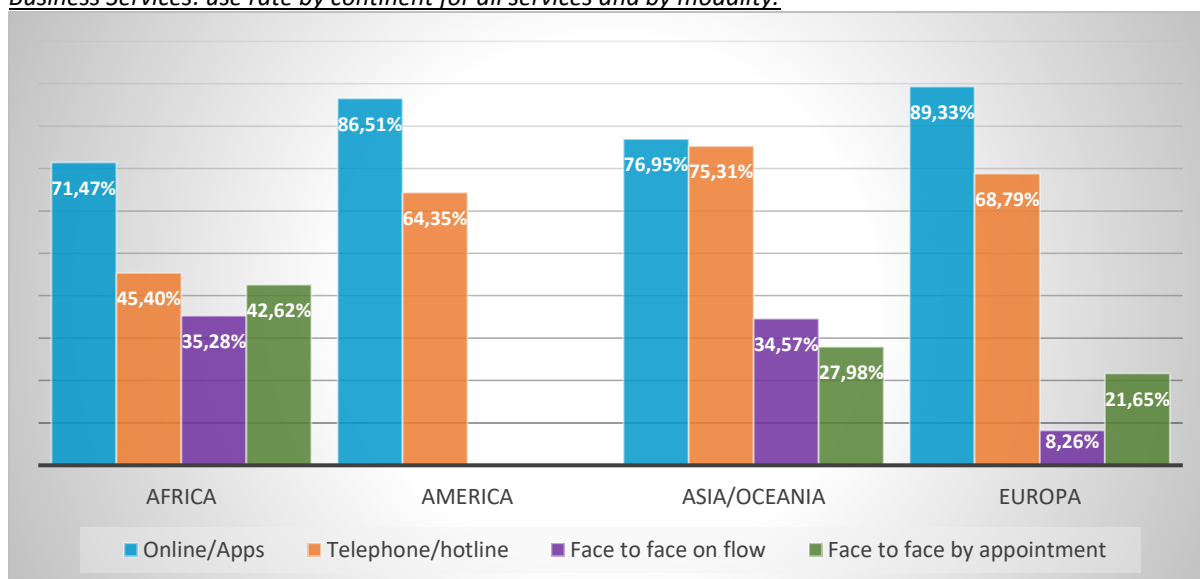
1. Maintaining business services

As with services to assets, as can be seen in the table and graph below, the digitalization of services has enabled us to meet the expectations and needs of businesses during the period. In some regions the PESs have been mobilised to provide additional benefits and services, particularly in the management and payment of aid to companies or short time working measures (e.g. Germany).

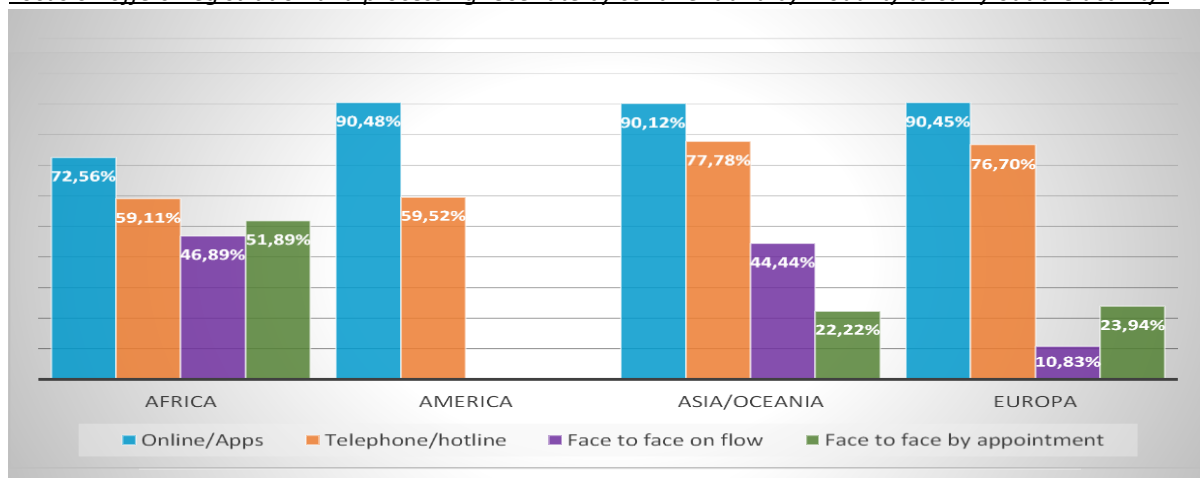
Rate of use of the different delivery modalities by service (all respondents)

	Online/Apps	phone/hotline	Face to face on flow	Face to face by appointment
Registration and processing of vacancies	85,17%	69,64%	25,69%	26,37%
Information and advice	77,35%	74,74%	20,75%	27,48%
Payment of employment or vocational training aid	81,44%	43,24%	12,80%	17,91%

Business Services: use rate by continent for all services and by modality.



Focus on offers' registration and processing: Use rate by continent and by modality to carry out the activity.



The registration and processing of job offers is handled mainly remotely and rather digitally. The particular needs of the job market and companies in sectors such as health and safety, logistics and agri-food, which have been under sudden pressure, have often required the setting up of specific digital matching platforms and accelerated training programmes in order to respond more easily and quickly (e.g. platform in France and the "jobs Switch" operation in Sweden).

2. Services maintained for the self-employed and Entrepreneurs

The effects of the pandemic on the economy, leading to massive job losses, have resulted in an upsurge in demand for advice and support for self-employment and business creation. In addition, those who have already embarked on projects are also in need of updating their action plans to adapt to new constraints and foreseeable market developments.

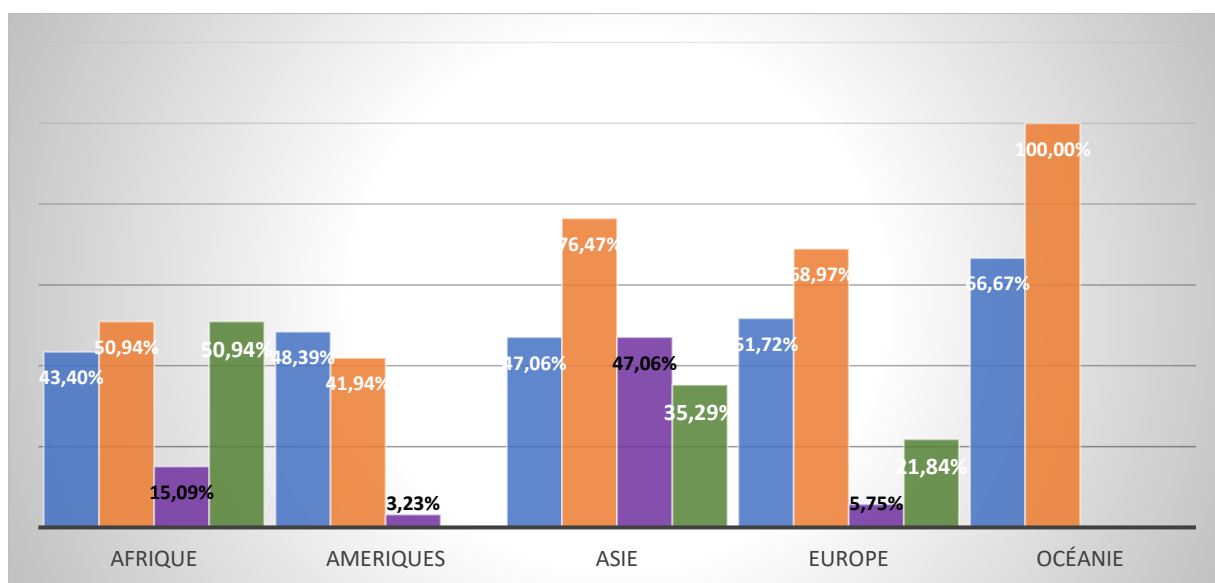
However, support for entrepreneurship is not within the competence of all the PES, 40% of our respondents declare not being responsible for these services.

For those providing these services, digital and telephone are once again the preferred channels (Online/Apps: 48%; Telephone: 58%; appointment: 27% and flow reception only 11%.)

Rate of use of different service modalities by service (all respondents)

	Online/Apps	phone/hotline	Face to face on flow	Face to face on appointment
Compensation	64,3%	42,9%	7,1%	21,4%
Information and advice	73,4%	68,8%	14,1%	26,6%
Registration and processing of the financial assistance application file	0,0%	59,2%	12,2%	24,5%
Personalized support	56,0%	62,0%	10,0%	34,0%

Rate of use of different service modalities by service (by continents)



3. Services maintained in vocational training

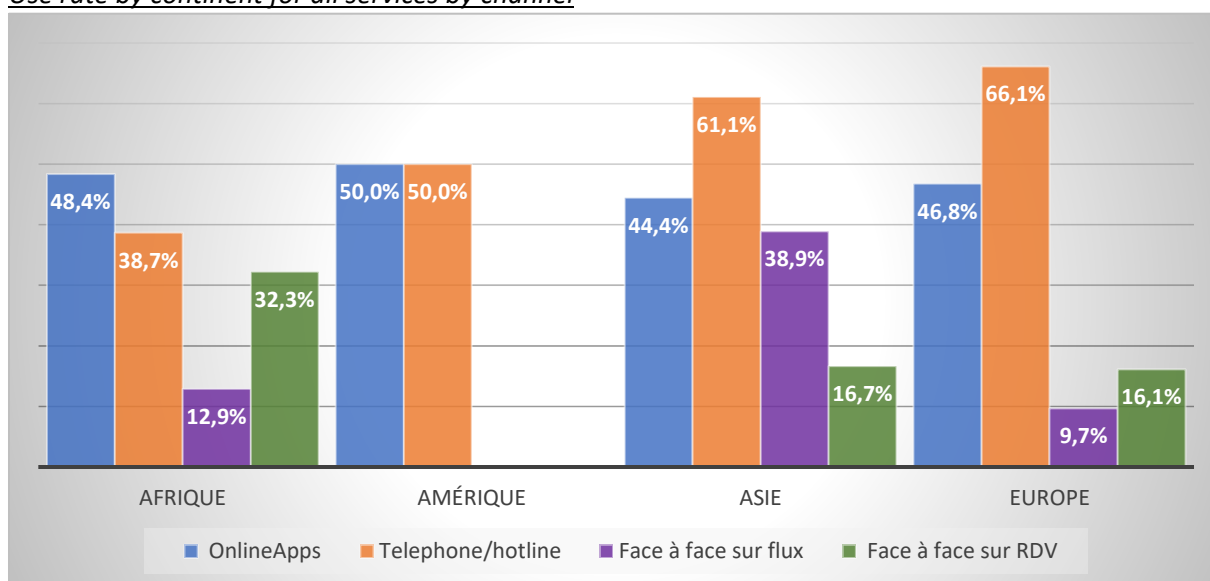
The entire vocational training sector has been severely affected by the pandemic's effects. Confinement or social distancing constraints have forced the suspension of face-to-face training in many countries. Whenever possible, remote training has gradually taken over.

Most governments and PES have been encouraging companies and workers without activities or jobs to engage in the development of their skills. The uncertainty about the future has increased the demand for vocational training. Consequently, training providers like other services, mainly used remote methods both to inform and advise and, whenever in their area of their competence, to ensure the remuneration of trainees.

Use rate of different delivery methods per service (all respondents)

	Online/Apps	phone/hotline	Face to face on flow	Face to face on appointment
Registration and processing of the financial assistance application file	0,0%	52,4%	16,7%	16,7%
Information and advice	75,4%	64,9%	12,3%	17,5%
Payment of financial assistance	58,8%	47,1%	8,8%	17,6%

Use rate by continent for all services by channel



Part three: Services organization measures

A. Implementation of continuity plans

Most public employment services have been challenged with a dual issue over the period: how to respond to a significant increase in the demand for services and how to ensure the protection of employees, taking into account the various health measures adopted by local authorities. More than 50% of the respondents reported having implemented a service continuity plan.

The organisational structure has been adjusted and some key departments have been strengthened:

- Staff relocation
- Recruitment of new employees
- Staff strengthening and transfer from other institutions

In most cases, PES have adjusted and simplified the access to benefits by relaxing eligibility criteria and often by extending coverage to other groups of workers affected by the economic effects of the pandemic.

Addressing the urgent needs of workers in key sectors and services during the crisis was essential.

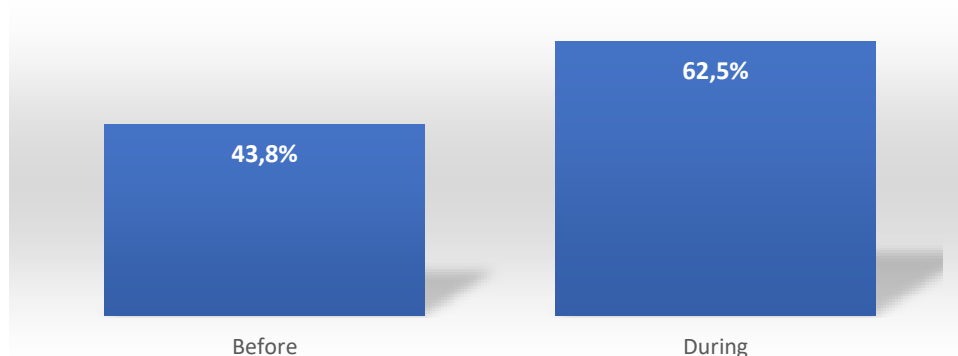
As previously mentioned, investment in digital technology has simplified access to services for most of the population. But to maintain these services, PES staff had to be mobilised on a daily basis, even though in many cases the usual use of the office premises was no longer possible, either completely (agency closure) or partly (reduction in the number of staff present on the premises).

In response to this twofold challenge, teleworking as solution has become the norm for most services.

B. Pushing telework

Public employment services have pushed in an unprecedented way the use of **teleworking**. Most of the countries indicated the use of telework (87.3%) and it has even been increasingly used including countries and public structures where this practice was not common before (+19 points for our PES).

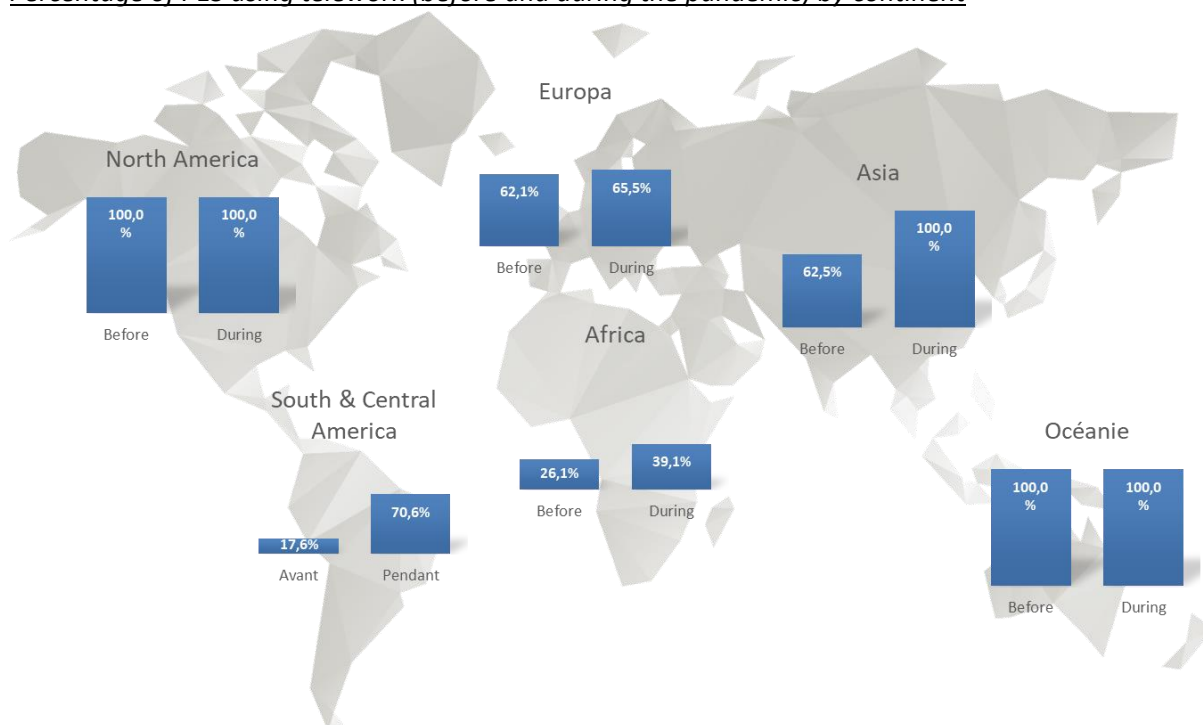
Evolution of the percentage of PES using telework before and after the start of the pandemic



Indeed, we see in the diagram below, a clear increase in regions where this use was still relatively undeveloped before the pandemic, this is particularly the case for PES in Latin America, and to a lesser

extent for those in Africa. This massive recourse, even in deficient infrastructure or equipment, has largely enabled us to achieve our priority missions.

Percentage of PES using telework (before and during the pandemic) by continent



Many of you are now declaring the intention to set up and optimise this way of organising work.

This progress has been facilitated largely by the maturity of our organizations (implementation of continuous improvement processes that have secured the processes, new management practices that have developed mutual trust between management and employees, progress on mobile equipment supply, investment in digital services, etc.). But we must note that this unprecedented use of telework, in both the public and private sectors, has also revealed a form of digital precariousness and may eventually increase inequalities at several levels:

- At the territorial level, because these sectors, in some regions, represent a significant part in the informal economy and provide employment for a large percentage of less qualified workers, who are less digitally literate and therefore more vulnerable.
- At the social and educational level, where the lack of telecommunications infrastructure, insufficient or unsuitable equipment, as well as digital illiteracy, reinforces the vulnerability of certain groups, particularly of young people, who found themselves temporarily excluded from the labour market, , from education and vocational training.

Part four: Current or foreseeable problems:

This chapter summarises statements from PES representatives, thus complementing the quantitative statistics presented above. The statements illustrate similarities, but also differences in national expectations regarding the functioning of the labour market and service provision by the PES.

a) Synthesis of PES' statements

Your answers reflect a shared concern about the future in the short and medium term, raising questions about the nature and scope of the services to be provided.

The significant increase in unemployment in most of our countries requires special consideration. Hence, most of the PES are confronted with the challenge to absorb the significant growth in the number of job seekers in a context of increasing debts and deficits of our countries meaning in a best-case scenario constant means. This will encourage us to intensify our efforts to digitalise services and develop AI (Artificial Intelligence) applications in our activities.

Consequently, the relation of labour supply to labour demand, a crucial factor for the fluidity of the labour market, will profoundly change.

We are already witnessing the impact of the decline in activity in sectors that are vital to the economy of many countries, as for example in tourism-related sectors such as transport, hotels, catering's and all related services. These declining sectors will free up skills that cannot always be integrated into sectors with increased need for labour, such as health or the pharmaceutical industry, at least not at the shorter term. We will probably have to manage significant movements in the labour and skills markets triggered by the gradual readjustments in the various sectors of our economies.

Moreover, the contraction of consumption in the "rich" countries and a foreseeable relocation of certain types of production will inevitably have an economic and social impact on the "emerging" countries. In these countries, the formal and, also the informal economy are often essentially linked to industrial production (e.g. the garment sector in Asia is already badly affected), the export of consumer goods and mass tourism.

This will increase the vulnerability of those who were already in very precarious work situations or excluded from the labour market, thus marking a significant setback in our progress towards decent work and aggravating impoverishment of many.

From a PES point of view, the systems for preventing and combating exclusion, for guidance and support should be strengthened. Further, education and vocational training policies should be adapted and strengthened, PES playing a significant role in "shaping" these policies.

The 'job switch' issue, which may be considered very cyclical, is perhaps an indicator of a more structural change in the relationship between the working population and the labour market, similar to the trend we have been observing in recent years with the development of the gig economy.

Overall, this means for the PES increase the flexibility and responsiveness of our retraining and redeployment systems. Moreover, this calls for the further transformation of our matching methods to move from an "employment by occupation" logic to a "competence-based" logic, with a particular

focus on strengthening soft skills, especially those related to the personal capacity to adapt to change. Lifelong learning and guidance policies are therefore more than ever one of the responses to the crisis we are experiencing collectively. This also means a change in the way continuing vocational training is conceived, both in its relation to the immediate needs of the economy and in its capacity to support and guide workers in their transitions throughout their professional life.

Another significant point of the survey is that the shift to digital made by the majority of PES during the period of confinement reveals "digital divides" affecting all countries, not only those with low levels of equipment and infrastructure.

Given the fragility of the networks and resources, and given the different stages of people's technological knowledge, we must continue to consolidate, support and consolidate the use of these tools into our customer's relations.

Summaries of the PES statements & examples of measures by topics and continents

The paragraphs below are a "compilation" of the summarised statements by the PES respondents. This synthesis aims at providing the emerging characteristics and trends by continent. It includes some examples of actions or practices implemented by some countries or PES not meant to be exhaustive.

a) Workers in the formal sector

Africa

The increase in collective economic layoffs, foreseeable bankruptcies of small and medium-sized enterprises, and suspended employment contracts in sectors such as tourism, accommodation, catering and transport are severely hitting the continent, leading to a drop in income and loss of livelihood.

Inadequate communications infrastructure in some regions is an obstacle for workers' mobility.

Numerous factors add up making professional transitions and workers' insertion more difficult: a corporate culture which favours work at the office or at the work site, the lack of equipment as well as exogenous factors (electricity, housing).

Nevertheless, new jobs are emerging as jobs are being lost (Togo).

America

In Latin America, employment opportunities have decreased significantly due to social distancing measures, with only home services, delivery of food, medicine, etc. being available.

The increase in unemployment and in the number of people with access to unemployment insurance will require the definition of strategies and methodologies for the provision of services different from those applied so far; technology is not always sufficiently developed to meet these demands and the use of virtual media in the population is not prevalent (Uruguay, Mexico, El Salvador,).

This situation, which is not expected to improve, will undoubtedly alter the possibility of obtaining formal jobs, forcing workers to turn to the informal sector (Peru). Statements show a shared concern about the protection of people with low economic incomes, the lack of public transport (Guatemala)

North America is also experiencing a sharp increase in unemployment; special efforts are being made to redeploy some workers to sectors in demand (health, safety), to work on their adjustment to the use of new technologies, and to secure seasonal employment. (Canada).

Asia

Measures are being taken to prevent companies from dismissing workers. However, a long-term corporate downturn in performance could result in a high number of unemployed people. In addition, it may be difficult to find a new job due to the lack of recruitment (Japan).

Temporary workers face a decrease in the income (South Korea)

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the government, the private sector paid the salaries for two months even if operations had been interrupted due to the lock down. However, it will not be possible to apply this compensation in the future and therefore, , waged labor will be faced with salary cuts s as the example of several companies in the apparel sector shows. (Sri Lanka)

Due to factory closures workers will lose their jobs, leading to an increase in the unemployment rate (Cambodia).

Europe

In most European countries, unemployment is increasing, especially temporary unemployment, causing a large inflow of people and increased pressure on public employment services:

There are more than 1.26 million (based on employers' requests) of temporary unemployed (8 April 2020) due to coronavirus in Belgium, France, that is more than 10 million employees, benefiting from temporary unemployment. However, governments also remain alert to the risks of fraud on these benefits.

In Austria about 300,000 people have lost their jobs, about 900,000 people are in part-time work and more than 150,000 are unemployed.

In most European countries, where telework cannot be applied, companies must take the necessary measures to ensure compliance with social distancing rules. This rule also applies to transport paid for by the employer. Companies are authorised to continue their activities, provided they organise teleworking whenever possible, without exception. In the case this organisation is not possible, social distancing will be strictly respected. If it is impossible for the employer to fulfil these obligations (as, for example, in the construction sector), the company must shut down. These regulations do not apply to essential sectors and services (grocery shops, pharmacies, supermarkets, etc.). However, they will have to ensure, as far as possible, that the rules on social distancing are respected.

Risk of job loss and precariousness. In this context, the focus is on improving the skills (upskilling/reskilling) of workers in the sectors most affected by the crisis, particularly in the tourism sector, with the aim of reorienting such workers towards occupations that are currently more promising, particularly in the field of health and care for the elderly. (Portugal, Belgium,)

In this very uncertain environment, two factors would appear to be crucial: on the one hand, the estimated duration of the epidemic and the exceptional containment measures intended to halt it, and on the other hand, the capacity of public support measures to avoid a new banking and financial crisis in Europe.

Putting on hold the provision of some services, for example providing training courses at some fields, where it is not possible to provide the service online (for example welding, driving a vehicle etc). (Estonia)

Many workers work at a distance, which requires some adaptation to a new reality as well as to new working methods.

In several countries (e.g. Portugal, France), measures are being taken to support the implementation of socially necessary work to foster the responsiveness of public institutions, of the social and health sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees whose contracts have been suspended or who are working part-time may benefit from these compensation measures.

Difficulties due to the social distancing measures that will last for at least 8 months in Italy. PES should adapt their spaces to be able to maintain social distancing and be efficient at the same time (Italy).

The major problem for workers, jobseekers and enterprises alike lies in the lack of knowledge about the virus itself and the possible evolution of this pandemic. This uncertainty hinders the development of processes and long-term measures.

Oceania

The further spread of COVID-19 has had a dramatic effect on all forms of employment in Australia, with sharp falls in labour demand as many businesses are forced to close to halt the spread of the pandemic. The Australian Treasury has projected that the national unemployment rate could reach 10 per cent. The Australian Government has not yet implemented new employment services measures targeting specific cohorts, focusing instead on general income support measures and wage subsidies designed to limit the impact of the economic downturn for all affected cohorts. Under pre-existing policy settings, job seekers with greater barriers to employment can access higher levels of assistance through the programme *Jobactive*. Further special programs are in place to support several cohorts of job seekers who are disadvantaged in the labour market. For example, there has been a temporary expansion of eligibility for income support payments and the establishment of a new, time-limited Coronavirus supplement to be paid at a rate of A\$550 per fortnight from 27 April 2020. Through the *Job Keeper Program*, a direct subsidy is being provided to affected business of \$1,500 per employee per fortnight for up to 6 months. This will keep workers connected with their employer and provide more certainty during this turbulent economic period. The Australian Government is also supporting apprenticeships through a wage subsidy of 50 per cent of each apprentice's or trainee's wage paid up until a maximum of \$21,000, during the 9 months from January to September 2020. Support will also be provided to the National Apprentice Employment Network, the peak national body representing Group Training Organisations, to co-ordinate the re-employment of displaced apprentices and trainees throughout their network of host employers across Australia. Across these and other measures to support the health system and national economy, the Australian Government has committed the equivalent of over 16 per cent of GDP. These measures targeted, proportionate and are intended to be sustainable for at least six months. In addition, Australia's State and Territory Governments have also announced their own stimulus measures to minimise the impacts of the pandemic on workers. (Australia)

b) Jobseekers

Africa

Increased difficulties in finding a job due to the market contraction of available jobs and the massive arrival of new jobseekers who are often more qualified. Exogenous factors (electricity) and the low availability of (free) internet connection prevent the best use of remote services and hamper the proper dissemination of labour market information. Nevertheless, it is essential to continue the

digitalisation effort and to improve the labour market information system, by accompanying it with training in the ICT environment and developing online support (e-CV, e-interview) (Congo (Congo-Brazzaville)).

We also notice a difficulty in mobilising jobseekers for certain support services during this period of confinement.

America

Latin American PES must deal with a population that is not accustomed to the use of virtual media and that does not have the capacity to acquire these technologies. Similarly, given that the crisis brought about by COVID-19 will affect countries' economies and therefore create instability in the labour market, the most affected groups are the most vulnerable, who will be forced to work in precarious conditions and in the informal sector (Perú)

Unemployed people are in a highly complex position because they usually have informal activities to generate daily subsistence income. Since there are restrictions on trade and other activities, they cannot work and may fail to meet payment obligations and have a problem covering their basic needs. (Chile)

Those groups of the population who usually experience the greatest difficulties in being hired by companies will find it increasingly hard to enter the labour market. Even the hiring incentives introduced in several countries (e.g. Uruguay) for many years have not proved to be effective in solving the employment problem of vulnerable groups.

Public employment services must consider how to implement more energetic strategies. (El Salvador)

For those who were already distant from the labour market (low educational attainment), the difficulties in finding a job are even greater. The slowdown in certain highly skilled sectors and the redeployment of skilled workers to less skilled sectors could explain these difficulties (Canada-Quebec).

Asia

The same observation can be drawn as for workers with the growth in unemployment, but the impact will be greater for jobseekers with the reduction in new recruitments, the decrease in vocational training opportunities, etc. (South Korea; Malaysia, Japan)

Moreover, vulnerable workers are often the first to lose their jobs.

Europe

Due to the reduction in economic activity, job creation is expected to be much less important, putting the unemployed in an even more difficult situation. All jobseekers expect increased financial support from the government. (Montenegro)

In crisis situations that have a significant impact on the labour market, the most vulnerable social groups are the most penalized. People with low education and skills, immigrants, people in situations of rampant unemployment, single-parent families, people with disabilities, the digitally illiterate, older workers and young people without work experience are groups that the PES should support more intensively. (Portugal)

Since some employment services can hardly be organised via telecommunications and the Internet, some services are closed, such as some vocational training activities. (Finland, Estonia...)

But overall, in most countries, public employment services focusing on job search and job placement services continue to be delivered according to needs and demands, but under increasing pressure.

The digital divide becomes more acute during this period, particularly for jobseekers who regularly update their job situation and use the services usually physically provided in agencies (France).

For instance, in Belgium, unemployment rises to more than 200,000 inactive jobseekers (+10.2% month-on-month monitoring) The strong increase in the number of inactive jobseekers between 21 March (last TOP; 181,798 NWWZ abbreviation in Dutch) and 21 April by 18,614 (+10.2%), which is the strongest increase on a monthly basis ever, is probably largely due to the influx of temporary employees. Over the last 20 days (excluding weekends), the average increase has been around 900 per day and this increase has been accelerating over the last week. Solutions before Corona: the recruitment incentive for long-term jobseekers. The recruitment incentive for long-term jobseekers wants to support recruitment and sustainable employment. A Decree provides for the possibility to temporarily adjust the calculation of the premium so that employers who have to adjust their employment do not suffer any additional financial loss as an outcome Eligibility to full unemployment : Periods of temporary unemployment are taken into account in the calculation of eligibility to full unemployment. The days covered by temporary unemployment benefits (TUb) granted with an exemption from the eligibility conditions due to force majeure and temporary unemployment (TU) due to economic reasons for the period from 01.02.2020 to 30.06.2020 are assimilated to working days to meet the eligibility conditions in full unemployment. Temporarily unemployed people will soon be able to earn extra on top of their benefits, while asylum seekers will also be able to work.

If the unemployment rate increases, there will be more competition for the jobs available. There also will be a risk of increased poverty, of psycho-social harm due to the lockdown as well as a great sense of insecurity (Belgium).

We have experienced in the past that, during a crisis, when many people find themselves unemployed, those closest to the labour market have the best chance of finding a new job quickly. It will therefore be more difficult for vulnerable groups to find a job again. (Netherlands)

Jobseekers, especially vulnerable groups, will need stronger and continuous support from PES operators, trainers and supervisors, but, at the same time, these services will have to work out organisational methods to respect the rules of social distancing (Italy).

During this period unemployed people must be offered opportunities to improve their skills to anticipate the needs of the new labour market (Ireland)

Oceania

Mutual obligation exemptions for all jobseekers are currently in force until 22 May 2020. (Australia)

c) Unprotected/informal workers

Additional information: The informal sector is officially defined as "*a set of units producing goods and services mainly to create jobs and income for the people involved. These units, having a low level of organisation, are operating on a small scale and in a specific way, with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production. Working relationships, if any, are mainly based on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than on contractual agreements with formal guarantees*" (ILO, 1993).

In Europe, the informal economy and sector are generally used to describe: *all legal productive activities and activities for the supply of goods and services which are deliberately exempted from public authorities for four reasons: to avoid paying taxes, VAT or other charges; to evade paying social security contributions; to circumvent certain standards such as minimum wages, legal working hours, safety conditions, etc.; to escape certain administrative procedures such as having to answer statistical questionnaires or fill in forms.*

Africa

Significant suppression of activities and consequently of the possibilities of generating income (e.g. Ivory Coast, Zimbabwe) with major job losses (selling art objects to tourists, guides, hotel suppliers, e.g. in Benin). The affected population is difficult to reach and support and often, there are no or no appropriate measures in place (e.g. Gabon, Algeria).

Economic and employment conditions are deteriorating and the demand for decent work is increasing.

Non-recognition of the acquired experience gained through the exercise of informal activities (working in the informal sector) and therefore difficulty of reintegration, of reinsertion into the labour market (e.g. Tunisia)

America

Informal work will increase and will undoubtedly become a lot more precarious, since the labour market will go into recession and will be unable to integrate workers into formal work, while unemployment will be a constant this year (Peru).

Informal workers are generally experiencing the same situations as other vulnerable groups. In most cases, the informal status is linked to the type of activity carried out and to the professional profile, and this implies the necessity to improve these employment conditions.

Moreover, some sectors of the economy, such as the arts, do not have social protection. (Uruguay)

In Ecuador, the government and legislators are considering the creation of a needs-based humanitarian assistance fund with contributions from companies and employers, intended for health, the provision of food and protection of employment (Ecuador)

Informal workers will see their income levels fall (lower wages) and it will be more difficult for them to access social security (El Salvador).

In Chile: difficulty in accessing government subsidies and support. A precarious future is on the horizon for these workers, although a formula has been established for delivering direct financial resources in the coming months. (Chile)

In Panama: There is concern about social assistance, many are asking for subsidies, and as informal workers, for access to social security (Panama)

Asia

In Sri Lanka, only essential services are operational. Thus, informal work in the retail and food sector has continued, while most other activities in the informal sector are being impacted by the crisis. For example, informal workers in the tourism sector are facing hardship.

Unprotected/informal workers are the first to lose their jobs resulting from the long-term slowdown in business activity. In addition, finding a new job can prove difficult due to the lack of recruitment. (Japan)

Europe

In Belgium, only if "precarious" workers are assigned for a longer period do they have the right to be

temporarily unemployed, just like permanent workers. Temporary unemployment for economic reasons cannot be introduced for flexi-job workers. Force majeure can, however, be introduced but only if there is a written employment contract. (Belgium)

The Belgian social security system provides a replacement income available for a large part of the population (for example through a minimum guaranteed income scheme [*Revenu d'intégration social*]). However, since informal workers are not included in official statistics, we do not have any information that could clarify this issue. (Belgium)

In Bulgaria, even before the pandemic, informal workers were confronted with problems of insecurity and difficulty in finding clients and markets. In the economic downturn, these problems will be exacerbated among this population group. As they are not covered by insurance, they are not entitled to receive unemployment benefits. The emergency law provides for interest-free loans of BGN 1,500. Repaying the principal amount afterwards will be difficult for most of these workers. (Bulgaria)

In Italy, there will be the need to extend the minimum income scheme introduced in 2019 in Italy (Reddito di cittadinanza) and to foresee special ALMPs devoted to this group of workers. (Italy)

As far as Portugal is concerned, non-protected and informally employed workers are among the most vulnerable target groups. Once becoming unemployed they are not entitled to unemployment benefits, which will require the IEFP to find targeted solutions: as the option of trying to integrate them, as quickly as possible into the employment market. Another solution is to ensure their participation in re-integration measures (e.g. occupational activities, traineeships) allowing them to have some income and the possibility to acquire new skills. Professionals are involved to facilitate their future professional integration. It is planned to expand the use of social inclusion income, i.e. support that is allocated to people in need, but not qualifying for unemployment benefits. (Portugal)

In Turkey, informal workers cannot benefit from the employment opportunities provided by the State. They can benefit from social assistance provided by Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services. On the other hand, these people can receive social welfare allowances. (Turkey)

In most European countries a risk of increased poverty has been identified; these populations predominantly rely on social assistance and in some countries have access to healthcare (France).

Oceania

See Australia's response on page 14

d) Employers

Africa

All over the continent, the decline in activity, the disruption of supply chains and the risk of increased business shutdowns are generating numerous job losses (economic layoffs, non-renewal of contracts, etc.).

For Morocco and Algeria, some companies fear the persistence of the crisis (absence of market, restrictive measures, serious cash flow problems) after the deconfinement, of a partial or total takeover of activities by other companies yet with financial difficulties and the need for investment (IS, adjustment of the offer, ...) and recruitment.

In some cases (Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire) there will be industrial reconversions, production and service adaptations that public services and public authorities will have to support. Recovery plans are foreseen (Namibia).

This will require more company visits and prospecting to better identify and respond to the needs of companies. (Mali)

Using teleworking potential through new work plans. (Mauritius)

America

In general, the sectors most affected are restaurants, tourism, hotels, non-essential trade, such as clothing shops, accessories shops, and especially the small retail trade.

In Chile, 0% interest loans are being implemented (Chile); Programmes are being developed for all sectors to inject liquidity into SMEs and reduce the cost of manpower in enterprises.

For El Salvador, labour intensive sectors will find it more difficult to reactivate their activities. Therefore, it will be very important to develop innovation projects to transform business models. Support for the financial system will play a key role. (El Salvador)

In Argentina, regarding companies, there are MSME sectors (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) which were already badly affected by the economic crisis (in 2019 the GDP dropped by 1%) and now need even more support, as this widespread crisis will lead to the closure of many companies. (Argentina)

Many small businesses found themselves in very challenging economic situations that have forced them to cease trading, while others have temporarily closed due to health and safety requirements, and others are assessing the situation of their workers. But support options are being considered to avoid employees losing their jobs: for the payment of taxes, the rent, lighting, water, and so on. (Panama)

Examples of tax incentives in Ecuador: *In accordance with Article 2 of Executive Decree No 1021, value-added tax and income tax for micro-businesses, tax domiciles in the Galapagos, economic activity by airlines, tourist accommodation and/or restaurant services, the agricultural sector and regular goods exporters, are all being deferred. The Government is also considering the proposal for a humanitarian assistance fund, which will also benefit small-scale producers. Similarly, the National Finance Corporation (Corporación Financiera Nacional) and Social Security Institute Bank (Banco del Instituto de Seguridad Social) have created a credit line for small and medium businesses that are vulnerable due to the health emergency, with funding of USD. 25,000 to USD 100,000 at a rate of 8.95%, adjustable over an 18-month period. (Ecuador)*

Asia

All over the continent, companies are being forced to shut down and reduce their activities, and could face cash flow problems, including not being able to pay their employees' salaries (Japan, South Korea).

For Sri Lanka: The tourism, garment, airline, and travel sectors are in danger. Gradually, the government is easing restrictions by reopening garment factories, but with a minimum of workers. The hotel sector is threatened by the loss of tourist arrivals, and the government is in constant discussion with the various sectors to take the necessary strategic decisions.

In Malaysia: we are expecting more wind-ups, downsizing, etc. Recovery support is being provided through subsidies, however, due to the confinement, many companies have not yet started their activities and are experiencing great financial difficulties.

Europe

As in other parts of the world, many sectors of the economy are strongly affected: tourism, the hotels, and restaurants sectors, but also transport with particularly airline companies, industries including aeronautics as well as the car industry. The cash flow of the companies, whatever their size, has been badly compromised, provoking the risks of suspension of payments and bankruptcies with the social consequences that one can imagine. Governments have taken measures to limit these risks. A European recovery plan is currently being negotiated.

The government of Montenegro has adopted important policies to revive the economy and support entrepreneurs, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. Here are some of these measures:

- Subsidies for industries closed in April and May 2020, accounting for 70% of the minimum wage and 100% of taxes and contributions to the minimum wage for each registered employee in sectors that had to be closed due to epidemic measures
- Subsidies for the most vulnerable activities for April and May accounting for 50% of the gross minimum wage for each registered employee in sectors, whose work is at risk due to measures to fight the pandemic
- Subsidy for wages of employees on paid absence for April and May of 70% of the gross minimum wage for each employee who had to stay home to care for a child under 11
- Subsidies for wages of employees in quarantine or isolation also for April and May 2020 accounting for 70% of gross minimum wage for each employee, who must be quarantined or in self-isolation
- Subsidies for new employment accounting for 70% of the gross minimum wage for at least 6 months for entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium-sized companies, who register new employees in April and who were simultaneously registered as unemployed persons at the Employment Agency of Montenegro.
- Additionally, the Government will charge the Investment and Development Fund to design new credit lines in a manner which complements these Government measures.
- State bodies, administration bodies, institutions and other entities exercising public authority, founded by Montenegro, as well as companies in which the capital is majority-owned by the state, will request the postponement of enforcement initiated on their proposal, after the adoption of measures, for a period of 60 days. This measure is targeted at economic entities, whose activities were prohibited by order of the Ministry of Health to combat the epidemic.
- companies in activities whose work is prohibited by the order of the Ministry of Health are exempted from paying a fixed part of the electricity bill for the months of April, May, and June.
- In parallel, during the application of these measures, the Montenegrin Electric Enterprise will double the subsidies' amount for electricity bills targeted at socially disadvantaged households.
- Postponement of repayment of loans at the request of citizens and economy to be applied by all banks, micro-credit institutions and the Investment and Development Fund for 90 days
- Postponement of payment of taxes and contributions on earnings as well as obligations under the Law on Rescheduling of Tax Claims. (Montenegro)

In Belgium: Force majeure can be invoked depending of the sector of employment. Temporary unemployment for economic reasons exists if there is a decrease in customers, orders, turnover or

production, as an outcome of which it is not possible to maintain the normal level of employment. An application for recognition as a company in difficulty is sent by reasoned and registered letter to the Director-General of the Directorate-General for Collective Labour Relations of the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, together with a business plan or a collective bargaining agreement (CAO). Conditions: the proof of unforeseen circumstances, resulting in a substantial drop in turnover, production, or orders in the short term. They must also prove the causal link between the unforeseen circumstances and the substantial fall in turnover, production, or orders. Sectors for which a sectoral collective bargaining agreement has already been concluded do not have to conclude an enterprise collective bargaining agreement (metal fabrication industries ,textile industry, paper industry -paper and board processing, technical maintenance, assistance and training in the aviation sector for airlines, for the diamond industry and trade, for the Flemish sector of sheltered workshops, social workshops and made-to-measure companies). Within the next days, other sectors will probably also conclude such a collective labour agreement. If companies cannot refer to a sectoral collective bargaining agreement or do not have a company collective bargaining agreement, they will have to add a business plan. (Belgium)

Several measures have been taken at federal level and in the country's regions to offset companies' and workers' loss of income due to the lockdown measures. The aim is to avoid (or to limit) bankruptcies and redundancies. They help to support demand in a targeted way during the lockdown period, and to ensure that businesses stay afloat and can retain their employees. However, although the negative impact of the spread of coronavirus on growth appears limited to the first quarter of this year, it could be more substantial in the second quarter. Declining supply and demand, through disruptions to global supply chains, could lead to an interruption in production and amplify the economic consequences, including the number of bankruptcies. (Belgium)

In Bosnia and Herzegovina: Support for job retention and the setting up of recovery funds.

For Bulgaria: Due to the uncertainty, many companies will be putting their plans to hire new employees on hold. The country's companies are relatively highly indebted, which will limit the possibility of benefiting from some of the proposed measures. The difficult prognosis for the development of the infection jeopardizes the elaboration of post-pandemic recovery measures. (Bulgaria)

In Italy, companies will need an extension of time for the extraordinary measures taken to support SMEs in the COVID19 crisis (suspension of tax payments, State guarantees on loans, measures for the retainment of workers, etc.) especially those companies and activities that cannot adapt very easily to the social distancing measures (bar, restaurants, care services, hotels, etc.) (Italy)

On 20 March, the Finnish government approved a €15 billion budget to help companies during the crisis. An additional support programme for businesses was made public on 8 April, with a contribution of around €1.5 billion. (Finland)

In Turkey, a fiscal support package, including 100% deferral of VAT and social security contributions for six months in certain sectors as well as a short-term work allowance has been announced. The government is also taking some economic measures, such as providing exporters with stock financing assistance to maintain activity during the downturn.

In Estonia, a trend towards redundancies in some sectors can be observed. To avoid such behaviour, the temporary subsidy programme was created. On the other hand, in some sectors (e.g. health care, agriculture) there is an increased need for employees. To meet the demand, an online platform for temporary job offers has been set up. (Estonia)

Oceania

See Australia's response on page 14 – would it not be easier to read if copying the text here? Always where relevant?

e) Self-employment and entrepreneurship

Africa

On the one hand, we are observing a decrease in the motivation of entrepreneurs to create a business due to the slowdown in household and business consumption spending, the mistrust of financing institutions to grant credits or loans to entrepreneurs (e.g. Togo, Benin, Morocco,...), On the other hand, we are observing an increase in the number of candidates for self-employment given the number of redundancies and the difficulty of obtaining wages in a context of crisis. (e.g. Gabon, Morocco)

Counselling services have almost stopped, the number of business start-ups and self-employment (AGR) has declined, and access to financing is difficult. (e.g. Benin, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Tunisia)

In addition, the insufficient level of digitalisation of some PES and the poor mastery of online tools are obstacles for service delivery. High cost of internet connection fees make access to the services offered by PES difficult (Togo, Benin, ...)

Emergence of new business opportunities according to market needs during and after the crisis. (Morocco)

Mali intends to set up appropriate SME financing mechanisms and to strengthen support and guidance schemes, with the establishment of a database on buoyant sectors.

America

In South America, in most of the respondent countries, business creation is on hold. Nevertheless, a diversification of income-generating opportunities (home-based products and services, distance learning courses, etc.) is taking place and self-employment is therefore increasing (e.g. Uruguay, Chile, Peru, Guatemala) People who have lost their jobs engage in forms of local self-employment, but mainly in an informal way.

In Argentina, as a temporary measure, self-employment and freelance work are fostered through state programmes. No measures are provided to encourage the creation of new enterprises. (Argentina)

Chile has introduced an unemployment insurance for the self-employed. (Chile)

In El Salvador, intensified actions to promote self-employment as an accompanying measure for the sectors and/or persons affected. (El Salvador)

In Panama, many people and companies are adapting their business strategies and creativity to the current needs and health constraints related to the coronavirus. They are receiving advice, legal procedure counselling and support to be able to hire people who will assist them in their production chain. (Panama)

In Ecuador, a draft law aimed at maintaining employment and entrepreneurship is being submitted to the Executive and several bills are being considered by the legislature. (Ecuador)

Asia

Entrepreneurs as the self-employed are (and will be) more cautious in setting up businesses given the impact of health measures on many sectors of the economy. Only essential service stakeholders can be more confident given the higher demand during lockdown. (Malaysia, South Korea)

The Sri Lankan government has imposed import restrictions on various items, and this will have a positive impact on the production of local suppliers. Therefore, the autonomous employers will be motivated, and a long-term sustainable model will be developed.

Europe

In most European countries, measures have been adopted to support the self-employed and liberal professions: reduction of advance payments for the self-employed, postponement of or exemption from the payment of social security contributions and, in some cases, provision of a replacement income (e.g. Belgium, France). The weak point of this population lies in the low capacity of their financial and cash reserves to cope with the temporary cessation of their activities. Should the health crisis persist, these reserves could prove insufficient and lead to bankruptcies.

Support programmes are mostly maintained by PES when it is within their remit, but the uncertainty about the duration of the spread of infection and its long-term economic effects constitutes an obstacle to the motivation of most people for self-employment and business start-up.

Another factor is the decreasing in purchasing power due to the cessation or reduction of work in many companies, but also due to the influence of attitudes. Of course, we also observe cases of rapid reaction to the current situation and the occupation of vacant market niches, mainly for safety and logistics equipment production.

In Bulgaria, the Employment Promotion Act provides for a measure that allows unemployed beneficiaries to receive unemployment benefits for starting their own business after having submitted a business plan. (Bulgaria)

In Romania, self-employed workers, athletes, lawyers, etc., who were not working under an employment contract, also benefited from temporary unemployment compensation during the emergency period. (Romania)

In Montenegro, an EU-funded grant will continue to be delivered over the near future by the Montenegrin Employment Agency, and significant funds will be injected into the market to create new jobs, including freelance jobs. Although self-employment is expected to decline, this measure should contribute to limiting the economic effects of Covid-19. (Montenegro)

In the Netherlands, self-employed persons are not covered by state insurance for unemployment or sickness. We are now witnessing that many of them do not dispose of the necessary financial resources to cope with the economic crisis. For the self-employed, specific emergency measures have been set up. (The Netherlands)

In Turkey, the public SME bank will postpone interest and debt payments for a minimum period of 3 months. The Credit Guarantee Fund increased its limits for SME loans from 3.8 to 7.7 billion US\$. The balancing period for working time rules will be increased from two to four months. (Turkey)

Oceania

See Australia's response on page 14

f) The informal economy

Africa

The informal and subsistence economy have been severely damaged in Africa, with limited trade, making it difficult for workers in this sector to earn a living. Consequently, they are not capable to pay bills and buy basic commodities. This decline in purchasing power will therefore also have an impact on the formal economy. (Zimbabwe).

Many businesses in the formal economy, particularly those in difficulty, could be tempted to switch to the informal sector to reduce their social charges especially if they do not eventually benefit from appropriate support measures (Gabon, Morocco, ...).

The Democratic Republic of Congo has set up an emergency programme. (Congo)

Togo's PES highlights the danger for informal sector entrepreneurs of wanting to continue their activities despite insufficient support measures. (Togo)

Mali's PES suggests upgrading skills in the trades (professionalisation) along with more support and guidance for these workers. (Mali)

America

Different scenarios have emerged, many people in the informal sector have been affected by the lack of consumers for their goods or services. On the other hand, there are people in the informal sector who have developed strategies to be able to offer their services or new services. Others are supported by the *Panama Solidario Plan*, and a large part of the population receives food vouchers. The banking sector has developed plans to defer debt repayment, the service sector provides many with water, electricity and other services, and many tenants are making payment arrangements. Safe distribution channels have been set up to ensure that producers can continue to deliver their products. (Panama)

The State must provide for assistance to the formal economy sector. (Haiti)

Given the mobility restrictions and the fact that the informal sector is also not protected, an increase in the number of layoffs in the informal sector is expected following the loss of formal jobs. (El Salvador)

Employment centres in Peru do not work with the informal sector. Clearly, more needs will have to be addressed in terms of occupational integration (Peru).

It is very likely that informal work will increase due a precarious labour market, and this will become quite complicated in a country where 73% of its labour market is informal. (Peru)

The Executive has created the Family Protection Voucher (*Bono de protección familiar*) for non-dependent affiliates with incomes below one SBU, for members of the Peasant Social Security and for those doing unpaid work at home. (Ecuador)

Asia

No verbatim on this topic

Europe

Europe seems to be less concerned about the informal sector, which is more a case of undeclared work (see page 17).

The informal sector represents one of the more vulnerable sectors that is likely to be the most severely affected by the epidemic. For this reason, social security inspectors continue to monitor companies to protect workers' rights. (Turkey)

Knowing whether the informal sector will grow or slow down because of the measures and recommendations taken by the Government of Montenegro is not yet evident. (Montenegro)

The informal sector has been severely affected by the COVID-19 crisis and subsequent closures. These workers are currently being assisted by social services in the municipalities (basic commodities: food, cleaning, protective masks, etc.) (Italy).

g) Labour mobility and migration

Two points are mentioned in connection with the closure of certain borders

- Cross-border activities - problems in terms of trade relations and circulation of cross-border workers.
- Migration – its impact on migratory population flows for economic or political reasons

Africa

Borders are closed, movement is restricted internally and to other countries; only goods are crossing borders (Benin)

This will have a negative impact especially on the informal economy that relies on cross-border trading to earn a living (Zimbabwe)

To apply for work permits online and to abide by migration laws (Mauritius)

Analysis of labour migration in Central Africa (meeting, exchanging information with experts from Central African countries) (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Combating the illegal use and misuse of foreign workers and stepping up inspection visits to businesses to reclaim jobs that nationals have not been able to access (Gabon)

During the lockdown period:

- Extension of migrant workers' contracts in host countries
- Suspension of departures to host countries

After the lockdown:

- Reduced demand for workforce from countries affected by the pandemic (Morocco)

Fewer recruitment opportunities on the international market (Togo)

Information, awareness raising and guidance. Regular update of? the Labour Migration Management Process Manual. (Mali)

America

Movement restrictions, whether legally imposed by governments, linked to loss of employment in the host country, or voluntarily enforced by individuals simply for fear of health risks, raise various problems:

- The reclassification of returnees,
- Increased demand for employment and risk of impoverishment of migrant populations,
- Labour shortages in some sectors, particularly in North America.

New inspection strategies must be developed and implemented, for example at ports, airports, and border areas (Haiti)

A cordon sanitaire between neighbouring areas has been set up before public holidays to prevent movement. Suspension of travel between regions under quarantine. (Chile)

It is expected that returnees will have difficulty integrating into the labour market, hence the importance of developing employment programmes for this vulnerable population. Likewise, an increase in labour supply for short-term work abroad is expected, but some restrictions (or preventions) to movement may persist, which will need to be managed through a human rights-based approach. (El Salvador)

In Panama, many people with pending immigration paperwork have been admitted and, in our particular case (work permits), they can work with the permits they currently have, allowance being made for the fact that once everything returns to normal, the corresponding cases will be resumed, with the Ministry of Work continuing to handle consultations online and by phone. Regarding many people who were transient, agreements with companies and governments have been made to repatriate people who were in transit. Mechanisms have been established to extend work permits and current migratory statuses. (Panama)

Migrants are one of the most vulnerable groups; in Peru, there is a large migrant population of Venezuelans, reaching 800,000 people, mostly working in the informal sector, and presumably their situation with this crisis will become more precarious. (Peru)

In recent years, Uruguay has welcomed large groups of migrant workers, particularly from other Latin American countries. The difficulties of professional integration are likely to increase due to restrictions on job creation in the current labour market. (Uruguay)

The Emergency Operations Committee has restricted the entry of passengers by air and sea. Ecuador's border posts are closed and will only be opened with restrictions. People who have been abroad must also be placed into mandatory isolation for 14 days. (Ecuador)

There are no restrictions on returnees. The closure of borders does not apply to Guatemalans (Guatemala)

In Mexico, no specific measures have been taken on this issue.

Potential reluctance to inter-provincial and international mobility: Some sectors may be more affected by labour shortages, such as construction, the agricultural and information technology sectors (Canada-Quebec).

Asia

The government has stopped migration for the moment due to the global situation (Sri Lanka)

Restriction of movement (Cambodia)

Restriction of movement (not mandatory but recommended), Reduced public transportation. (South Korea)

Europe

The main concern in Europe focuses on the movement of cross-border and seasonal workers on two aspects:

- The generation of employment linked to tourist activity will be significantly reduced due to the closure of certain borders, the reduction of air traffic and movement restrictions,
- Restrictions? to use of European or non-European manpower to carry out seasonal work related to agriculture (fruit harvesting, picking).

This is perhaps the most important issue for Montenegro, as the entire economy relies on tourism and sightseeing during the summer season. Moreover, another challenge will be seasonal employment which will decrease. It is unclear for how long the borders will be closed, leading to a decrease in the number of tourists and significantly reducing the supply of seasonal workers in Montenegro. (Montenegro) A problem of sufficient labour supply for seasonal work in agriculture and horticulture: Belgium has put in place several measures restricting transit at its borders (from Belgium and to Belgium) to professional and essential journeys. Professional travel is considered an essential journey. Germany: a plausible proof of their place of destination is strongly recommended. France has introduced a strict restriction on its territory until Monday 11 May. To date, Luxembourg has not introduced any controls at its borders with Belgium. In all cases, Belgium has limited the crossing of its borders to essential movements. The Netherlands: The Belgian-Dutch border is strictly controlled. Only the crossing of the border for essential movements is allowed. Today, there is a vignette system that allows professions from critical sectors to be given priority when crossing the border. The critical professions can be found here:

<https://crisiscentrum.be/nl/news/crisisbeheer/coronavirus-de-antwoorden-op-al-je-vragen>

Frontier workers who live in another country (e.g. France, Germany, the Netherlands or the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg) and who come to work in Belgium may, in the event of temporary unemployment, receive benefits at the expense of Belgium. It was still possible to go to work. However, a certificate from the employer had to be presented at the border. In principle, this means that the employment contract does not have to be suspended in such a case. If a person lives in Belgium and works abroad, the employee is at the expense of the country of employment. Consequently, there is no temporary unemployment at the expense of Belgium. (Belgium)

The health crisis is happening at a time when Belgium habitually depends on a large foreign workforce, for example in seasonal employment. In Belgium, regulations on casual employment or seasonal work enable flexible recruitment in all horticultural production sectors: floriculture, tree nurseries, forestry, fruit-growing, vegetable crops (in greenhouses and in open air), and the cultivation of endives and mushrooms. Movement restrictions present a barrier to this work, which is primarily carried out by workers from eastern Europe. In addition, access to Wallonia's employment market by foreign workers is simplified for certain trades recognised as having workforce shortages. Movement restrictions could further increase the recruitment needs of businesses for these sectors already under strain. (Forem-Belgium)

Camps and centres have been set up for migrants to prevent the possibility of movement and the spread of the virus. These facilities provide accommodation as well as food and health care. (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

According to the Bulgarian PES, the flow restrictions need to be tackled from several angles:

1. Border closures put to the test many countries such as Bulgaria whose economy relies on imports and exports

2. The business of carriers is also affected. Firstly, aviation, for which a package of European measures is being prepared. At the same time, European countries agreed on "green corridors" for IRT (International road transport), but there were problems in this industry even before the pandemic was declared. In December 2019, an agreement was reached at the European Commission on the Mobility Package, with which some countries disagree. At the end of March 2020, eight Member States, including Bulgaria, asked the EU to support transport companies affected by the pandemic of the coronavirus and to cease work on reforming the working conditions of truckers. The letter urges the EU to help transport companies, as it plans to do with airlines. In recent years, less and less people in the country were employed by transport companies, so creating additional restrictive conditions would lead to the bankruptcy of many of these companies and the reduction of staff. In the current crisis, however, freight transport is of particular importance

3. On migration: Europe has taken stringent measures to combat the coronavirus. As a measure, Member States have closed the external borders of the EU as well as those between EU Member States. At the same time, the European Commission is working hard on a new legislative package for a comprehensive migration policy. It will replace the current one and will again offer a binding mechanism for the redistribution of migrants to the Union in the event of strong pressure in border states. Acquired as "quotas", it was temporarily tested at the peak of the migration wave. Between 2016 and 2018, refugee applicants moved from Italy and Greece to the rest of the EU, examining their applications for stay in Europe. The concept was never fully adopted, and some Member States resisted. Currently, the number of migrants in Bulgaria is not large, but to the border, in the territory of Greece, there are thousands of migrants who wish to cross the country on their way to Western Europe. They live in camps with very high population levels and are a risk group in terms of infection. (Bulgaria)

Restriction of movements until the end of the frontiers lock. (Italy)

A special arrangement has been made to ensure that 1 500 foreign seasonal workers could arrive to Finland. This is essential for securing spring sowing and other vital agricultural work. The need for seasonal workers in agricultural industry is normally roughly of 15 000 workers in summertime. (Finland)

The demand for foreign workers has decreased and it will probably remain at a lower level for a while since domestic workers are being laid off. (Croatia)

Migrant workers who are also beneficiaries can have problems exporting their benefits if they are not able to comply to the rules in the EU 883 Regulation on coordination of social security when quarantined or when PES offices are closed due to COVID 19. Since many borders are closed migrant workers might get "stuck" in a country without suitable jobs. (Netherlands)

Due to closed borders, movement is restricted, with specific agreements for people working in agriculture and care services (Austria)

In Turkey, immigrants can benefit from online appointment and application services in employment-related services. In addition, they can also contact our provincial units. They have the possibility to call the service number to get information on the benefits provided by İŞKUR. Related information would be provided in different languages. They must respect the restrictions which apply to Republic of Turkey citizens, such as travel restrictions, etc. (Turkey) For Portugal, border closures and mobility restrictions have created increased problems for these workers. Job insecurity for these workers may accentuate social disadvantages. Before the pandemic crisis, the country was growing and needed workers whose profiles were not available in the Portuguese labour market. The current context may

have reversed this trend and further analysis will be needed before action is taken. Job insecurity for these workers can catalyse social disadvantages. Before the pandemic, the country was expanding and needed workers whose profile was not available in Portugal. Before moving forward with concrete measures, it will be necessary to consider how to best reconcile the need to attract immigrants due to the demographic situation with the foreseeable rise in unemployment rates. (Portugal)

h) Vocational training

Africa

Restructuring training programs to suit the prevailing market trends will need to be considered. Even more so as some people will lose their jobs and will need to be reintegrated. (Zimbabwe)

Look for support and advice online. Follow course online (Mauritius)

No proper training (Namibia)

Implementation of a consultation framework between the NEO, INPP, CNSS, Ministry of Labour, WAPES and ILO (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Training centres are closed: setting up training via television and videoconference (Benin)

Vocational retraining schemes for accessing job-generating sectors of the economy, such as the agroindustry sector. (Gabon)

Some students are late in completing their studies, some risk dropping out (Côte d'Ivoire).

Cancellation of face-to-face training. The obsolescence of certain training courses with regards to the new needs of the labour market has become obvious. Difficulties linked to distance learning habits (Morocco)

Diversification of vocational training to meet the unfulfilled requirements of enterprises (Togo)

Continuing the development of the Operational Dictionary of Jobs and Employment (Dictionnaire opérationnel des métiers et emplois - DOME) or African Directory of Jobs and Employment (Répertoire africain des métiers et emplois - ROAME). Strengthening training for the development and implementation of skills training modules. (Mali)

Exogenous factors - Online training service offer (Congo (Congo-Brazzaville))

America

Creation and adaptation of new training courses (Haiti)

Difficulty to follow face-to-face courses. Difficulty to learn online for lack of knowledge (Chile)

A shift to e-learning modalities and an increased use of ICT for vocational training should be possible. (El Salvador)

The new digital platforms were used to promote training courses. Using the slogan "Stay at home", virtual training options were highlighted. High demand for vocational retraining for different professions (Peru)

The education sector has moved to remote learning at all educational levels. As far as workers' vocational training is concerned, online training possibilities are also beginning to be promoted and generated. (Uruguay)

In Ecuador, classes have been suspended throughout the country, and the school year will end in virtual mode in the highlands and the Amazon until 30 June. (Ecuador)

Few job opportunities and low pay (Guatemala)

No action has been taken in this matter, but the Unit of the National Employment Service, the General Directorate of Human Resources of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security provide distance learning courses for workers. (Mexico)

Asia

Face-to-face vocational training has been suspended and almost all courses are now delivered online.

TVET institution closed and there are no possibilities of e-learning for students (Cambodia)

During Covid-19 and beyond, we will face a strong demand for vocational training. Those who are not able to join the labour market can take advantage of this situation to get their skills validated and upgraded. The Ministry of Youth and the Ministry of Human Resources are seriously addressing this issue, particularly for young people and those who have recently lost their jobs. (Malaysia)

Europe

As gatherings and group training are prohibited, additional efforts will be made to facilitate the conditions for online vocational training. This is a challenge as other activities are being reorganised within the Montenegro Employment Agency. In addition, vocational training providers are not well prepared, and it will take time for them to adapt to the government's preventive measures. (Montenegro)

In Belgium, vocational training is continued digitally where possible. The practical modules cannot take place during the duration of the lock-down, internships have also been suspended due to sectors in lock-down and / or the social distancing measures. A restart of an individual vocational training (abbreviation Dutch IBO) can be proposed by the VDAB after the termination of the contract due to force majeure. Indeed, many companies have had to stop their activities in the past days/weeks. Due to changing rules, possibilities and emerging solutions, some companies can still resume their activities. If these companies wish to continue the previously terminated IBO, it can be done according to specific guidelines.

An employee who had to follow a training course at the start of his employment (at a third party before the lockdown) can invoke temporary unemployment due to force majeure if there are no internal alternatives (e.g. internal training). Pupils following an alternating training may be made temporarily unemployed for reasons of force majeure or for economic reasons. The young person under 18 years of age (who is still subject to part-time compulsory education) is not entitled to unemployment benefits. A young person (+18 years of age) who is still studying with a full curriculum is also not entitled to benefits, except if the lessons are mainly given on Saturdays or after 5 p.m. (VDAB- Belgium)

Everything has been suspended (retraining) except the regular teaching process that takes place in the form of on-line courses. (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Online adult vocational training, both now and in the future, has been adopted because it is not clear how long social distancing will be maintained. The entire education system has, very quickly, resorted to distance learning. This will greatly stimulate the transition to e-learning for adults. (Bulgaria)

Vocational training has been suspended due to confinement. Some training is already provided online (as well as for school courses). (Italy)

The demand exceeds the available supply by far (Ireland)

All training activities organised by the PES were stopped after the introduction of the restrictive measures. In the following period, due to the increase in the number of unemployed people, the need for vocational training will increase. (Croatia)

De facto no possibility to enter a training, training measures which started before Covid-19 restrictions: online, if possible, no new measures available until June. (Austria)

On-site training programmes at the workplace are currently being implemented: However, companies have the right to suspend such training without any legal requirement. In addition, programme participants may leave the programme due to their state of health or age. (Turkey)

The aim is to provide online training courses with a level of quality equal to those provided in face-to-face sessions. For some fields (e.g. welding) online training cannot be provided. (Estonia)

Pending activities for the moment. (Albania)

"To support private entities, including those in the social sector, and their workers, the Extraordinary Support Measure for the Maintenance of Employment Contract in a situation of business crisis - Professional Training, of a temporary and exceptional nature, aims to:

- Mitigate business crisis situations, ensuring the viability of companies or establishments
- Support the maintenance of employment contracts in situations of business crisis
- Support the development of the professional qualification of workers that increases their employability.

Procedures were thus defined within the scope of the measure's execution, namely regarding the realization of distance training or on site if possible, according to the current provisions regarding the prevention of the emergency triggered by the COVID 19 outbreak. We consider it necessary to raise the level of digital literacy so that, in the future, the use of distance learning does not prove to generate greater gaps among audiences, since all trainees with low levels of digital literacy will have much more difficulty in professional reintegration. Portugal traditionally has low levels of digital literacy, according to DESI - 2019 (EU Digital Economy and Society Index), Portugal is in 19th position among the 28 countries stating""(...) The country has a poor performance in terms of Human Capital and Use of Internet services, which is partly explained by the relatively high number of people who do not regularly use the Internet. (...) "" It is essential to revert these indicators, especially that of Human Capital, both for access to training, which will be increasingly distance training, or for access to employment, where teleworking is gaining ground and, therefore, removes those who do not have compatible digital skills." (Portugal)

Possibility of face-to-face/online training. (France)

Reduction of funds available for employment-oriented vocational training requiring selective strategic actions for sectors undergoing reconversion (Spain)

i) Other PES-related aspects

Africa

As the Congolese PES is transversal, it must work in all areas. (Democratic Republic of Congo)

The ANPE's programmed activities have been reduced to the essentials, as the government has announced a reduction in state spending; suppression of many activities; psychological problems and development of various diseases; reduced social life; general gloom. Development of online service start-ups; (Benin)

Identification of job vacancies in the informal sector and supervision (valorisation) of several activities to attract the national job seekers. (Gabon)

Delay in achieving the objectives and implementing the PES action plan (e.g. investments, projects) (Morocco)

America

Efforts are to be made in all areas (Haiti)

Depending on their financial capacity, provinces have launched programmes to support the private sector, but in a limited way (Argentina)

School year postponed, uncertainty about resumption dates (Chile)

Some companies do not pay their workers the minimum wage legally required by the government, and with the crisis salaries have been reduced even further. (Guatemala)

For Canada (Province of Quebec):

- 1) Difficulties in attracting clients when resuming business (prioritisation of income-generating activities or turning to domestic obligations)
- 2) Online training could be more requested
- 3) Training of workers redeployed to certain sectors.

Asia

No comments on this topic

Europe

Employees in the non-profit sector are subject to the rules of the private sector (linked to an employment contract), they may be temporarily unemployed for reasons of force majeure, but not for economic reasons. (Belgium)

In all its areas of competence, Actiris has launched a 'collective intelligence' exercise within all its departments to collect ideas for initiatives to address the coming economic crisis. It aims, for example, to answer questions on how to manage a high influx of young people, innovative ways of ensuring labour-market reintegration, training needs, how to evaluate employment support schemes, etc. Actiris also cooperates closely with the regional employment minister to analyse the impact on the PES budget in relation to government priorities. (Actiris-Belgium)

In General: Unemployment could increase in the upcoming months despite great efforts by all responsible actors in politics, the world of business and administration. How big this increase will be and how long it will last is currently not foreseeable. (Germany)

One of the most affected sectors, which has created a large part of GDP in recent years, is tourism (more than 23% of registered unemployed since the beginning of the state of emergency have been from this sector). The travel and tourism business are currently facing losses that are unlikely to be easily recovered. Hotel and restaurant businesses could benefit from government-guaranteed financial instruments, but only if they have no credit obligations. They may also benefit from the employment protection measure. However, there are many small family businesses in this sector that are reluctant to avail themselves of credit, which puts them at risk of bankruptcy if the tourist season does not take place. As regards the tour operators in the Emergency Measures and Actions Act, it is foreseen that those who have to reimburse a trip, when it has been cancelled due to a declared emergency, may offer the traveller a voucher for the amount paid. If the traveller does not accept the voucher and, in the absence of another package travel agreement, between the tour operator and the traveller, the tour operator shall reimburse not later than one month from the date of the cancellation of the emergency any payments received by the traveller or anyone on his behalf. If the tour operator is unable to recover the payments it has received, there may be tension between the operator and those wishing to travel, including lawsuits. (Bulgaria)

The Finnish Parliament has approved the state of emergency, giving the government extra powers to fight the crisis. Especially critical personnel in healthcare can be required to work under the Emergency Powers Act. (Finland)

Regarding the prospects of economic sectors and employment opportunities, people and companies are feeling insecure, and it is necessary for governments and other economic forums to provide guidance, projections, hope, measures, proposals on how this crisis should be overcome at the global level, so that countries can take their own measures. (Albania)

j) Any question you want to share with our community?

Africa

Enabling workers, jobseekers as well as employers to use telework through capacity building. Seeking online support and advice (Mauritius)

What will be the role of public employment services in a devastated economy? (Namibia)

How to strengthen the PES digitalisation in Sub-Saharan Africa? (Democratic Republic of Congo)

How are other PES planning to restart their activities after the crisis and with what means? (Ivory Coast)

What role will cooperation play in supporting the PES during and after the crisis (Morocco)

The national employment and self-employment agency have set up a crisis unit and is working on a post-pandemic rescue plan for job seekers and small businesses in difficulty. The agency wants to be supported in its strategy and to find a partner to liaise with and be inspired by its initiatives (Tunisia)

How to ensure the permanent follow-up of jobseekers, especially the graduates? (Mali)

America

COVID-19 has exposed all our weaknesses. We will have to take new measures to be prepared for all eventualities (Haiti)

We are seeing acts of corruption during the pandemic. The great Latin American pandemic, corruption. (Argentina)

What are the best strategies for supporting job retention, and what role does training courses play for work in this pandemic? (Chile) Need for more virtual advice to private and public institutions and/or organisations (Panama)

What initiatives or proposals are being looked at to meet the new occupational demands we will see? How are you working on the issue of retraining in the short term? (Peru)

Given this situation, we need to develop the use of web tools and social networks for a better offer of employment services. In Uruguay, we already have a Professional Mediation via Web. So, the question is to know if there are any experiences in the field of online work counselling that we could use as a model to develop in our country. (Uruguay)

Will we have sufficient and necessary resources (financing, human resources, technology) to ensure the recovery of employment in the context of the anticipated public finance crisis? (Canada - Quebec)

Asia

Can you share with us the different national strategies adopted to minimize the workforce shortages related to this pandemic? (Sri Lanka)

We would like to know what countermeasures other countries have adopted to deal with COVID-19. (South Korea)

Europe

We would like to launch the initiative of pooling responses to COVID-19 by the Western Balkans and South East Europe, specifically for the unemployed. Such an action will bring together the neighbouring countries of this region in the creation of common intervention measures, platforms for the exchange of experiences, etc. and we would like to know if such an idea arouses interest. (Montenegro)

The way in which technical unemployment figures are compiled in neighbouring countries differs totally from the way they are determined and calculated in Belgium. In Belgium, it is easy to find an agreement between workers and employers regarding technical unemployment. Sitting at home for one day is already counted as technical unemployment in Belgium. One fifth of all workers in Belgium are situated in some form of technical unemployment. More than in Germany (4 million workers, or at least 10 percent of German workers), considerably less than in France (10 million workers, or at least 50 percent of French workers). With a view to the composition of figures in international publications, are specific definitions of technical unemployment considered in a differentiated way or is this calculated globally in relation to the total number of people employed? (Belgium- VDAB)

To regulate the labour market, new and ongoing measures continue to be discussed and updated, analysing the situation. Therefore, our reflection should focus on at least two points: intelligently subsidised temporary employment, i.e. in sectors that really need it, and improving the skills and qualifications of the newly unemployed. (Bulgaria)

Are there currently any specific post-COVID strategies/measures planned to address the rise in the number of unemployed after this initial crisis? (Croatia)

We see that in many countries due to COVID-19, PESs are less strict or do not enforce on job seeking activities of beneficiaries. For the Netherlands we are in a similar situation. We do encourage beneficiaries to stay active on the labour market, but do not enforce on job seeking during the crisis. At the same time, we see that there is growing demand of labour in vital jobs. For instance, in health care (obviously) but also in the agri-food sector since many migrant workers returned to their home countries due to the corona virus. Normally we would stimulate and enforce jobseekers to take on jobs in these sectors but now we are hesitant to do so since jobseekers might be scared to get out of the house due to COVID -19. (The Netherlands)

The need to understand the new employment perspective should be grasped so that jobseekers and enterprises can be best advised in this new market situation. (Albania)

Oceania

Australia wishes to learn more about the steps taken by other WAPES members to ensure the transition from face-to-face to online employment services in response to the pandemic.

In conclusion...

In this complex period, the PESs have been able to effectively maintain the implementation of their priority missions. Overall? We note however that the pandemic crisis has and will have profound and lasting effects on our society and particularly on regions and populations that were already vulnerable.

As many countries are gradually exiting confinement, we will be facing an upturn in activity, in a context where the health risk remains very present, most certainly with drastic budget control measures, but also major transformations or fluctuations in the labour market associated with strong social tensions. In this context of uncertainty, we will have to act.

And for that, several actions can be taken:

- Pursue and accelerate the digitalization not only of our service offers but also of our internal processes by simplifying them (e.g. HR, logistics) and increase our capacities of anticipation and intervention by developing the use of artificial intelligence where relevant. Therefore, we equally need to install new sensors, to diversify and make the data of our environment more reliable (the best algorithm is only valid if the data introduced is significant and accurate).
- Pursue and accelerate our actions on our performance levers by integrating long-term risk management, in health and other areas, into our organizational plans and service delivery processes and by capitalizing on initiatives emerging from this crisis.

We have understood that telework is not only a question of technology but also of culture and particularly of corporate culture:

- Our teams had to be? and have been able to create new ways of working, new rituals (social meeting, collaborative work and maintaining the link via social networks) and have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to fulfilling their missions,
- Our managers have been able to redefine priorities, rebuild regular links with their teams, anticipate and reorganize in uncertain times and thus reassure. They have been able to adopt and make effective use of new technologies, new communication 's and collaboration tools (zoom, skype, MS Team, ...).

Agility, empathy, and resilience are the markers of this difficult episode; we can make them lasting markers of our decision-making.

The crisis of COVID-19 has highlighted the need for more horizontal and decentralized organizations with more autonomy for greater flexibility and responsiveness to events.

These are the topics we propose to share with you and to develop within our association.

WAPES, Brussels June 2020

Annex 1: Strengthening worker protection

They tell us more about

Prevention and economic support measures: Strengthening worker protection

AFRICA

ANPE- Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (Benin)

- Suspension of public transport
- Reduced number of people in other transport (taxi)
- Systematic and compulsory use of masks in the cordon sanitaire regions
- Installation of compulsory hand washing devices in all services and companies
- Temperature measurement device (optional)

Ministère de la Jeunesse et de Promotion de l'Entrepreneuriat des Jeunes (Ministry of Youth and Youth Entrepreneurship Promotion) - Burkina Faso

Measures of the Ministry of Youth and the Promotion of Youth Entrepreneurship implementing the Government's decisions within the framework of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Pursuant to the decisions taken by the Government within the framework of the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Youth and Youth Entrepreneurship Promotion hereby adopts the following measures:

1. Suspension of all relocated activities
2. Suspension of all missions except those considered essential
3. Limitation of human contact by favouring electronic communication (telephone, emails, WhatsApp, Messenger, tweeter, Instagram, etc.)
4. Limitation of hearings to those deemed essential
5. For offices with a high staff density: application of a weekly rotation system to relieve congestion in the offices while ensuring the prompt processing of files. The managers of the structures concerned will consult with the Secretary-General on the practical arrangements
6. The Ministry's buses and the *ECEs* under its supervision are no longer rented
7. Respect of protective measures and distances between participants in meeting rooms (this information should be provided to the tenant users)
8. 2-week leave, renewable according to the evolution of the pandemic, for all pregnant or breastfeeding women and any person suffering from a respiratory disease.
9. The DAF (Administrative and Financial Department) will take all the necessary steps to acquire the protection kits for the central structures and missions
10. Managers of State Public Establishments, projects and programmes and decentralised structures are invited to take initiatives to provide disinfectants in their workplaces.

(Ouagadougou on 23 March 2020)

General Directorate of Employment – (Ivory Coast)

In addition to social distancing measures, teleworking has been favoured and each service has implemented rotation and curfew-related work schedule change programmes.

Youth Employment Agency – (Ivory Coast)

Hand washing and temperature taking device.

Observatorio do Mercado de Trabalho (Labour Market Observatory - Cape Verde)

Preserve employment; Dismissal; Subsidy to informal sector workers; Hiring of health and social protection professionals.

ONEM - OFFICE NATIONAL DE L'EMPLOI (NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT OFFICE- Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Wearing of masks, hand washing, downsizing of workers (' minimum service'), suspension of non-essential activities, distancing of workstations.

National Employment Office (Gabon)

People with a medical condition such as chronic illness are exempt from coming to work. Strict prohibition of more than 10 people in a workroom.

Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs- Haiti)

Subsidies to workers from the textile sector.

ANPE - Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (National Employment Agency- Mali)

Access to products for barrier measures is facilitated.

ANAEJ - Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi des Jeunes (National Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment – Mauritania)

Provision of cleaning products and masks.

Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training (Employment Service) – Mauritius

An amount of half the minimum wage is granted to workers in the formal and informal sectors.

ANAPEC - Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi et les Compétences (National Agency for Employment and Skills- Morocco)

- Mandatory wearing of masks
- Social distancing
- Adaptation of workplaces (e.g. large areas/installation of plexi-glass panels in the cash register set)
- Installation of disinfection booths at the entrance of certain factories
- Wearing of medical visors for specific sectors
- Installation of fans for ventilating workplaces

ANPE- AGENCE NATIONALE POUR LA PROMOTION DE L'EMPLOI (NATIONAL AGENCY FOR THE PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT - Niger)

- Hand washing device
- Working time adjustments
- Protection kit for staff
- Application of barrier gestures

ANE- AGENCE NATIONALE POUR L'EMPLOI (NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY- Togo)

Working hours for the entire public administration have been adjusted. Working hours are from 08:00 to 16:00 every weekday. The possibility is given to each administration to modify these hours according to circumstances to allow workers to return to their homes before the curfew decreed from 8:00 pm to 6:00 am.

Placing staff members on leave, shift rotation, mandatory wearing of masks at work and regular hand washing. Suspension of training activities for young people and other small entrepreneurs. Implementation of hand washing with soap and hydro-alcoholic gel. Distribution of masks to all employees.

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICES DIVISION (Zimbabwe)

The Ministry is currently carrying out inspections in workplaces that have been authorized to operate during lockdown to ensure the workers' safety.

AMERICA

SINE - SISTEMA NACIONAL DE EMPREGO (NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM- Brazil)

Provisional measure 936 of 4/1/2020: establishes the emergency employment and income maintenance programme and provides for additional labour measures to deal with the state of public disaster as acknowledged by Legislative Decree No. 6 of 20 March 2020, and the public health Emergency of International Importance resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19), regulated by Law No. 13.979 of 6 February 2020 and other measures.

This programme aims to:

1. Preserve employment and income
2. Ensure work and business continuity
3. Reduce the social impact arising from the consequences of public calamity and public health emergencies.

The measures of the Emergency Employment and Income Maintenance Program include:

1. Payment of an emergency employment and income preservation benefit
2. Proportional reduction of working hours and wages
3. The temporary suspension of the employment contract.

This program endorses the payment of an income benefit to maintain employment in case of emergency, based on the following assumptions:

1. the proportional reduction of working hours and wages

2. temporary suspension of the employment contract.

Servicio Público de Empleo (Public Employment Service- Bolivia)

A ministerial resolution regulating the prevention and confinement of COVID-19 in the workplace, suspends public and private activities, and ensures wages for the public sector.

MTSSN- Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social de la Nación (National Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security – Argentina)

A 60-day ban on dismissal without valid reason has been imposed, and collective negotiations have been held to suspend employees with a maximum reduction of 25% of salary.

The labour assistance programme has been implemented providing wages to more than three million private workers, providing emergency family income to informal workers, increasing the amount of the unemployment fund and providing interest-free loans to the intermediate sectors.

SENCE- Servicio Nacional de Capacitación y Empleo (National Training and Employment Service- Chili)

EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION ACT. It ensures maintaining the employment relationship between the worker and the employer. The latter pays social security contributions (pensions, health, etc.) and the worker receives a minimum 3-month degressive severance pay.

TELEPHONE LAW. Legislation aimed at establishing measures to protect workers and give them the opportunity to carry out their job.

DNE- Departamento Nacional de Empleo (National Department of Employment- El Salvador)

Prohibition of dismissal of persons quarantined by the competent authority (Decree-Law 593). Other texts mandate employers to maintain the payment of salaries and to shut down businesses carrying out non-essential activities (Decree-Law 593 and Health Branch Decree No. 19).

US\$300 economic support to households affected (professionally) by COVID-19 (mainly informal workers)

DNE- Dirección Nacional de Empleo (National Directorate of Employment)- Panamá

Decrees to protect workers exist, such as:

1. If the contract is suspended, workers who have been suspended must be protected by decrees allowing them to resume their work once the emergency phase has ended.
2. Reduction of working hours and staff turnover in enterprises approved by the government to continue to operate.
3. Develop and implement working methodologies such as: teleworking, stand-by work in which the worker is waiting to be called to work.
4. Through decrees, ensure that workers benefit from their time off in lieu, from paid holidays.
5. Support companies that are currently in a state of emergency and have the government's permission to continue operating, by recruiting unemployed people to sustain production logistics, particularly in the primary sector.

6. Provide support measures to producers and the supply chain, as well as logistics distributors, to ensure that the population can be adequately supplied.
7. Support companies changing their usual production to essential needs due to the State of Emergency.
8. Strengthen tripartite social dialogue between the main actors to identify initiatives that support workers and employers during and after the state of emergency.

PVE- Plataforma Virtual de Empleos (Virtual Job Platform- Panama)

Remote (virtual) access is created and promoted via search engines for those who are unable to travel to public offices and benefit from their services.

Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo (Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion – Peru)

Unemployment fund provision (Compensation for CTS time service) for a certain amount - pension fund provision up to a certain amount

Social security contributions are suspended for the month of April, to facilitate workers' solvency. - Economic benefit of social protection for microenterprise workers affected by measures of complete work suspension - Licence with the right to a credit for the first 30 days of compulsory isolation - Implementation of telework.

MTESS - Emploi-Québec- Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale Emploi (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity – Canada)

Creation by the MTESS of the following programmes:

- 1) Temporary Worker Assistance Program (TWAP) designed to provide financial support for workers who, due to isolation caused by the spread of the COVID-19 virus, are unable to earn full work income and who are not entitled to another financial assistance program. To avoid any overlap between programs and considering that the Canada Emergency Benefit (CEB) is available to most workers eligible for the TWAP, the program was suspended on April 10, 2020.
- 2) Concerning measures to prevent discrimination and exclusion due to COVID-19: As described in point #10 to #13 of the guidelines for continued support for participants in public employment service measures.
- 3) The Quebec Revenue Agency (Revenu Québec) has set up the Retention Incentive Program for Essential Workers during the pandemic period to compensate for the difference between their wages and the Canada Emergency Benefit. All eligible workers will be able to apply for this aid online as of May 19 and will receive \$100 for each eligible work week, backdated to March 15, 2020, for a maximum of 16 weeks. In addition to their wages, they could receive a tax-free amount of \$400 per month, up to a maximum of \$1,600 for a 16-week period.

ASIA

Job Center (Public Employment Service Center - Sri Lanka)

The government has declared a homeworking strategy, and only the country's essential services are maintained whilst keeping enforcing social distancing.

NEA – (National Employment Agency – Cambodia)

We have promoted Occupational Safety and Health prevention and social distancing measures among workers, and the use of masks, gel and alcohol in the workplace.

Department of Employment – Thailand

The Social Security Act can provide partial compensation. If employees are affected by the epidemic and their employers have put employees on temporary leave, under the Social Security Act, these employees are entitled to compensation of 50% of their monthly salary, but? not more than THB 7,500 per month.

Nn (Afghanistan)

Extending the coverage of user interface

PESM- Public Employment Services of Malaysia (Malaysia)

1. Job Retention Program for workers on unpaid Leave
2. Wage subsidies to employers to help them keep their employees

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Japan)

If workers become infected with Covid-19 during work or commuting, workers may be entitled to workers' occupational injury insurance.

A temporary special measure will allow workers infected with Covid-19 outside work to receive a sick leave allowance when they must take time off work. This sick leave benefit will be financed by public health insurance schemes.

Workers can take leave not included in normal annual holidays if their child's elementary schools are closed. The government is reported to subsidise employers to pay for leave up to JPY 8,330 per person per day. The government will grant JPY 4,100 per leave day to self-employed persons who must care for their children due to emergency closures of elementary schools. Temporary special benefits of JPY 10,000 per child will be paid to households receiving child benefit.

Korea Employment Information Service (South Korea)

1. Flexible working hours to protect workers in the workplace (e.g. teleworking, extended lunch hours)
2. Income subsidies for confirmed isolated workers due to COVID-19

EUROPE

National Agency for Employment – Romania

During the Covid-19 emergency period, the Romanian PES implemented simplified procedures for delivering the necessary documents either by regular mail or by e-mail to validate unemployment claims and to pay unemployment benefits.

In addition, a specialised call centre has been made operational, providing all necessary information to potential beneficiaries of the newly introduced measures.

Employment Agency of Montenegro (Montenegro)

Reports on Health Condition Assessment, Suspension of First Instance Medico-Social Commissions in Social Welfare Institutions, in the Social Welfare and Child Welfare Field. Limitation of the number of citizens at public service desks in units and services of the Ministry of the Interior and other state administration bodies, so that the maximum number of citizens allowed may not exceed the number of existing public service offices.

VDAB- Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (Flemish Service for Vocational Training and Employment Mediation- Belgium)

1. Measures ensuring workers' purchasing power (federal measures)

A. Temporary unemployment due to force majeure was initially extended for three months until 30 June 2020. Thereafter, the distinction between unemployment for economic reasons and force majeure was dropped, retaining only one kind of unemployment, namely due to force majeure. Employers who had to cease all or part of their business activities because of the coronavirus could systematically resort to temporary unemployment. Anyone using this option for the first time has immediately been allocated a fixed amount of 1,450 euros per month. In this way, purchasing power is maintained as much as possible. This means that the company is not required to account to claim it.

B. A two-month extension of personal income tax payment deadlines has also been adopted.

C. During the coronavirus crisis, employers may temporarily reimburse their employees for the costs of homeworking (teleworking). This monthly allowance is tax and social security exempt and amounts to €126.94 per month.

2. Direct support measures for the self-employed (federal measures)

Under the transitional law, a monthly allowance of €1 291.69 (self-employed persons without family responsibilities) to €1 614.10 (with family responsibilities) can be granted to self-employed persons in their main occupation if they are unable to continue their activities or can only partly do so because of the coronavirus. This right will automatically apply to the sectors included in the ministerial order concerning urgent measures aimed at limiting the spread of the coronavirus Covid-19. This fee will apply automatically to the sectors covered by the Ministerial Order on urgent measures aimed at limiting the spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus and will be immediately implemented (March/April). For the others, the activity must have been suspended for 7 consecutive days. The cost is estimated at 1 to 1.5 billion euros per month. Tax deferrals (two months) and social security contributions (carried forward for the first two quarters) are planned. Certain exemptions as well as the possibility to apply for a reduction of the down payment for the self-employed are also included. Local authorities are contributing to the effort and freezing certain taxes at the municipal level.

3. Flanders' measures for natural persons:

Postponement of registration and inheritance tax. Extension of the registration period for past acts to two months after the end of which more strict coronavirus measures shall apply. One-off compensation for the temporarily unemployed for public utility bills. For each temporarily unemployed person resulting from the Coronavirus crisis, the Flemish government provides a one-month financial compensation for the payment of the water and energy invoice. The sum is calculated on an average monthly expenditure for water (EUR 30.77) and energy (electricity EUR 76.86, gas/oil/other energy

sources EUR 95.05). Thus, the total amount is 202.68 EUR. The estimated value of this measure is 20 million EUR.

- If the COVID-19 crisis lasts longer than one month, the Flemish government will develop, within budgetary constraints, a system of deferred payment for families with one or more family members entering technical (forced) unemployment.
- While the strict COVID-19 measures are in force, there will be no water, gas, or electricity cuts.

Actiris (and *Bruxelles Formation* for the French-speaking part of the Training section. The *VDAB* responding for Dutch-speaking jobseekers- **Brussels, Belgium**)

Federal competence not implemented by the PES. The implemented measures include easier access to the favourable conditions of short-term/temporary unemployment, Covid-19 being recognised as a "force majeure" or as an "economic cause" (it concerns +/- 1 million people across Belgium, including 150,000 in the Brussels-Capital Region), but in the medium term, these jobs are likely to be permanently lost. The BECI (Brussels enterprises of commerce and industry) estimates that 300,000 jobs could be affected, which represents 40% of the jobs filled before the crisis in the Brussels Capital Region.

The self-employed who face difficulties because of COVID-19 can resort to different types of measures related to the payment of social security contributions:

- Deferred payment and waiver of surcharges: both the self-employed person and assisting partner can submit a form to their social insurance fund to request a one-year delay in the payment of provisional social security contributions. This measure already applies to provisional contributions for the first and second quarters of 2020.
- Reduced provisional social security contributions: the self-employed can apply for a reduction in their provisional social security contributions for the year 2020 if their professional income is lower than one of the legal minimum thresholds.

FOREM- Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi (Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Employment- Belgium)

The general measures related to the confinement are listed (in French, Dutch, German and also in English) on the official website www.info-coronavirus.be.

Basically this means staying at home as a priority, teleworking, cancelling gatherings, respecting social distancing (including at the workplace if required or on public transport) and avoiding non-essential movements (i.e. except to go to the doctor, grocery shop, post office, pharmacy, bank or to go to someone requiring assistance).

Closure of non-essential shops and companies not able to comply with social distance measures. A toll-free telephone number is available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm for any questions related to the Covid-19 crisis.

Other measures have been taken to simplify the life of citizens in general in their administrative and legal procedures (removal of time limits for appeals, etc.), in the tax field (removal of certain taxes, removal of payment deadlines), and to provide financial assistance to families in precarious situations.

The additional measures taken by the federal government on April 11, 2020 are:

- Freezing of degressive unemployment benefits from 1 April to 30 June due to the coronavirus crisis
- Tax exemption for voluntary overtime (220 hours) in so-called "essential" sectors until 30 June 2020.
- The possibility for temporarily unemployed workers to engage in temporary jobs in the horticultural and forestry sectors on a flexible basis and without any income loss. For a complete working day, for example, the worker will receive the normal wage related to the job plus an amount equivalent to 75% of the temporary unemployment benefit.
- Flexible working hours, secondment, and occasional work to facilitate the temporary availability of full-time employees from other companies to employers in "critical" sectors. Mechanisms to protect workers against social dumping - such as the principle of equal pay, equal work - will continue to apply.
- Not taking into account the hours worked by students in the second half of 2020 for the calculation of their annual quota (475 hours per year) to enable them to strengthen the workforce in "critical" sectors, such as the mass retail sector or the food sector.
- The possibility of accumulating successive fixed-term contracts in "critical" sectors for a period of three months.
- Asylum seekers' access to the labour market provided they have submitted their application to the General Office for Refugees and Stateless Persons. They will have the opportunity to work during the procedure, including during any possible appeal before the Foreigners' Litigation Council (*Conseil du Contentieux des Etrangers*). The objective is to compensate for the lack of manpower, especially among seasonal workers.
- Confirmation of a "gateway right" for the complementary self-employed: considered as "classic", those who pay maximum contributions, as "adapted" for those complementary self-employed (income between 6 996.89 and 13 993.78) and active pensioners (income >6996.89) who are forced to stop their activities because of the Covid-19.
- In the health sector, a legislative framework could be considered - as a last resort - to allow the requisitioning of health personnel not yet involved in the crisis, to maintain or even increase the existing capacity of the number of health professionals, particularly in nursing homes. Such an option depends on the urgency of the situation. Voluntary application or participation of currently economically unemployed staff will be given priority.
- Temporary delegated legislative powers to the Minister of Health (rules and deadlines) and to the general administrator of the National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance are also being considered to guarantee accessibility to health care. This will allow, for example, the development of alternatives to physical consultations (as it is currently already the case), the implementation of marginal adjustments for reimbursement or the protection of healthcare professionals who no longer fit the criteria (e.g. consultations by videoconference). Such decisions will be made by consulting specifically the mutual insurance companies and providers within the RIZIV. Any measures having a budgetary impact must be submitted to administrative and budgetary control.

Forem, for its part, has created a special "COVID measures" page on its website <https://www.leforem.be/coronavirus-mesures-prises-par-forem.html>. All the measures adopted by Forem are well detailed in the "citizens" section. Teleworking is widespread in the Forem itself. Nevertheless, some workers are considered partially or totally exempted from service. This concerns particularly canteen girls, blue-collar workers, or some employees whose work used to support activities that can no longer take place at all, or not with the same level of intensity. Managers are made aware of the need to maintain contact with their teams and to provide time benchmarks. For work organisation issues, internal HR advisers can be consulted. As for work-related psychosocial risks, reliable persons are available.

For ergonomic problems, prevention advisers can be contacted. During this confinement period, some non-work-related risks (depression, isolation, family tensions, ...) can appear and Forem has mobilized among its staff graduate psychologists who can provide professional support to their colleagues in accordance with the applicable deontology. Furthermore, additional online trainings and webinars are provided, and staff members are strongly advised to follow them.

BA- Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency- Germany)

Being an institution with many clients, the BA must avoid risks. When local health authorities make recommendations or take binding decisions under the Infection Protection Act, a coordinated process is essential. We follow these recommendations! Therefore, the recommendations regarding the detection of coughs and sneezes, good hand hygiene and distance rules apply. Agencies were recommended to give colleagues presenting health risks, as, for example, those who have already suffered from an illness, the opportunity to work at home. This also includes colleagues with sick relatives. This option is actively proposed to employees.

Labour and Employment Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Bosnia and Herzegovina

Recommendations from governments and employers' associations from all levels of power: to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, employers are recommended to organize minimum work and hire the minimum number of workers. As the epidemiological situation evolves, employers will be informed in due course of further steps concerning the organization of work. Minimum work means reducing the number of workers employed without endangering the functioning of enterprises, but ensuring the highest possible level of protection of workers' health (by increasing the distance between workers, reducing the number of workers by organizing shift work, intensifying disinfection and worker protection measures). Telework is recommended everywhere and whenever possible.

Employment agency – Bulgaria

The measures will evolve over time, depending on the situation assessment. Employers, depending on the nature and scope of their activities, should ensure appropriate working conditions that include, at least:

- Emergency training of employees, with an emphasis on limiting the spread of COVID-19 and updating information on the risks of contamination, including appropriate instructions, information support and advice on the use of reliable sources of information.
- Introduction of a security accreditation to guarantee the control and non-admission of employees and foreigners to the company's premises.
- The implementation of a work organisation that minimises direct contact between employees and with people outside the company and, if possible, keeping a distance of at least 1 to 1.5 m.

- Mandatory workplace cleaning and disinfection. Provide the required conditions for personal hygiene.
- Provision of the necessary personal and collective protection equipment for workers according to the specificity of the activity - masks, gloves, and others.
- Disinfection and ventilation of vehicles after each race, when used for official transport, while at the same time limiting the number of employees in the vehicle.
- Temporary suspension of employees who show flu-like symptoms or who do not use the personal protective equipment provided to them.

Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment (Denmark)

The social partners and the Danish government have concluded a tripartite agreement on a temporary wage compensation scheme for companies at risk of dismissing a significant proportion of their staff. The agreement of 14 March 2020 was presented in the light of the COVID-19 situation, putting companies under severe pressure, and creating insecurity for employees in the private sector. The program should help keep the jobs of thousands of employees and their salaries during the extraordinary labour market situation created by COVID-19. Companies that would be forced to reduce their staff by at least 30% or more than 50 employees are eligible for wage compensation under the plan. On 30 March, the agreement was adjusted. It increased the level of total wage expenditure, compensated by the state to the amounts specified below. This adjustment also includes companies that have already applied for wage compensation. The state compensation will be 75% of the total wage expenditure for the employees concerned, but a maximum of DKK 30,000 (around EUR 4,000) per employee per month. Companies will have to pay the remaining 25% of the salary. For those working on an hourly basis (without prior notice), the rate of pay is 90%. (Maximum EUR 4,000). Employees also contribute by taking five days of mandatory annual leave. Compensation will be paid provided that the employees concerned are not dismissed. Companies must also commit not to dismiss employees for financial reasons during the compensation period. The programme has so far been in force for the period from 9 March to 8 July 2020.

Public Employment Service of Finland (Finland)

The five-day qualifying period for unemployment benefit is abolished. The employment period for employees required for unemployment benefit would be reduced to 13 calendar weeks, compared with the previous 26 calendar weeks.

SECO – Secrétariat d'État à l'Economie (The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs – Switzerland)

Employers must protect the particularly vulnerable persons (people over 65 years of age and those who have already suffered from an illness). By Federal Council decree, employers must allow particularly vulnerable people to work at home (home office). If the person at risk can only work on site, employers must ensure that the required hygiene and behavioural measures are observed (washing hands, keeping a distance). Should none of these conditions be possible, the employer must grant leave to the particularly vulnerable person and continue to pay the salary.

Guidelines for employers, they should:

- Be flexible with the medical certificate and require it from the fifth day at the earliest.
- Inform their employees about personal and professional protection measures.
- Allow their employees to stop travelling on public transport during peak hours. Make their employees' working hours as flexible as possible and allow home office.

- Activate their Business Continuity Management (BCM) now.

As a basis, the operational manual (pandemic plan) and the SECO FAQs can be consulted.

UWV – Uw WERKbedrijf (Your WORK Company - The Netherlands)

We are working on relaxing self-containment measures (many companies and organisations are closed) and we are heading towards a "1.5 metre economy", all sectors wishing to reopen are required to make a plan to ensure that the opening will be safe.

State Employment Agency of Republic of Armenia (Armenia)

The Government of the Republic of Armenia has adopted the following decrees:

RD Governmental Decree N 427 of 2 April 2020

The decree defines that all households with children under the age of 18, where both parents (or one single parent) were legally employed on 12 March 2020 and were not recruited for temporary or permanent employment in the period between 12 March 2020 and 31 March 2020, will receive a flat-rate financial support equal to the minimum pension amount (AMD 26 500) for each child at the expense of the State budget.

RD Governmental Decree N 412 of 30 March 2020

The decree stipulates that employees and individual entrepreneurs in the most affected areas of the private sector due to the COVID-19 epidemic will receive lump-sum financial support at the expense of the State budget. The decree also defines the areas deemed to be affected. Financial assistance amount depends on the employees' average monthly salary, and in the case of individual entrepreneurs - on the 4th quarter 2019 turnover but may not be higher than twice the minimum wage. At the same time, the financial assistance amount should not be lower than the minimum wage amount and not exceed twice the minimum wage amount.

RD Governmental Decree N 411 of 30 March 2020

The decree specifies that pregnant women who are single and unemployed on 30 March 2020 or pregnant women whose spouses have been dismissed from their jobs during the period from 13 March 2020 to 30 March 2020 and have been unable to find another employment during the same period, will receive a lump-sum financial support of AMD 100,000 at the expense of the state budget.

RD Governmental Decree N 410 of 30 March 2020

The Decree determines that citizens of the Republic of Armenia, who have worked continuously for a private sector employer on the basis of an employment contract or an individual legal act on employment in the period from 1 January 2020 to 13 March 2020 and have been dismissed in the period between 13 March 2020 and 30 March 2020, will receive a lump-sum financial assistance corresponding to the minimum wage. Assistance is provided as a lump sum equal to the minimum monthly wage. According to the decree, citizens who have worked in banks, credit institutions, pawnbrokers and insurance companies, currency exchange offices, organisations dealing with the purchase and sale of shares, investment companies, investment funds, lottery and gambling organisations are not entitled to receive the benefit.

Governmental Decree RD No. 358 of 26th March 2020

This decree provides for a lump-sum financial assistance at the expense of the State budget to all families with children under 14 years of age who are facing one of the following circumstances: - Both parents were dismissed from their legal employment in the period between 13 March 2020 and 25 March 2020; - One of the parents was dismissed from his or her legal employment in the period between 13 March 2020 and 25 March 2020 and the other is unemployed; - One of the parents was dismissed from his or her legal employment in the period between 13 March 2020 and 25 March 2020 and the other is deceased, dead or missing;- A single mother or a parent living with a child (in case the parents are divorced) was dismissed from her/his job in the period from 13 March 2020 to 25 March 2020; - dismissed or unemployed parents, self-employed and whose activity was not interrupted in accordance with the RA Tax Code. The lump-sum compensation is granted up to the amount of AMD 100 000 for each minor child.

Arbetsförmedlingen (Employment Agency- Sweden)

Temporary strengthening of unemployment insurance: The conditions for receiving benefits from an unemployment insurance fund will be temporarily relaxed in terms of required working hours and affiliation. At the same time, higher amounts and minimum thresholds are proposed to be temporarily increased to alleviate the economic impact on the unemployed. It is also proposed that the six first days of the waiting period should be abolished and that unemployment insurance funds should receive funds for administrative purposes. To better respond to a situation in which more people are expected to become unemployed, it is also proposed to increase funding for Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service) and labour market policy programmes. Similarly, it is considered to extend for an additional year the period during which a person can have an "extra job", a new start job or an integrative job for those who already have such jobs.

IP- Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profisisonal (Institute for Employment and Professional Training- Portugal)

Given the exceptional nature of the situation and the emergency triggered by this outbreak (on 18 March, a state of emergency for the whole country was declared and extended to 2 April), the Portuguese government, after consulting the social partners, approved laws to contain the disease but also to provide immediate, extraordinary, temporary and transitional support to families, workers and employers, to secure jobs and to alleviate the business crisis caused by COVID-19.

In the labour, solidarity and social security field, these measures are as follows:

FOR FAMILIES AND WORKERS

1. When a 14-day prophylactic isolation period is necessary, workers in the private and public sectors are guaranteed payment of sickness benefits, allowing 100% of the monthly pay. This scheme applies regardless of the guarantee period. After the isolation period, the rules of the general health insurance scheme apply. It also applies to self-employed persons.
2. Assistance support to children in cases of prophylactic 14-day isolation
3. Extension of the subsidy for assistance to children or grandchildren in the event of illness to cover prophylactic isolation situations for 14 days regardless of the guarantee period. It also applies to the self-employed
4. Due to school closures, one parent can stay at home to care for children under the age of 12 or suffering from a chronic illness or disability with a minimum guaranteed income of 2/3 of the average wage. Social security pays 1/3 and the employer 1/3. This does not apply to

teleworking situations. In case of self-employment and if there is no other way of providing the activity, including teleworking, and if the other parent is not absent for the same reason or is not able to provide assistance, there is a guaranteed income from social security of 1/3 of the average salary declared in the first quarter of 2020 (min. EUR 438.81, max. EUR 1097.03). On 9 April, the Portuguese government outlined the conditions for pre-school, primary and secondary education. Pre-school education and basic education (primary and lower secondary education) students will not return to face-to-face classes during the current school year, classes will be held via digital and television. The former social security support will continue to be guaranteed as described above. For domestic workers, entitlement to financial support: 2/3 of the registered pay in January 2020, up to 3 times the national minimum wage, where 1/3 is paid by social security and the other 1/3 is paid by the employer. The employer is also responsible for the respective social security contributions.

5. From 16 March and during the state of emergency, telework is compulsory if the function can be performed at home.
6. For self-employed workers, managing partners of enterprises, members of the corporate bodies of foundations, associations or cooperatives without employees, several extraordinary measures have been created to compensate for the reduction (40% in the 30 days before applying for assistance) or the total cessation of economic activity: right to financial assistance from social security (one month up to a maximum of 6 months): entitlement to the value of the registered pay with a maximum limit of € 438.81, in situations where the value of the registered pay is less than € 658.21 or up to 2/3 of the value of the registered pay with the maximum limit of the national minimum wage, or in situations where the value of the registered pay equals or exceeds € 658.21, or the possibility of deferring social security contributions during this period In the case of management by the members of the statutory bodies, the members must be exclusively protected by the social security system and their turnover in 2019 must have not exceeded 60 thousand euros.
7. Extraordinary automatic extension of unemployment benefits and minimum social benefits
8. 100% monthly payment to workers over 70 years of age unable to work
9. Guarantee of social security to protect trainees, trainers and beneficiaries involved in active employment policies who have been denied participation in the actions.
10. Kindergartens and schools are available for the children of essential service workers.
11. Since 2 April, the General Labour Inspectorate's functions have been strengthened to reinforce workers' rights and guarantees, particularly by giving the possibility of suspending unlawful dismissals based on illegal evidence. A campaign has been launched to strengthen inspection actions to ensure that, owing to COVID-19, companies continue to respect workers' rights and specific health and safety rules.
12. Truce on the suspension of housing rental contracts due to the closure of businesses for the next three months

AT SOCIAL LEVEL

1. All senior day care services have been closed and support is provided at home
2. Introduction of a credit line - total amount € 165M - to support the cash flow of the social economy sector; each operation will be limited to a maximum of € 500,000.00, with a 12-month amortisation deferral and an amortisation period of up to 4 years, the interest rate being fixed or variable, determined by agreement between the Bank and the beneficiary, plus a spreading at a 1.5% maximum rate.
3. Exceptional support for the maintenance of employment contracts (in the event of a work stoppage or a 40% break in 30 days): simplified dismissal up to 2/3 of the salary, and up to 3

times the national minimum wage. Social security pays 70%, and the remaining 30% is covered by the employer. One month up to 6 months; Temporary exemption from employer's social security contributions during the period of dismissal

4. Flexibility in human resources management
5. Voluntary actions can be carried out to perform functions that cannot be guaranteed otherwise; an awareness-raising campaign has been launched
6. Suspension of seizures of social security privileges vii) Deferral of 2/3 of tax and contributory obligations for 3 months
7. License exemption for new answers to start the activity
8. Flexibility in the provision of social responses with a guarantee of co-participation
9. Reinforcement of the hotline
10. Strengthening State cooperation agreements
11. The António Sérgio Cooperative for the Social Economy (CASES) has created 3 tools providing voluntary initiatives from all over the country with platforms created to respond to people who need more support. Together, the 3 platforms provide more than 3,500 volunteers to meet the demands posed by the pandemic, 25% of these volunteers being available to help patients infected with Covid-19.
12. Specific support measures for nursing homes: The government, in cooperation with the Portuguese Red Cross, health and social security services and municipalities have launched a national plan to test all elderly people in nursing homes and their staff. Those infected will be separated and moved to another building, normally provided by the municipalities.
13. Extraordinary support for workers in social and health institutions from private social welfare institutions (3 months with the possibility of extension) including: - Unemployed people (whether they are registered in the Public Employment Service or not) - Workers with suspended contracts or reduced working hours - Workers with part-time contracts - Persons benefiting from the minimum guaranteed income from the social allowance - Students and trainees aged 18 or over. These workers may not be older than 60 years old. Those who will work under this measure will get a monthly financial contribution in addition to any allowance already received, as well as food, reimbursement of transport and coverage by the compulsory insurance against accidents at work. 90% of the monthly contribution will be paid by the Public Employment Service and 10% by the institutions.
14. Protection of the homeless (in cooperation with municipalities and NGOs): since the declaration of the state of emergency all available emergency shelters, including those intended only for temporary use in winter, are open during the state of emergency. In addition, 18 new shelters have been created throughout the country. The shelters provide all kinds of care, including health care, hygiene, food, and clothing. xvi) With the amendments to the European Fund for Aid to the Most Deprived, a strategy to reach more people and to use alternative delivery channels is being developed, as in this scenario, more people will be exposed to increased vulnerability.

Pôle emploi (Employment division – France)

Reducing the exposure of workers in workplaces where telework is not possible and improving OHS (Occupational Health and Safety) measures: Find here the guidance sheets published by the Ministry of Labour to help employees and employers in implementing protection measures against COVID-19 in workplaces. Reducing the exposure of workers in workplaces where telework is not possible and

improving OHS (Occupational Health and Safety) measures: <https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/actualites/l-actualite-du-ministere/article/coronavirus-covid-19-fiches-conseils-metiers-pour-les-salaries-et-les>

The Ministry of Labour is proposing a document reminding employers of their obligations to protect the workers' health:

https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/coronavirus_sante_et_securite_des_travailleurs_obligations_legales_de_lemployeur.pdf

In some sectors, such obligations may be further detailed by the professional branch, which will provide a guide for each trade.

Implementation of confinement measures: In application of the health state of emergency, until 11 May, movements are prohibited except in the following cases and only on the condition of being in possession of a certificate for:

- Journeys between home and the workplace, when they are essential to carry out work activities that cannot be organised by teleworking, or such journeys cannot be postponed.
- Travel to purchase supplies necessary for the professional activity and to buy staples, including free goods (distribution of foodstuffs, etc.) as well as to receive social benefits and withdraw cash, in establishments whose activities remain authorised.
- Consultations and treatments that cannot be remotely ensured and cannot be postponed, as providing care for patients with long-term illnesses.
- Travel for imperative family reasons, assistance to vulnerable persons or childcare.
- Short journeys, limited to one hour per day and within a maximum distance of one kilometre from home, either for physical activity, excluding any collective sports practice and any proximity with other people, either for walking with only the persons living in the same home, or for pets' needs.
- A judicial or administrative summons.
- Participation in missions of general interest at the administrative authority's request.

Access to paid sick leave

If no alternative solution can be found and teleworking is not possible, it is up to the employer to declare a cessation of work via the dedicated employer webpage on ameli.fr

This declaration then activates the compensation. The employee receives daily allowances and, where applicable, extra pay from the employer from the first day of leave, without any waiting period being applied.

Training promotion: Labour Minister Muriel Pénicaud promotes e-learning during the confinement period

There are more than 150 free and paid distance learning courses available: <https://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/en-formation/formations---actualites-evenemen/pour-vous-preparer-a-travailler.html>

In response to the crisis, the government is adjusting the unemployment benefit rules: <https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/actualites/presse/communiqués-de-presse/article/face-a-la-crise-le-gouvernement-adapte-les-regles-de-l-indemnisation-du-chomage>

OCEANIA

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (Australia)

Under Australia's Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) laws, employers have the duty to ensure their workers' and others' health and safety in the workplace. This involves providing and maintaining a working environment that is free from health and safety hazards and supplying adequate facilities for workers to carry out their work. To ensure the safety of workers and limit the spread of COVID-19, the Government recommends that employers should:

- allow employees to work from home, if possible
- ensure physical distancing in the workplace by keeping a distance of at least 1.5 metres between people
- encourage all workers to wash their hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and to practice good hygiene
- make sure that workers do not come to work if they feel unwell
- check that the workplace is regularly cleaned and disinfected
- display signs and posters in and around the workplace to remind workers and others of the risks of COVID-19 and the measures required to stop its spread.

More information on Australia's national COVID-19 Safe Workplace Guidelines is available at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/other-resources/national-covid-19-safe-workplace-principles

Annex 2: Facilitate the adaptation of companies

They tell us more about

Prevention and economic support measures: Facilitate the adaptation of companies

AFRICA

Observatorio do Mercado de Trabalho (Labour Market Observatory- Cabo Verde)

- Reduced interest rates
- Moratorium
- Liquidity availability
- Procedural facilitation
- Creation of credit lines

Office National de l'Emploi (National Employment Office – Gabon)

Exceptions to the maximum length of stay on oil sites from four (4) weeks usually to six (6) to take the quarantine time of suspect persons into account before they are brought on site.

ANPE - Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (National Employment Agency – Mali)

The working week has been reduced from 40 hours to 34 hours. Measures have been announced to minimise manpower in public and private transport.

Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training (Employment Service – Mauritius)

Subsidies to textile workers

ANAPEC – Agence nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences (National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills -Morocco)

A telework guide for administrations has been published by the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Public Employment Services (Namibia)

Flexible labour regulations

AMERICA

Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social de la Nación (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security- Argentina)

Work assistance program and credits at 0% rate for the self-employed

SINE - SISTEMA NACIONAL DE EMPREGO (NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM - Brazil)

Several measures exist in this regard. These include those that allow the renegotiation of employment contracts (reduction of hours with proportional reduction of salary, temporary suspension of the employment contract, etc.), previously mentioned, as well as measures to facilitate access to credit, particularly for working capital. Within the framework of the SPPE, the creation of the FAT PROGER Capital de Giro line was submitted and approved by the deliberating Council of the Workers' Support Fund - Codefat. The Council approved the allocation of a maximum of 5 billion reais in FAT funds to the official federal banks to be used as financing for the operation of the line. See Codefat Resolutions n. 850/2020 and no. 856/2020.

Servicio Público de Empleo (Public Employment Service – Bolivia)

Only companies in the food chain and those related to health work, for complete quarantine

Red Socio Empleo (Partner Network Employment – Ecuador)

The Ministry of Labour, through Ministerial Agreement No. MDT-2020-076, publishes the guidelines for the application of pop-up telework in which the registration by e-mail of workers who have opted for this modality is highlighted. The Ministerial Agreement No. MDT-2020-077 and MDT-2020-080, issue the guidelines for the reduction, modification, or emergency suspension of the working day, which can be carried out online in the One Work System.

Departamento Nacional de Empleo (National Department of Employment - El Salvador)

Development of protocols of preventive measures aimed at minimising the risk of contagion in specific workplaces for the economic sectors authorised to operate. Punctual authorisations to carry out the installation of teleworking facilities

Servicio Nacional de Empleo (National Employment Service- Guatemala)

- Temporary suspension of employment contracts
- Facilitate teleworking
- Personnel transport
- Encouraging personal care to face the crisis

Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour – Haiti)

Reduced working hours

Servicio Nacional de Empleo (National Employment Service – Mexico)

Services are provided to companies to fill vacancies with the support of recruitment consultants.

Plataforma Virtual de Empleos (Virtual Employment Platform – Panama)

Possibility of publishing job offers on a free virtual platform.

Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo (Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion – Peru)

An emergency decree (DU 038-2020) was issued to introduce economic and financial extraordinary measures to alleviate the economic effects on private sector workers and employers caused by the restrictive measures and social isolation adopted in the context of the health emergency resulting from COVID19 .

MTESS Emploi-Québec - Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity – Quebec, Canada)

1) Regarding the promotion of e-learning to invest in employee skills during a downturn

- Programme of concerted actions for employment maintenance (PACME) aimed at providing direct support to businesses that are experiencing a reduction in their activities due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including self-employed workers, notably through collective promoters recognized by the Commission of Labour Market Partners, i.e. organizations whose actions concern several businesses and individuals in employment. The Business section of the program provides direct assistance to businesses for their human resources management and worker skills development activities, in the workplace, online or remotely, so that they can take advantage of the current economic pause to increase the skills of their workforce and thus be ready for the economic recovery.

2) Action has been taken by other Quebec government departments and by the federal government at the national level (Canada). For example, the Quebec Ministry of Economy and Innovation has created the Emergency Assistance Program for Small and Medium Enterprises (COVID-19) to support, for a limited period of time, businesses that are experiencing financial difficulties due to COVID-19 and needing cash flow under \$ 50,000 .

ASIA

NEA - National Employment Agency (Cambodia)

Workers who have health problems or who care for an elderly member or children may have their working hours reduced with continued salary maintenance.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Japan)

Flexible work regulations (use of teleworking...)

→ Employers installing telecommunications equipment for teleworking in response to Covid-19 may receive a subsidy of 50% (up to JPY 1,000,000) of the installation cost.

Specific measures to protect and support the self-employed

→ Loans of up to JPY 200,000 are provided to households, such as the self-employed, who have lost income and need emergency and temporary loans to maintain their livelihoods due to Covid-19.

Job Center - Public Employment Service Center (Sri Lanka)

Companies were paid the salaries to its waged workers even when the lock down was there in last two months.

Korea Employment Information Service (South Korea)

Subsidy to businesses with reduced working hours and job maintenance. Financial assistance to stabilize the status of the business through a sales decline

EUROPE

VDAB- Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (Flemish Service for Vocational Training and Employment Mediation- Belgium)

Measures to support enterprises (federal)

The abovementioned deferral of payment also applies to SMEs and companies in difficulty. Service providers to whom federal public contracts have been awarded do not receive fines for delays in the execution of those contracts if they are affected by Covid-19. In addition, the authorities undertake to speed up the payment deadline for those contracts.

Sectoral provisions (federal)

As far as the catering industry is concerned, there will be flexibility in the application of "take away" (fiscal and Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC/ abbreviation in Dutch FAVV): no new permit required for restaurants). Brasseries, in turn, will not be penalised in case of under-consumption.

Regarding trade affairs, the government is consulting with the social partners to allow greater flexibility in supermarket opening hours. There is also consultation on ways of transferring staff from one sector to another. This should ensure that activity is maintained, but also the possibility of carrying out a flexi-job, even in the case of temporary unemployment. As far as the travel sector is concerned, in the event of cancellation of a package holiday, a voucher of equal value, valid for at least one year, is granted.

As far as the event sector is concerned, the tickets purchased are still valid if the event is postponed. If the consumer is unable to attend the event, there will be sufficient time for the refund. As far as the agriculture and horticulture sector is concerned, the period of seasonal work will be doubled. As far as the federal scientific institutions are concerned, they have the possibility to use their reserves to compensate for the shortfall in income resulting from the closure by Covid-19.

Sectoral' initiatives (Flemish)

Sports: Sports events that have received a subsidy through Sport Vlaanderen will receive 100% of their subsidy, even if the event is abolished because of corona.

Childcare: There will be a compensation amount per day of absence for the reception initiatives. A day of absence is a day for which the family had ordered childcare and on which the child was absent. The compensation varies according to the type of reception: free allowance 27 euros for

group reception and 17.5 euros for family reception, income allowance 20 euros for group reception and 17.5 euros for family reception, income allowance with sui generis reception parents or employee status 18.5 euros (group and family reception). For half a (third) day of care, the initiatives receive 60 (40) percent of the compensation. In addition to the compensation scheme, the Flemish government has also decided to invest an additional 10.6 million euros in the further equalisation of subsidies in childcare.

Support to the tourism sector. A budget of € 5 million is made available for youth tourism and social tourism. Tourism Flanders will also not be collecting rent from its youth hostels this year, a measure worth € 1 million.

Social Economy. The Flemish Government took 5 support measures for the social economy to give these enterprises more financial breathing space and to guarantee the employment of target group employees.

- Suspension of the external through-flow processes for target group employees of collective custom-made companies
- Suspension of the external through-flow routes and extension of the inclusion routes for the target group employees of local service economy enterprises
- Suspension of the rule for the '90% filling for the 2020 quota' and the corresponding reallocation in 2021
- Suspension of deductions from advances for customised collective services and local service economy for enterprises suffering economic or financial hardship due to the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic.
- The temporary provision of alternative financing for the guidance of employment care workers.

Agriculture and horticulture. For more information, see this link. The Flemish Government has therefore agreed in principle to a package of measures to remedy the damage suffered by agricultural and horticultural businesses and ornamental plant growers. These measures include the following:

- Urge at European level the necessary support measures targeted at the broad agriculture, horticulture, and fisheries sectors, with priority given to perishable products that are not harvested, processed, or sold on time. Existing European crisis measures should be activated, and ornamental horticulture products should also be eligible.
- Provide for accelerated disbursement of pending investment files, a guarantee scheme and flexibility in terms of administrative deadlines. In addition, some existing measures will be made more flexible:

1) The files of the Flemish Agricultural Investment Fund (VLIF) of the ornamental growers will be paid out and dealt with more quickly. For the VLIF investment files of the other sectors, it is also being examined which files and under which conditions can be paid out more quickly.

2) In addition, a generic VLIF guarantee scheme will be provided for bridging loans for professional agricultural and horticultural businesses, including floriculture businesses, which are experiencing liquidity problems resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak.

3) As far as administrative obligations are concerned, the necessary flexibility will be shown. The deadline for submitting single applications - the parcel registrations and aid applications - will be set

at 15 May 2020 instead of 30 April 2020 without prejudice to the payment deadlines for the advances of direct aid to farmers, which are made before the end of the year.

FOREM- Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi (Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Employment- Belgium)

Federal and Wallonia aid to companies is described on the "www.1890.be" website, which enables companies to easily find out whether they are eligible for compensation. In addition, Forem must adapt to continue providing existing financial aid to companies while respecting new political decisions (more flexibility in certain criteria). An internal Forem document entitled "Employers facing Covid-19" provides employers with all the information they need in the context of the Covid-19 crisis. It addresses issues such as prevention, the deferral of amounts due to social security, possible payment plans for social security contributions/VAT/employer's payment/taxes, flexibility in the execution of federal public contracts, employer-employee relations (sickness, short-term and permanent contracts, temporary work, etc.), employer-trainee relations (training, etc.) and the various employment aids. Finally, in terms of service to companies more specifically, Forem is increasing its efforts to identify and then respond to the increased recruitment needs in certain essential sectors. Some job offers can thus be identified as being urgent by an "urgent 2020" code. Remote transactions are simplified. Le Forem has created a special "COVID measures" page on its website <https://www.leforem.be/coronavirus-mesures-prises-par-forem.html>. All the details are well provided in the "companies" section.

Actiris (and Bruxelles Formation for the training part- Brussels, Belgium)

Actiris support to employers:

- 100% of "Actiris Select" services are available online, via the employers' personal space or by telephone with their usual adviser
- A general email was sent about recruitment procedures during the period of confinement.
- A generic e-mail was sent to explain the adjustments of the employment support measures and the youth guarantee measures.
- All employers with active job vacancies (JOs) were contacted to assess the urgency of recruitment.
- Urgent job offers to cope with the crisis should be labelled under the # Covid19 hashtag; currently there are +/- 130 Job Offers. When this is not mentioned but the vacancies seem urgent, a counsellor contacts the employer for further information.
- Tailored advice is provided: how to handle virtual interviews, what employment support measures are available, how to organise retraining/upgrading courses, what are the employer's latitudes/obligations during the period?

Labour and Employment Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

-Subsidies for minimum salaries and contributions in the Republika Srpska (in March and April 2020)
-Amendments to the Labour Law in the Federation of BiH are recommended (introduction of instruments such as teleworking, temporary lay-offs) -Some cantons have adopted a short-term set of measures to help the economy in job retention which implies the assistance to legal entities that have been hit by the measures prohibiting the operation of business activities in the areas of tourism, hospitality and catering, transport of passengers, trade and the like, particularly to those entities that, according to the classification of activities, mainly operate in the areas included in the prohibition measures.

Employment agency (Bulgaria)

The facilitation of the adaptation of the companies is realized through measures for maintaining employment, financial instruments, and temporary easing of the conditions in terms of tax and rent relations.

Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment (Denmark)

Compensation for small and medium sized companies: The Danish government issued an aid package on 18 March for companies and self-employed persons. The package consists of two elements:

- 1) Compensation for the companies' overhead expenses and
- 2) a compensation scheme for small companies and self-employed persons. Companies with a significant decline in their turnover (more than 30 pct.) are eligible for compensation. The first mentioned compensation is targeted at the overhead expenses ranges between 25 to 80 pct., whereas the last compensation relates to small companies and self-employed persons with a decline of more than 30 pct. in turnover. The state funded compensation will be at 75 pct. of the turnover loss with a maximum of 23.000 DKK (app. 3,080 euro) per month. Establishment of a "Government and Business Corona Unit": The unit was established on 10 March and serves to give a mandate to the Danish government and the business community to debate temporary and targeted initiatives concerning the challenges that now face Danish businesses. Sickness benefit reimbursement: Employers of employees affected by the coronavirus (infected or quarantined) will receive sickness benefit reimbursement for wages and sickness benefits as early as the first day of absence rather than after 30 days, as under normal circumstances. Possibility to temporarily reduce working hours of employees: This possibility is one of the central suggestions to create a more flexible labour distribution. It entails the possibility for companies to temporarily reduce working hours of employees, where the employees will then receive supplementary daily cash benefits. 10 million DKK in funding for initiatives in case of large-scale dismissals ("varslingspuljen"): Allocation of 10 million DKK (app. 1,339,243 euro) to ensure fast and targeted initiatives in case of large-scale dismissals caused by COVID-19, such as job search courses or upskilling.

Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (Estonia)

To alleviate the labour problem, we have begun working with the new platform that was created last weekend under the Garage48 initiative. The platform, called *ShareForceOne* (www.shareforceone.ee/), is a solution to a situation where a larger number of employees would be ready to work with another employer at the same time, i.e. helping to bring together companies with employees who need labour (the employment contract remains valid with the employee's original employer). The state will pay advance social tax to sole proprietors in the first quarter. If the sole proprietor has already paid the advance social tax, he or she can use the amount to cover any tax liability, either immediately or in the future, or may ask for the transference of this amount into his or her bank account.

Public Employment Service of Finland - Finland

Shorter notice period for temporary layoffs (from 14 to 5 days). The duration of co-operation negotiations regarding temporary layoffs are shortened from six weeks or 14 days to five days. The right to temporary layoff also a fixed-term employee. The employment can be terminated during the trial period also for financial or production-related reasons, not just person-related grounds. The employee re-employment obligation is extended to nine months if the employee was laid off during a time when the temporary provisions were in force. Extended right to unemployment benefit during temporary lay-off.

Pôle emploi (Employment Division- France)

The labour code will be temporarily made more flexible to help companies and employees get through the crisis. Adopted on 22 March, the emergency bill in response to the Covid-19 epidemic includes several exceptional measures, with a dual objective: to limit workforce reductions by facilitating recourse to short-time working and to allow employers to dispose of their employees more freely. These changes are "by their very nature provisional", assured Muriel Pénicaud, the Minister of Labour.

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000041755940&categorieLien=id>

All business support measures: <https://www.economie.gouv.fr/coronavirus-soutien-entreprises>

Staff recruitment in essential positions: Some companies, in essential sectors, require workforce reinforcements to ensure their activities and the country's economic continuity. In response, the Ministry of Labour and Pôle Emploi have launched the Mobilisation Emploi (Employment Mobilization) mobilisationemploi.gouv.fr platform for jobseekers registered or not with Pôle Emploi and employees in part-time work. On this platform, employers can submit in a simplified manner their recruitment needs.

Afterwards, a company adviser will contact them systematically to review the recruitment criteria for this specific period, and to establish contact procedures to limit travel. The adviser also proposes to the recruiter to undertake, on his behalf, a pre-selection of candidates. As at 15 April, around 12,000 offers were available in all regions of France.

Nav - The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (Norway)

strengthening of online services and Call centres services

I.P - Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute for Employment and Professional Training – Portugal)

A platform / website has been launched by the government (<https://covid19estamoson.gov.pt/>) and an application for IOS and Android (App Covid19-Estamos On), with all relevant information on prevention and containment measures against the new coronavirus, is available. The website is intended to be a practical guide to help citizens, families, and businesses to combat the effects of COVID-19, with the relevant documentation particularly the forms to be filled in. This initiative provides a set of technological tools enabling teleworking. With this initiative, citizens, schools, public services, and companies can be provided with the necessary tools to continue their activities in the most efficient way, taking the exceptional timetable into account. All the exceptional measures adopted by the government in each government are available there. Since 11 March, the Government has set up a digital response group for COVID-19, led by the Secretary of State for Digital Transition, to evaluate digital reference measures, using the involvement of public and private stakeholders in an integrated response approach. In the specific context of telework, in collaboration with network

operators, some of the major technology companies and other relevant actors have created several tools, videos and other content to raise awareness of telework best practices. In partnership with technology companies, a set of digital tools has been made available on the website for free use by citizens, public and private organisations, and schools:

- Proof of service upgradeability and availability
- Product / Service /Gateway in Portuguese
- With Portuguese videos or manuals for training
- With access to online support.

National Agency for Employment (Romania)

The Romanian PES has been mandated to pay employers, from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, up to 75% of the basic wage of each of their workers temporarily on technical unemployment or whose wages can no longer be paid in full, due to the Covid-19 emergency.

SEPE - Servicio Publico de Empleo Estatal de España (Spanish State Public Employment Service – Spain)

Possibility of invoking the Temporary Employment Regulation Files (ERTE) during a state of crisis.

İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency – Turkey)

In the context of temporary unemployment, increase the number of short-term work benefit recipients by facilitating conditions.

OCEANIA

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (Australia)

The Implemented measures include:

- Under the Governments' \$130 billion Job Keeper Payment, businesses significantly impacted by COVID-19 will be able to access a subsidy from the Government to continue paying their employees. This assistance will help businesses and not-for-profit organisations keep people in their jobs and re-start when the crisis is over. Affected businesses will be able to claim a payment of \$1,500 per fortnight per eligible employee.
- The Government is providing temporary tax-free cash flow boosts of between \$20,000 and \$100,000 to small and medium businesses and not-for-profit organisations, including charities, who have an aggregated annual turnover under \$50 million and employ staff.
- The Government is temporarily expanding eligibility to income support payments and establishing a new, time-limited, Coronavirus supplement to be paid at a rate of \$550 per fortnight on top the current income support of existing and new recipients.

Annex 3: Financial support to companies experiencing a decrease in activity

They tell us more about

Prevention and economic support measures: Financial support to companies experiencing a decrease in activity

AFRICA

Ministère de la Jeunesse et de Promotion de l'Entrepreneuriat des Jeunes (Ministry of Youth and Youth Entrepreneurship Promotion - Burkina Faso)

- Government decision to set up a support fund for major affected companies as well as informal economy stakeholders
- a policy of free rent, water, and electricity for the informal economy actors particularly has been implemented.

Direction Générale de l'Emploi (General Directorate of Employment - Côte d'Ivoire)

Four funds were created, including the SME support fund, the informal sector support fund, and the support fund for large companies...

Each of these funds is endowed with an amount of about 100 billion CFA francs

Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training (Employment Service- Mauritius)

Financial support is provided to companies

Public Employment Services (Namibia)

Stimulus package for companies experiencing a decline in their economic activities.

AMERICA

SINE- SISTEMA NACIONAL DE EMPREGO (NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM – Brazil)

Interim Measure 944: establishes the Emergency Employment Assistance Programme, aimed at carrying out credit transactions with entrepreneurs, commercial and cooperative companies, except credit companies, to pay their employees' wage bill.

Article 2 The Emergency Employment Assistance Programme is intended for persons referred to in Art. 1 with a gross annual income exceeding R\$ 360,000.00 (three hundred and sixty thousand reais) and not exceeding R\$ 10,000,000.00 (ten million reais), calculated on the basis of the year 2019.

§ 1 Credit lines granted under the emergency employment assistance programme:

- (i) will cover the contractor's entire payroll for a period of two months, limited to an amount equivalent to twice the minimum wage per employee
- (ii) will be used exclusively for the processing of the payrolls mentioned in point I.

§ 2º To benefit from the credit lines of the Emergency Employment Support Program, the persons referred to in s. 1st must have their pay processed by a participating financial institution.

§3. All financial institutions under the supervision of the Central Bank of Brazil can join the emergency employment support programme.

§ 4 The persons referred to in Art.1 who contract the credit lines under the emergency employment assistance programme will assume the following contractual obligations:

- (i) provide truthful information
- (ii) (ii) not to use the resources for purposes other than paying their employees
- (iii) (iii) not to end, without valid reason, the employment contract of its employees in the period between the date of subscription of the credit line and the sixtieth day following receipt of the last instalment of the credit line.

Art.4 In credit operations contracted within the framework of the emergency employment assistance programme:

- (i) fifteen percent of the value of each financing operation shall be paid from the capital of the participating financial institutions
- (ii) eighty-five per cent of the value of each funding will be paid from the federal resources allocated to the programme. Art.5 Participating financial institutions may formalise credit operations under the Emergency Employment Assistance Programme until 30 June 2020, subject to the following conditions: interest rate of three whole and seventy-five hundredths per annum on the amount granted
- (iii) Thirty-six months payment period

Ministerio de Trabajo, Empleo y Seguridad Social de la Nación (Ministry of national Labour, Employment and Social Security- Argentina)

Labour assistance programme and coordinated agreement to suspend employment contracts with a maximum 25% reduction in salary.

SENCE - Servicio Nacional de Capacitación y Empleo (National Training and Employment Service - Chile)

- Loans with 0% interest
- Deferral of the tax payment
- Early tax reimbursement

Departamento Nacional de Empleo (National Department of Employment - El Salvador)

The government of El Salvador has been encouraging credit incentives for companies that have suspended their activities as long as they continue to pay wages to their workers.

Dirección Nacional de Empleo (National Directorate of Employment – Panama)

Implementing rules allowing for the reduction of working time, so that workers do not lose their jobs, companies can recover, and workers gradually return to full working days. Once the State of Emergency is lifted, this will involve encouraging initiatives aimed at supporting local businesses, in

sectors such as tourism, services, etc., but also creating attractive stimulus packages so that tourism can recover in its various stages.

Plataforma Virtual de Empleos (Virtual Job Platform- Panama)

No financial support has been granted. But there was the possibility of paying deferred taxes and no pandemic surcharge.

Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje bajo la optica de SNE Costa Rica (National Learning Institute under the SNE's scope - Costa Rica)

1. Temporarily alleviate the collection of social security taxes
2. Deferral of payment of income tax, VAT and customs duties for companies and SMEs
3. Improved credit conditions for households and businesses

Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo (Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion- Peru)

- The Peruvian government has announced that it will subsidize up to 35% of the salaries of employees earning less than 1,500 soles per month (\$428).
- The Central Reserve Bank of Peru (BCR) has announced a 30,000 million soles (\$8,500 million) line of credit for loans to companies with guarantees to help them cope with crippling containment in Peru.
- Peru will invest 12% of its gross domestic product to cope with the economic impact of the pandemic

Red Socio Empleo (Social Employment Network - Ecuador)

Taxpayers who are micro-businesses, Galapagos residents, airline economic activities, tourism, accommodation, commodity exporters can pay their 2019 income tax and value added tax from April, May, and June 2020, with a staggering from April to September 2020:

- 10% in the first three months, (April, May, and June),
- 20% in the last three months. (July, August, and September).

Servicio Nacional de Empleo (National Employment Service – Guatemala)

The assistance is still awaiting approval and includes a tax deferral and financial assistance for capital.

Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour – Haiti)

Deferral of royalty payments

MTESS - Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale – Emploi Québec (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity – Employment Quebec, Canada)

Nothing was, in this case, developed by our PES, Emploi-Québec. Measures have been taken by other departments of the Quebec government and by the federal government, at the national level (Canada), including an emergency wage subsidy covering 75% of the wage bill of businesses that have slowed down their activities by at least 30%. PES initiatives, including PACME, complement government interventions.

ASIA

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Japan)

Firms whose sales have been declining by at least 5% due to Covid-19 can get loans at a low interest rate of up to 60 million yen. Also, the government will create a new benefit system for SMEs and sole entrepreneurs such as freelancers, who are in a particularly difficult situation. For enterprises whose business income has decreased by 50% or more compared to the same month of the previous year, they will receive the same amount as the income reduction up to 2 million yen for SMEs and up to 1 million yen for sole proprietors. Due to the impact of the Covid-19, if business income has decreased by approximately 20% or more compared to the same period of the previous year for a period of one month or more from February 2020, and it is difficult to pay taxes at once, the payment of income tax, corporate tax, consumption tax, etc. will be postponed for one year. The government expanded the coverage of the Employment Adjustment Subsidy (EAS) by including the temporary shutdown due to Covid-19 response and eased the requirement of EAS in the cases of Covid-19 response. One of the required conditions for EAS was 10% reduction of production for more than 3 months. However, a 5% reduction of production for one month will qualify for the subsidy. In addition, the subsidy rate will be increased to four-fifths for SMEs and two-thirds for large enterprises, and, if the enterprise does not lay off workers, to nine-tenths for SMEs and three-quarters for large enterprises, as well as to cover non-regular workers who are not insured by employment insurance. As a result, EAS prevents enterprises from laying off workers.

Job Center (Public Employment Service Center - Sri Lanka)

The Central Bank has taken steps to protect the company by extending loan repayments.

Korea Employment Information Service (South Korea)

(Government subsidy for maintaining employment)

General overview : A policy that supports part of the personnel labour expenses in the event that employers take job maintenance measures, such as temporarily closures or taking leave of absence, that are forced to restructure their employment status due to inevitable temporary difficulties in company activities.

Explanation:

- 1) There are some limiting conditions for support, such as a 15% of reduction in the original total sales. However, in case of damage related to COVID-19, It is applicable even if it does not meet the requirement conditions.
- 2) Especially, Benefits are given priority to companies affected a lot of damages such as travel industries or health industries.... etc

3) Increase the support ratio temporarily. (As-Is) The ratio of subsidy was 2/3 to the priority support target companies and 1/2 to major companies (To-Be) Upgrade the ratio of subsidy for 3/4 to the priority support target companies and 2/3 to major companies

4) Take effect from January 29th and last until COVID-19 is terminated.

EUROPE

NAES (The National Agency for Employment and Skills- Albania)

Minimum wage subsidy for employees of small enterprises with a turnover not exceeding LEK 14 million.

Labour and Employment Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

- Subsidies for minimum wages and contributions in Republika Srpska (in March and April 2020).
- Moratorium on the repayment of loans to investment and development banks in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska
- Deferred income tax payment to June 30, 2020

The Employment agency (Bulgaria)

The financial support, directly aimed at maintaining employment, initially consisted in providing companies with 60% of the gross remuneration for their employees who were prevented from performing their jobs during the pandemic. Subsequently, the measure was changed, with the state also covering 60% of the funds for the insurance of persons. Until the cancellation of the state of emergency in case of delay in payment of obligations of private entities, debtors under credit agreements and other forms of financing (factoring, forfeiting and others) provided by banks and financial institutions under Art. 3 of the Law on Credit Institutions, including when the receivables are obtained from other banks, financial institutions or third parties, and under leasing contracts, no interest and penalties are charged, the obligation cannot be declared early due and the contract cannot to be destroyed due to default, and no items can be seized. Until the state of emergency is abolished, ministers, regional governors and heads of other agencies that lease or use state-owned property or municipal councils that lease or use municipal property may decide to reduce their contributions. for rent and use or exemption from payment in whole or in part by natural and legal persons - tenants or users who have restricted or ceased their activities as a result of a measure they and the restrictions imposed during the emergency.

VDAB- Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (Flemish Service for Vocational Training and Employment Mediation- Belgium)

Agreement with the financial sector (federal)

In order to safeguard financing for families, the self-employed and businesses during this difficult period, the federal government, on the initiative of the Minister of Finance and with the support of the National Bank Belgium (NBB), has drawn up an agreement with the financial sector: the financial sector is committed to defer until 30 September 2020, without charge, viable non-financial businesses and the self-employed, as well as mortgage borrowers with payment difficulties due to the corona crisis

The federal government will activate a guarantee scheme for all new loans and credit lines with a maximum duration of 12 months, which banks provide to viable non-financial businesses and the self-employed. The budgetary impact is estimated at €50 billion.

Deferral of insurance premiums (federal)

The sector organisation of insurance companies *Assuralia* has reached an agreement to make efforts to mitigate the corona crisis for the self-employed, businesses and individuals. This agreement, which was co-facilitated by the National Bank with the support of the FSMA and the federal government, includes, among other things: A commitment to continue, without further formalities, the pension, death, invalidity and hospitalisation coverage of the collective insurances (taken out by the employer) of employees in temporary unemployment. The payment of the relevant premiums by the employer is postponed until 30 September 2020.. For companies affected by the COVID-19 crisis, the insurance sector points out that some insurance covers (accidents at work, civil liability, ...) already provide for retrospective adjustment of the premium in the event of reduced activity. This will be charged automatically. On top of this, for all premiums due between 30 March and 30 September 2020, companies, which have to stop their activities as requested by the government, can obtain an extension of the payment of their premium in consultation with their insurer. For any further measures concerning the suspension of contracts, companies are advised to contact their insurer or intermediary directly. The insurers will also apply the same conditions to loans granted to companies as those already agreed for the banking sector. This is a deferral for the repayment of loans (interest and capital repayments) until 30 September 2020.

Flemish measures for companies

Extension of incentive bonus. The incentive bonus that already exists to encourage people to work part-time in order to avoid redundancies will be extended to companies facing, for example, declining production, declining sales or falling orders as a result of the corona crisis. This monthly premium for the worker is between 90€ and 150€. It is subject to a reduction in production of at least 20 % and to an approved plan of collective reduction of working time.

Compensation closures.

All companies and stores that must close completely due to the corona crisis will receive a one-off premium of € 4,000 (until 5 April 2020) and subsequently € 160 per day (from 6 April 2020). The premium amounts to € 2,000 for weekend closure with the same daily allowance after 6 April. Tax deferral. The Flemish Tax Administration VLABEL will only send the property tax assessments for the assessment year 2020 as from September 2020 instead of May 2020. In addition, the Flemish Government called on the local authorities to revise their regulations so that entrepreneurs on their territory do not pay taxes or fees on activities or situations to which they surrender financially due to the crisis. This concerns cancelling or revoking the tax or fee regulations, modifying the entry into force of a tax or fee regulation or of certain articles thereof to a later date, registering an exemption or a rate reduction in a tax or fee regulation, possibly limited in time. - PMV also grants a 2-month moratorium on payments to all customers who have received a start-up loan, co-financing, or co-financing+. As lender of a win-win loan, it is also possible to grant a deferral of payment in capital or interest to the borrower. More information on how PMV's financial arsenal supports companies during the corona crisis can be found via this link.

Traffic tax deferral.

Companies are granted an additional four-month deferment of payment for traffic taxes. Flexibility in terms of conditions of support measures and grants. Enterprises which, in the wake of the crisis, find it difficult to meet the deadlines laid down for certain VLAIO grants may discuss with the Agency the possibility of extending these deadlines. These include Baekeland mandates, the ecology premium+, ICON, Innovation mandates, research and development projects, the Extended Reality project call, STRES, STS and thematic ICON projects.

Flemish employment policy measures:

Flemish support premium for self-employed persons with a work-limiting disability: Self-employed persons with a work-limiting disability must demonstrate sufficient business activity to be eligible for the Flemish Support Premium (VOP). The coronary pandemic makes it difficult to demonstrate this activity. The decree provides for the possibility of settling this period pro rata.

The recruitment incentive:

The recruitment incentive for long-term jobseekers wants to support recruitment and sustainable employment. The decree provides for the possibility to temporarily adjust the calculation of the premium so that employers who must adjust their employment do not suffer any additional financial loss as an outcome.

The transition premium:

The transition premium for jobseekers aged 45 and over aims to stimulate the transition to entrepreneurship. The coronavirus pandemic is hampering starting up as a self-employed person. The decree provides for the possibility of extending the submission period for application files, as well as the period of validity of the compulsory pre-starter programme.

The work permit for economic migrants:

A work permit is granted to a third-country national who is admitted working for a maximum period of ninety days. Anyone wishing to extend the duration of their stay for the purpose of work must apply under the combined procedure. This Decision provides for an exception for cases where, for exceptional reasons, the third-country national cannot leave the country independently of his/her will. In this case, the work permit may be temporarily renewed without the need to start a combined procedure. This exception is granted so long as the third-country national's departure is postponed.

FOREM - Office wallon de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi (Walloon Office for Vocational Training and Employment- Belgium)

As indicated in question 7, federal and Walloon allowances are granted to companies in sectors undergoing a crisis due to Covid-19.

In Wallonia:

- A lump-sum compensation of 5,000 euros will be granted to sectors of activity that have to close or are at a standstill (catering, hotels, retail trade, accommodation, travel agencies, coach operators, tourist attractions, taxis, etc.).
- An indemnity of €2,500 will be granted to those activities partially impacted (hairstylist).
- The Walloon financial resources (SOWALFIN, SOGEPA and SRIW) are mobilised to provide emergency aid to companies by granting guarantees, co-guarantees (with banks) or loans. Emergency loans for cash flow support can be granted up to 200,000 euros.

- Maintaining subsidies and employment aids for employers if they do not resort to temporary unemployment.
- Exceptional financial aid for hospitals and rest homes, centres for the most disadvantaged and disabled people, social and medico-social structures.
- Logistical assistance to facilitate the supply of masks and protection equipment
- Grants awarded to certain Walloon training or insertion centres will actually be paid in Wallonia even though those planned services cannot be provided.

A series of complementary measures were adopted by royal decrees on Saturday 11 April 2020 within the framework of the federal government's special powers:

The implementation of a temporary moratorium on business bankruptcies. During this difficult period, any debtor company - facing difficulties because of the repercussions of Covid-19 - will be protected against conservatory and enforceable seizures, any declaration of bankruptcy or judicial dissolution. In addition, the payment deadlines stipulated in a reorganisation plan will be extended and contracts concluded before the Royal Decree's effective date cannot be resolved on a unilateral or judicial basis.

The State guarantee for certain credits contracted to mitigate the economic consequences of the Coronavirus. This decree aims to guarantee new credits for non-financial companies, including self-employed workers and legal entities in the non-profit sector, amounting to 50 billion. It will apply retroactively (1 April 2020).

Actiris (and Bruxelles Formation for the French-speaking training part. The VDAB answers for the Dutch-speaking training part in Brussels – Belgium)

Regional competence, measures include:

- The payment of a one-off grant to all businesses affected by the emergency measures and forced to close down
- Cancellation of the Brussels regional tax for the first half of 2020
- Support to strengthen the cash flow of the companies concerned by granting public guarantees (via the Brussels Guarantee Fund) on bank loans, for a total of €20 million.
- The creation of a mission delegated to Finance & Invest.brussels, including:
 - Access to low interest rate loans for the main HORECA sector suppliers enabling them to offer deferred payments for the HORECA sector
 - Access to low-interest loans for HORECA companies employing more than 50 people.
- A moratorium on the reimbursement of loans granted by finance & invest.brussels to companies in the affected sectors.
- Accelerated (and early) treatment, contracting and payment of direct aid for economic expansion (grants) in the following sectors: HORECA, tourism, events and culture
- Strengthening support mechanisms for businesses in difficulty by increasing funding for the Centre for Firms in Difficulty (CED)

CES- Croatian Employment Service (Croatia)

Currently CES measures and activities are focused on the job preservation in activities/sectors mostly at risk: transport and storage, accommodation, food and beverage activities, trade, activities within manufacturing industry – textile, wearing apparel, leather and wood, employers from manufacturing industry who are export-oriented or who import raw materials and employers who cannot perform their activities according to the Decision of disease control centres on national or regional/local level.

The employers previously referred to previously received a minimum net wage compensation of 100% from the ETUC for March, while this subsidy amount will be increased for April and May. The period of eligibility for funding is from 1 March 2020, with a maximum duration of 3 months. It will be possible to extend the duration.

This measure is successfully implemented, and employers are very interested in it. So far, more than 550 000 workers are included in the measure.

Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment (Denmark)

- Direct financial assistance to compensate companies for fixed expenditures (rent and other expenditures like leasing contracts) in situations where the turnover is plummeting. The compensation can be up to 80 percent depending on the loss of turnover.
- Package providing financial assistance to organisers forced to cancel or postpone concerts and other cultural events with more than 1,000 participants (and smaller arrangements targeting people at risk, like elders and people with health issues).
- Postponement of payment of VAT and other taxes for SME's. Expected outcome is strengthening of the liquidity with 40 billion DKK.

This comes on top of other initiatives, which in total will improve liquidity with around 165 billion DKK.

Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (Estonia)

Temporary subsidies will be paid to workers whose employers are significantly impacted by the current extraordinary circumstances. The subsidy will grant an income for the employees and help the employers to surpass temporary difficulties without having to lay off their staff or call bankruptcy.

The subsidy is paid, when an employer is in a situation where they comply with at least two of the following terms:

- The employer must have suffered at least a 30% decline in turnover or revenue for the month they wish to be subsidized for, as compared to the same month last year.
- The employer is unable to provide work to at least 30 per cent of its employees.
- The employer has cut the wages of at least 30% of employees by at least 30% or down to the minimum wage.

The employer must meet the terms during the calendar month they wish to have subsidized. The employee must have an employment contract with the employer. Both private and state organizations are eligible for the subsidies, independent of the size of the organization. The amount

of the subsidy will be 70% of the average monthly wage of the employee. The maximum amount of the subsidy is €1000. In addition to that, the employer must pay a wage of at least €150 to the employee. The employee will receive at least the minimum wage of €584 from the Unemployment Insurance Fund and their employer, collectively. In case the employee has thus far received less than the minimum wage due to working part-time, their income will remain the same as before. Any employee's wage can be subsidized for up to two months during a three-month-period. The Unemployment Insurance Fund will pay social security, unemployment insurance tax and mandatory funded pension, and income tax on the subsidy, the employer will pay these taxes on the employee's wage.

Public Employment Service of Finland (Finland)

Finland has legal possibility for "temporary lay-off scheme". This is an emergency measure for firms to temporarily lay off employees when the economic situation worsens. Currently, this is in a very active use.

Pôle emploi (Employment Division- France)

See all business support measures: <https://www.economie.gouv.fr/coronavirus-soutien-entreprises>

BA - Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency – Germany)

The corona crisis is a stress test for many companies. As a result, the employees are temporarily short of work. To make sure that companies do not have to fire their employees, the legislator has created the option of short-time work, called KUG, and expanded it in the wake of the corona crisis (initially until December 31, 2020). By April 6 2020, around 650,000 companies had registered short-time work with the employment agencies. If a company is on short-time work, employees receive 60 to 67 percent of their net wages. The employment agency will reimburse the monthly wage costs in order to relieve the companies financially. This can compensate for a temporary loss of work for up to 12 months (in parts). Companies can now obtain this benefit for their employees more easily than before. This way, the company retains valuable workers. The KUG is designed to preserve the company's employees and employees' jobs and to replace part of the loss of wages due to short-time work. Requirements for the KUG: There has to be a considerable loss of work with loss of earnings, the operational requirements have to be met, the personal requirements have to be registered and the loss of work has been reported. The BA does not only assist with financial help – the employer service is also available with comprehensive advice.

Education and Training Boards (Ireland)

Free online training, support and use of the devices

ANPAL- Agenzia Nazionale Politiche Attive del Lavoro (National Agency for Active Labour Policies – Italy)

Financial support (State grants) to SME up to 500mIn euro. For micro and small enterprises up to 25.000 euro without restrictions other than showing the income losses due to COVID19 containment measures (Closures, social distancing, etc.)

Employment Agency of Montenegro (Montenegro)

Postponement of repayment of loans at the request of citizens and economy with all banks, micro-credit institutions and the Investment and Development Fund for 90 days, Postponement of payment

of taxes and contributions on earnings as well as obligations under the Law on Rescheduling of Tax Claims, Creation of a new IRF credit line intended to improve the liquidity of entrepreneurs, micro, small, medium-sized and large enterprises up to a maximum amount of EUR 3 million per beneficiary. By a simplified procedure, no approval fee and an interest rate of only 1.5%, Provision of one-off financial assistance to the pensioners with the lowest pensions and beneficiaries of material assistance in the amount of EUR 50 each, Postponement of payment of lease of state-owned real estate, also for a period of 90 days, Suspension of payment of variable pay and all budgetary allowances for work in commissions, steering committees and other working bodies, All energy entities will exempt from paying, of a fixed part of the electricity bill for the months of April, May and June, the companies in activities whose work is prohibited by the order of the Ministry of Health, Subsidies for closed industries for April and May 2020, in the amount of 70% of the minimum wage and 100% of taxes and contributions to the minimum wage for each registered employee in sectors that had to be closed, Subsidies for vulnerable activities for April and May in the amount of 50% of the gross minimum wage for each registered employee in sectors, whose work is at risk due to measures for combating epidemic, Subsidy for wages of employees on paid absence for April and May of 70% of gross minimum wage for each employee who had to stay home to care for a child under 11, Subsidies for wages of employees in quarantine or isolation also for April and May 2020 in the amount of 70% of gross minimum wage for each employee, who have to be quarantined or in self-isolation, Subsidies for new employment in the amount of 70% of the gross minimum wage for at least 6 months for entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium-sized companies, who register new employees in April and who were simultaneously registered as unemployed persons at the Employment Agency of Montenegro,

UWV WERKbedrijf (YOUR WORK Company - The Netherlands)

Deferral of tax payments, government guarantees on business loans and reduced interest rates on small business loans. The government announced a loan guarantee program and tax relief for affected SMEs and the self-employed.

I.P - Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profisisonal (Institute for Employment and Professional Training- Portugal)

Enterprises

- i) Outstanding support for the maintenance of employment contracts in companies in a situation of business crisis (in cases of stoppage of the activity, suspension or cancellation of orders or break of 40% of the billing in the 30 days before demanding the support)
- ii) Extraordinary support for the maintenance of employment contracts in situations of business crisis in the amount of 2/3 of the wage, up to 3 times National Minimum Wage. Social Security ensures the payment of 70% and the other 30% is ensured by the employer. One month up to 6 months

Temporary exemption of employer's Social Security contributions payments during the lay off period, as well as on the first month after the resumption activity (companies with <50 workers are eligible and those with 50 + and at least 20% drop in revenue)

The employer using this measure cannot dismiss the workers during the period of application of the measures as well as in the following 60 days.

Extraordinary financial incentive to support the resumption of the company's activity (1 national minimum wage per worker)

Temporary exemption of employer's Social Security contributions payments during this period ii) For Business that continue to work, the payment of social security contributions for the months of March, April and May was delayed, until the end of the year.

Conditions:

- Business up to 50 workers
- between 50 and 249 workers with a break of at least 20% of turnover
- with more than 250 workers, billing losses are bigger than 20%.
- 2/3 of tax obligations for all SMEs and for all aviation and tourism enterprises was delayed
- Suspension of seizures of tax and social security privileges
- Credit lines with State guarantees for companies
- Extraordinary support for vocational training (50% of worker's remuneration up to national minimum wage, including training costs), for non-employed in productive activities for a considerable period.

National Agency for Employment (Romania)

The Romanian PES has been mandated to pay employers, from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, 75% of the basic salary of each of their workers who are temporarily out of work or whose salaries can no longer be paid completely, due to the Covid-19 emergency.

Arbetsförmedlingen (Employment Agency- Sweden)

Crisis package for small enterprises in Sweden. The package includes a central government loan guarantee to make it easier for companies to access financing. The proposal means that the central government will guarantee 70 per cent of new loans banks provide to companies that are experiencing financial difficulty due to the COVID-19 virus but that are otherwise robust. Furthermore, temporary reduction of employers' social security contributions will be proposed for the period 1 March to 30 June 2020 so that only the old age pension contribution is paid. To reduce costs for companies with considerable difficulties as a result of the COVID-19 virus – in sectors such as durable consumer goods, hotels, restaurants and certain other activities – the Government proposes providing support that aims to facilitate and speed up renegotiation of rents. The approach is that central government will cover 50 per cent of the rental reduction up to 50 per cent of the fixed rent. Moreover, the rules for tax allocation reserves will be temporarily changed so that sole proprietors severely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak will receive tax cuts. The new rules mean that 100 per cent of the taxable profits for 2019, up to SEK 1 million, can be set aside in the tax allocation reserve, which can then be set off against possible future losses.

This means that many people can get back the preliminary tax they paid in 2019. Furthermore, the previously presented proposal on new opportunities to defer tax payments will be expanded. This means that value added tax reported annually from 27 December 2019 until 17 January 2021 will also be covered by the proposal. On 20 March, a range of measures were presented to make it easier for Swedish businesses, particularly small- and medium-sized businesses, to access finance at this difficult time. Almi Företagspartner AB will receive a capital contribution of SEK 3 billion to

increase its lending to small- and medium-sized businesses throughout the country. The Swedish Export Credit Corporation's credit framework will be increased from SEK 125 billion to SEK 200 billion and can be used to provide both state-supported and commercial credit to Swedish export companies. Furthermore, the Swedish Export Credit Agency will decide on credit guarantees that entail new and improved credit opportunities for businesses.

SECO – Secrétariat d'État à l'Economie (The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs – Switzerland)

The Federal Council has approved a comprehensive package of measures totalling over CHF 60 billion to cushion the economic consequences of the spread of the coronavirus. The aim of the measures, which are aimed at various target groups, is to avoid redundancies, maintain employment, safeguard wages, and provide support for the self-employed. The measures must have a rapid and targeted effect. They should also be reversible once the recovery begins. Most important measures: Liquidity support for companies Emergency aid in the form of guaranteed COVID bridging loans: To enable affected SMEs to obtain bridging loans from the banks, the Federal Council will set up a guarantee programme worth CHF 40 billion. Affected companies should be able to obtain credit amounts of up to 10% of turnover or a maximum of CHF 20 million quickly and easily. Amounts of up to CHF 0.5 million are to be paid out immediately by the banks and 100% guaranteed by the Confederation. Amounts exceeding this should be guaranteed by the Confederation to 85% and require a brief bank examination. Deferment of payment of social security contributions: Companies affected by the crisis can be granted a temporary, interest-free deferral of payment of social security contributions. Liquidity buffers in the tax area and for federal suppliers: Companies should have the option of extending payment periods without having to pay interest on arrears. Legal standstill under the Federal Debt Collection and Bankruptcy Act: From 19 March to and including 4 April 2020, debtors were not to be operated throughout Switzerland.

Measure in the occupational pension provision. To bridge the liquidity bottlenecks, employers may temporarily use the so-called employer contribution reserves to pay employee contributions to the occupational pension scheme. Extension and simplification of part time working. Due to the current exceptional economic situation, people who work on a fixed-term, temporary or employer-like basis as well as people who are in an apprenticeship are also severely affected. For this reason, the entitlement to short-time work compensation has been extended and the application process simplified: The short-time work compensation can now also be paid to employees with fixed-term contracts and to persons working for a temporary work organisation. The loss of working hours can now also be credited to persons in an apprenticeship. In addition, short-time work compensation can now also be paid to employees who are close to employers (e.g. partners in a limited liability company). The waiting period for compensation for short-time work has been abolished. Employees no longer have to reduce their overtime before they can benefit from short-time work compensation. Wage payments that are due can also be paid via short-time work compensation. The approval period for short-time work has been extended from 3 to 6 months. The group of those entitled to short-time work will be extended to employees on call. Income from interim employment during short-time work will no longer be counted towards short-time work compensation. This will simplify procedures and create an incentive for many companies that are currently urgently seeking new staff (especially in the health care, agriculture, or logistics sectors).

İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency – Turkey)

Measures such as part-time working allowance, special credits from public banks, deferral of payments to companies are planned.

OCEANIA

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (Australia)

Yes, the government has introduced various measures, including financial assistance and the *Job Keeper* payment. The comprehensive list of measures is available here:

<https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus>