



# EU Social Response to COVID 19

## EAPN EUISG Webinar

### 23 April 2020

**DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion**  
**Unit EMPL.C.1 – Social Investment Strategy**

# OVERVIEW

## Short term actions

- @ health care
- @ prevention

## Employment related actions

- @ job protection
- @ income protection

## Financial support

**COM measures can be followed here:**

**[https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response_en)**

# First emergency measures

- ✓ **Direct support to the EU healthcare sector**
  - ✓ €3 billion from the EU budget, matched with €3 billion from Member States
  - ✓ Emergency Support Instrument to procure directly on behalf of the MSs
  - ✓ RescEU's common stockpile of equipment, such as ventilators, protective equipments, medical team mobilization
- ✓ **Medical guidance for the Member States**
- ✓ **Coordination on availability of personal protective equipment, increase production**
- ✓ **Providing protective and hygienic products through FEAD**

# Protect workers and ensure adequate income

*Various responses of MSs, supported/promoted by COM*

- **Short time working arrangements**
- **Special unemployment benefits to all**
- **Expanded sickness benefits**

*Workers' mobility guidelines*

- **critical staff like doctors or elderly care workers to reach their workplace to fight the pandemic**
- **applies to other key sectors (firefighters, police officers, etc.) as well as to seasonal workers**
- **burden free and fast procedures at borders, and apply proportionate health screening**

# Financial support I

- ✓ **'general escape clause' of the Stability and Growth Pact** - maximum flexibility to budgetary rules to help national governments financially support healthcare systems and businesses
- ✓ **Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative (package I and II)**
  - ✓ flexibility to allow MS rapidly re-orient their funds towards COVID-19-related measures, including relaxing rules on transfers across ESF and ERDF and between programmes
  - ✓ 100% financing rate by the EU for measures to fight the crisis
  - ✓ ESF allowed to purchase necessary **healthcare equipment**, including protective material for health care workers and **recruiting additional staff** for more and extended healthcare services and communication and **information** to the public.
  - ✓ Moreover, MSs were **encouraged** to use ESF for access to health care and **social services for the poor** and those at risk of social exclusion, by supporting:
    - ✓ measures to **ensure access** to services **for people** and families in **vulnerable situations** and with disabilities
    - ✓ **support to social workers**, including additional staff
    - ✓ **volunteering initiatives** at community level

# Financial support II

- ✓ **FEAD support to most deprived and homeless**
  - ✓ help social workers and NGOs to adapt their work to this situation of emergency
  - ✓ available to purchase material to avoid the transmission of the virus (eg. protective gloves, disinfection devices, protective shields) and any other measures needed for the proper delivery of assistance to homeless people in a healthy and safe environment
  - ✓ proposed amendments to the FEAD regulation to facilitate operations on the ground with greater flexibility, such as adapt measures without the preliminary need for amendments of the OPs and eligibility for:
    - protective material,
    - preparation costs for the food,
    - electric and paper vouchers;

# Financial support III

- ✓ **Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency – SURE**
  - ✓ complementary to the support available from the ESIF, it consists of a financial assistance based on loans to Member States – up to €100 billion worth –backed by 25 billion euro guarantees committed by Member States
  - ✓ prevents a temporary shock from having long-lasting consequences through allow short time work schemes
  - ✓ helping Member States to cover costs directly related to the creation or extension of national short time work schemes or similar measures by providing employees with income support for the hours not worked
  - ✓ also address self-employed or atypical workers

# Additional challenges ahead, beyond the sanitary crisis

*Long term impacts of the lockdown measures*

- further divergences among regions
- growing inequalities
- self-employed and atypical workers being hit, even more the undeclared workers

*Plan to recovery with adequate financial instruments and a new adequate European budget to support investments, including social investments, in particular skills and adequate social protection*





# Thank you for your attention.

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