# SEDEC Bulletin N°4

## COVID-19 impact and response measures

**05 June 2020**

*The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically affected our world and our way of life, with the loss of thousands of lives and unprecedented consequences for every aspect of our daily existence. The Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC) at the European Committee of the Regions is preparing regular bulletins on the policy fields within its remits, reflecting recent research, articles and discussions on the socio-economic impact of the pandemic in Europe and on the different actions and response measures being planned and implemented at EU, national, regional and local level.*

*Anne Karjalainen (FI/PES), Chair of the SEDEC commission*

## Social policy and employment

On 3 June, the European Commission launched the second-stage consultation of European trade unions and employers' associations on how to ensure **fair minimum wages in the European Union**.

On 27 May, the European Commission proposed a EUR 750 billion COVID-19 **coronavirus recovery package**, which will be made up of EUR 500 billion in grants and EUR 250 billion in loans. The recovery fund comes in addition to the EU's long-term budget for 2021-27, which the Commission proposed to set at EUR 1.1 trillion and which still needs the unanimous backing of all EU Member States and the European Parliament.

To address the economic and social challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis, the Commission's **recovery plan** through the long-term **EU Budget 2021-2027** will be boosted by **Next Generation EU**, an emergency recovery instrument which is structured around three pillars: supporting Member States to recover, kick-starting the economy and helping private investment, and learning the lessons from the crisis.



*Source: European Commission*

**The REACT-EU package.** Cohesion policy will play a key role in ensuring balanced recovery, making sure no one is left behind. The focus of the EU cohesion policy in 2021-2027 remains among other things the promotion of the European Pillar of Social Rights. For the current programming period, **REACT-EU** (Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe) will deliver EUR 55 billion of additional funds that will be made available to the ERDF and the ESF as well as to the European Fund for Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD).

REACT-EU will continue and extend the crisis response and repair measures delivered through the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative and the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus. The package will provide additional funding for the most important sectors that will be crucial in laying the foundations for a sound recovery. This will involve investment to support job maintenance and job creation, including through short-time work schemes and support for the self-employed.



On May 26 there was a debate with the Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmit, the Croatian Presidency of the EU Council and MEPs from the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL) on how to offer as much protection as possible for **seasonal and cross-border workers** in the wake of COVID-19. To this end, they called for the revision of the Common Provisions Regulation to be adopted as soon as possible. According to Commissioner Schmit, there are currently 17 million seasonal and 1.5 million cross-border workers. The EP is now tasked with preparing a resolution on the issue of **seasonal workers** in agriculture, social services and tourism for the June plenary session (scheduled for 17 June, rapporteur Dragoș Pîslaru, RO/Renew Europe).

On 2 June, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) called for the **right to disconnect** to be enforced under a 2002 agreement with employers on the **regulation of remote work**. Due to the pandemic, 40% of employees in Europe have been working from home, but this has led to several cases of abuse. During a debate with the Commissioner for Employment and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmit, MEP Jordi Cañas (SP, Renew Europe), suggested creating a new European framework for remote work, in the light of the abuse taking place as a result of the health crisis.

On 21 May, the ILO published a factsheet on temporary wage subsidies applied worldwide during the COVID-19 crisis.

In May 2020 CEDEFOP presented a **skills forecast** which was developed before the coronavirus pandemic. Using this baseline, we can assess the coronavirus impact on sectors and jobs for the post-crisis "new normal" across all Member States, Cedefop executive director Jürgen Siebel notes. First, future labour market participation rates are expected to fall in many countries. This is the result of an ageing workforce and decreasing numbers of prime-aged workers. The current crisis may serve as an alarm bell regarding the ageing workforce and a population that is more vulnerable to any recurrence of a pandemic in the future. Secondly, jobs in the higher and lower skills spectrum are expected to grow, hollowing out those in the middle. This trend is likely to be further reinforced by the pandemic, which has hit sectors that typically employ workers with a medium level of skills harder. These jobs are also threatened more by technological advances. The coronavirus may result in them being replaced by technology.  The skills forecast also highlights a trend towards continuous skills upgrading. Although we are heading towards a highly skilled workforce, a significant proportion of such workers may not have the opportunity to use the skills they have acquired. However, during the coronavirus crisis, it is the highly skilled workers that have been finding it easier to adapt to the new ways of working by making good use of technological advances.

## Research and innovation policy

**Commission creates one-stop shop for coronavirus research and innovation funding**
The European Commission has launched the European Research Area Corona Platform, a one-stop shop for information for beneficiaries of R&I programmes. It provides useful information, dedicated support and real-time updates on funding opportunities for coronavirus-related research and innovation. The platform also has a dedicated section on national activities, including funding opportunities, initiatives and projects in the Member States.

**R&I action against Coronavirus**
On 12 May, EUR 117 million was granted by the Commission to eight large-scale research projects for treatments and diagnostics through the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI). In addition to this, on 19 May the Commission mobilised another EUR 122 million from  Horizon 2020, complementing earlier actions to develop diagnostics, treatments and vaccines by strengthening capacity for manufacturing and for deploying solutions. This contributes to the Commission's EUR 1 billion pledge via Horizon 2020 to the Coronavirus Global Response initiative, launched by its president, Ursula von der Leyen, on 4 May 2020.

**Research and Innovation Performance report: Enabling Europe to lead the green and digital transition**

On 27 May, the Commission released its latest report on the EU's Science, Research and Innovation Performance, through which it analyses how Europe performs in the global setting. It highlights the need for research and innovation (R&I) to support sustainable and inclusive growth of companies, regions and countries, making sure that no one is left behind in the quest to strengthen innovation systems, especially in less-developed regions.

**A resilient tomorrow: a COVID-19 response requires societies to transform**

The JRC has been working to put resilience thinking into policy-making since 2015. Researchers have now summarised the key strategic lessons learnt from this scientific work and discuss them from the new perspective of the COVID-19 emergency in a freshly published report co-authored with Professor Enrico Giovannini, member of the Italian Task Force for handling Phase II.

**EIT launches its Crisis Response Initiative**

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is mobilising EUR 60 million of additional funding for innovators offering high-impact solutions. The initiative will allow the launch of innovation projects to be implemented by the EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Communities across Europe. The "Pandemic Response Projects" will tackle the current crisis and prevent its resurgence, and the "Venture Support Instrument" will support innovative start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs, crucial to the swift recovery of the economy.

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**Education and Youth, Culture and Sport**

**1.** On 27 May, the European Commission presented the **Adjusted Commission Work Programme** for 2020, which prioritises the actions needed to propel Europe's recovery and resilience. The **Updated Skills Agenda for Europe**, which was delayed because of the pandemic, is to be adopted as swiftly as possible (planned for 8 July). The **Reinforcing of the Youth Guarantee** (planned for 24 June) is also one of the initiatives which are considered essential or support the immediate recovery.

On the same day, the European Commission put forward the long-awaited proposals for a revised **Multiannual Financial Framework** for 2021-2027 and the **Union Recovery Instrument** in its Communication on **The EU budget powering the recovery plan for Europe**. It proposes to invest more in young people through an additional EUR 3.4 billion for **Erasmus Plus**, bringing the total to EUR 24.6 billion. The Commission is also adjusting its proposals for the future **cohesion policy programmes** to give even stronger support to recovery investments, for example support for small and medium-sized enterprises, youth employment measures, education and skills, and measures combatting child poverty. Reacting to these proposals, the CULT Committee chair and rapporteurs stated: "*While the Commission's proposed recovery plan has a lot going for it, the specific figures for the education, culture*

*and youth programmes are deeply disappointing and simply not in line with the statement by the Commission President on the importance of future generations, along with education and culture*".

On 18 May, EU **education ministers** held an informal video conference to discuss the implications of COVID-19. The focus of this third meeting was on re-opening education and training systems, including different organisational and safety measures, as well as on school leaving exams, enrolments in higher education and the continuation of learning mobility. The majority of Member States (22) were moving towards a gradual reopening and return to actual physical lessons, starting with specific target groups. 20 Member States have already organised or are going to organise end-of-year examinations, although the majority have made some adjustments (reducing the number of examinations or simplifying procedures). Some, on the other hand, have chosen to postpone or cancel assessments.

B. Divjak, Croatian Minister of Science and Education, noted that "*We will need to take steps and look beyond this emergency response and, based on lessons learnt, perhaps consider some innovations that can make our education system more resilient to any potential future crisis.*" **European Commissioners Schinas** and **Gabriel** focused on inclusive and resilient education systems and on learning the lessons of the pandemic. They also presented Commission's future initiatives on the New Skills Agenda, the Digital Education Action Plan and the European Education Area.

On 19 May, EU **ministers for youth** discussed the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic as experienced by the youth sector in relation to mobility, youth programmes and youth activities, access of young people to services and employment, the overall well-being of young people and youth participation in decision-making. The vice-president of the European Youth Forum, V. Majamaa, presented the perspective of young people. The discussion highlighted the need for further cooperation, with an emphasis on disseminating information, exchanging positive experience and best practice, as well as on networking.

**Learning City Webinar Series 2020, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)**

For the next period, UIL announced two new **webinars** for cities to share and learn about measures taken at different stages of the emergence of COVID-19:
- 10 June: General response to COVID-19
- 10 June: Human and civil rights protection

On 11-12 June, the European Committee of the Regions' YFACTOR project "**Mind the Digital Gap**" will highlight the commitment of regional and local actors in their efforts to facilitate the digital transition and to ensure  continuity of services across the EU regions.

The CoR trainees will host a series of webinars and interactive workshops focused on inclusive digital access to **Education**, **Culture** and **Civic Participation**, engaging public administrators, members of the public, practitioners, civil society groups and other stakeholders. The recent push for digitalisation has encouraged a lot of innovation in these fields but has also exposed the digital divide, even widening

gaps in accessibility and knowledge of end-users. Thus, the YFACTOR event will focus on bringing forward innovative and inclusive practices to ensure that no one is left behind in the digital transition.

**2.** Under the revised **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)**, the Commission is proposing a new **REACT-EU** initiative to increase cohesion support to Member States. Such support will be available across economic sectors, including for the badly-affected tourism and **culture sectors**; as these form a particularly large part of some EU economies hit hardest by the COVID-19 crisis, REACT-EU can also counterbalance trends of **rising divergence** in the Union. In addition to the reinforcements financed under **Next Generation EU**, other programmes are to be strengthened to allow them to play their full role in making the Union more resilient and addressing challenges that have been heightened by the pandemic and its consequences. The Commission proposes to invest more in the **cultural and creative sectors** through an increase in **Creative Europe** funds to **EUR 1.5 billion**. But the **CULT Committee** in the European Parliament considered the proposal "*A terrible message for the cultural, creative and media sectors*". It underlines that "*the Covid-19 pandemic has also ravaged the cultural and creative and media sectors across Europe, but the proposal - a decrease compared to the 2018 proposal - ignores this impact completely. Creative Europe is the only EU programme that provides direct support to these sectors*".

On 19 May, EU **Ministers of Culture** shared in a videoconference their plans regarding the next steps that should be taken in re-opening cultural venues and restarting artistic events and productions. Nina Obuljen Koržinek, Croatian Minister of Culture, said: "*As all parts of cultural sector have been affected by the crisis, the effects of which will be long-lasting, we feel it is urgent to react by adapting our policies and financing schemes to changing circumstances. The period ahead of us carries many unknowns, and a continuous exchange of information, as well as careful mapping and planning of further activities, are of the utmost importance. This will ensure appropriate conditions for our further work, in particular in the context of the "new normal" at the EU level*".

**3.** On 2 June, EU **sports ministers** discussed restarting the sport sector and making it more resilient for the future. **Commissioner Gabriel** announced the launch of a **study to quantify the short-term economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic**, with the results available at the end of August.

Tomislav Družak, Croatian State Secretary for Sport said that: "*A special emphasis should be placed on the safe return of athletes and citizens to sport activities and on launching sport events without jeopardising public health. It is also necessary to continue strengthening the dialogue with the sports movement at all levels – from local to international – in order to address jointly long-term adjustments to changes brought about by this crisis*".

On 30 May, the **#BEACTIVE HOUR** campaign called for simultaneous physical activity across Europe. Activity that can be done in the home, as a family unit, or amongst groups living together, those who are currently feeling isolated – something that brings us all together with an element of fun. The campaign is being coordinated by EuropeActive and ukactive and supported by the European Commission as part of the build-up to the European Week of Sport.

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| Information society, artificial intelligence and audiovisual/telecommunications technologies |
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### Artificial intelligence

#### Potential of artificial intelligence (AI) not fully used yet to fight the pandemic

According to expert staff working in the Cabinet of the European Commission's vice-president, Margrethe Vestager, the potential of data and AI have not been fully exploited during the current crisis. Among the problems, "lack of data infrastructure and interoperability, together with weak quality control" have been pointed out. Only a few research projects have been considered fully operational in addressing the practical challenges arising from the crisis.

#### Technical limits of artificial intelligence in rapidly changing circumstances

AI uses machine learning to analyse training data and identify predictive patterns. However, some algorithms may no longer function properly if the human behaviour they analyse is disrupted by such crises as the COVID-19 pandemic, reflecting a well-known limitation of AI systems: they do not handle novel situations well. Some algorithms are designed to continuously add new training data and therefore update the algorithm, but with major changes this gradual updating will not be sufficient. To learn completely new rules, machine learning algorithms need large amounts of new data. To address the challenges, in the short term, it will also likely be necessary to increase human oversight of AI.

#### Support to the deployment of AI in the 27 May recovery package

The recovery package proposed by the European Commission on 27 May includes a new Strategic Investment Facility built into InvestEU. This facility, aiming to generate investments of up to EUR 150 billion in boosting the resilience of strategic sectors, will support the green and digital transition. In connection with of the priority of stimulating digital transition, additional investment in artificial intelligence has been envisaged.

#### The EU research programme has prioritised AI analytics to control the pandemic

EU has **mobilised funds** under its research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, for urgently needed research dedicated to the coronavirus. Digital tools, including artificial intelligence analytics, will be eligible for support for the purpose of improving surveillance and care at high Technology Readiness Levels. A new ERA call has been launched with the deadline of 11 June.

### Audiovisual media

#### Innovative EU financial solutions for the audiovisual media promised to be available locally

The European Commission is currently working on plans to introduce "new and innovative financial solutions" to support the sustainability of the EU's media sector amid the current health crisis. This was promised by the EU Commissioner, Thierry Breton, during a discussion with the members of the European Parliament's Culture Committee on 4 May. In response to their letter asking for support to

the sector, the Commissioner has pledged to present a media Action Plan before the end of the year. Mr Breton has also stressed that the upcoming Digital Services Act, when adopted later this year and subsequently implemented, could help to create a more level playing field between the huge transnational online platforms and the EU traditional media outlets, thus facilitating recovery.

❖ **Responses at regional and local level**

**Social policy and employment**

**Braga – Cheaper bus tickets for the unemployed**
Starting on 1 June, public transport passes will become almost 50% cheaper for the unemployed in Braga, Portugal. The city had made its buses free of charge in April and May. With the return to normal operations after the coronavirus lockdown, the passes with reduced fees will be introduced to support those in need.

**Brno – Support for businesses**
Brno is supporting the areas of business that have been most affected, such as gastronomy, tourism and culture, and has also approved complex measures for businesspeople. It provides easier administration of permits for the outdoor areas of restaurants, and it also suggests that these areas should be established at no extra cost to proprietors.

**Milan metropolitan area - Social policies**
The metropolitan area of Milan, and indeed the whole region of Lombardy, was one of the areas most severely hit by COVID-19. The City of Milan supported countless initiatives related to social policies and employment, such as the distribution of food to the elderly, to the unemployed and to people with special needs, including those who were vulnerable and not self-sufficient. It has also distributed 10 000 masks to homes for the elderly. To ensure essential public services it also gave 3 000 sets of protective clothing to the municipalities of the region.

**Vilnius - Social policies**
During the quarantine, at the initiative of the municipality of Vilnius the most vulnerable group of residents – lonely seniors, the disabled and parents raising children alone, who had no opportunity to go out for shopping – were temporarily provided with free food support and, if necessary, medicines and hygiene products. During this period, around 2 000 Vilnius residents applied for such support. Every week they received food packages containing food products with a long shelf life. In total, the municipality spent about EUR 10 000 on the initiative. As the Lithuanian government is moving ahead with quarantine easing, free food support to the most vulnerable people is being replaced by reusable face masks. Those experiencing greater difficulties may continue to contact the hotline for paid assistance. The quarantine hotline has already received more than 8 000 different emergency calls to date.

**Research and innovation**

### Palermo – Boosting digital competence

The innovation service of the municipality of Palermo, in collaboration with other offices, created a "digital toolbox" at the beginning of March 2020. This online space provides the tools, procedures and information necessary for the new style of working online, including national legislation on smart working, the fast internal communications of the Google group "Aquile Agili" (Smart Eagles", the eagle being the symbol of the municipality of Palermo), procedures for drafting decisions compliant with the national law on the digital agenda (CAD: digital administration code), management applications to work remotely at home, tutorials for using a digital signature, managing video meetings, drafting and sharing documents with colleagues on Google Drive, and much more.

### Kungsbacka – Digital doers help you stay connected

To enable all citizens to use digital tools for social contacts during the coronavirus pandemic, the Swedish city of Kungsbacka has initiated a support service: people can book a "digital doer" to assist them at home on how to make a video call, download an e-book or enjoy a live-streamed concert or digital museum tour. The service is available for people aged 70 years or older and others who belong to a risk group and have difficulties using online tools. They can also borrow a tablet from the digital doers. Information about the offer is given via a municipal outreach programme and through a senior citizens' network. You can read more here (in Swedish)

### Austria awards 45 COVID-19 research projects EUR 26 million

The Austrian Research Promotion Agency has selected 45 projects to be funded through the country's EUR 26 million COVID-19 research fund, with the last 21 awardees announced on Saturday. Across the country, 18 research projects will work on COVID-19 diagnostics, 16 will look for ways to prevent the spread of the disease and nine will search for new drugs. The grantees include two Vienna-based vaccine developers, Themis Bioscience, which last week announced it is being acquired by the US pharma company Merck, and Baxalta Innovations, owned by Japanese pharma company Takeda.

### Flanders launches EUR 2 million coronavirus knowledge transfer fund

The Flanders Agency for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (VLAIO) has launched a EUR 2 million funding call under its knowledge transfer programme, COOCK, to connect universities and companies in the fight against COVID-19. The programme will facilitate technology and knowledge transfer between universities and companies to aid in the monitoring, control, prevention and detection of the virus. The call is open until the end of September 2020 and winning projects will start two weeks after the submission of the application.

## Education and Youth, Culture and Sport

### *Education and Youth*

**The Hague**

The Hague is taking measures to ensure pupils can get to school safely by respecting physical distancing. Fifteen primary schools have introduced "School Streets", closing streets to traffic twice a day – coinciding with school opening and closing hours.

**Viladecans**

Both educational and fun – that is the ambition of the online platform "School at home" from the Spanish city of Viladecans. Activities range from baking an Easter cake to math games to watching a short film and reflecting over the emotions represented in the movie.

**eTwinning Platform**

The eTwinning platform allows school staff (teachers, librarians, etc.) from one of the European countries involved to communicate, collaborate, develop projects and share resources and best practices. It is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme. Currently, there are 44 countries involved in eTwinning across Europe and beyond.

**Florence**

The city of Florence has re-opened its parks for families, and launched the "Pollicino.Zero"project. In eight parks in the city educators and volunteers will be present to answer parents' questions and suggest creative activities around outdoor and environmental education.

### *Cultural and Creative Sectors*

**RICC**

The Regional Initiative for Culture and Creativity (**RICC**) collected good practices to counteract the COVID-19 emergency from 12 RICC regions (the Basque Country, Emilia Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the Canary Islands, Castilla la Mancha, Lombardy, Occitanie, Ostergotland, South Moravia, Tuscany, the Veneto and Wallonia).

**Guimarães**

The municipality of Guimarães invites artists to propose special creative projects for the coronavirus crisis. The idea is to develop a programme of community work and cultural activities to reconnect creators, the public and the community. Up to ten projects will be financed up to a maximum amount of EUR 50 000.

### Vilnius

[Restaurants in Vilnius](#) are using social distancing rules to become fashion displays for local designers. The indoor restaurant tables that otherwise must be kept empty will therefore be used for mannequins to demonstrate this season's fashion. The city also held a [Mask Fashion Week](#) – the project was open to everyone, and the city streets became a runway to showcase the designs.

### Nantes

Nantes is encouraging citizens to archive their experience of lockdown to preserve its value for future researchers. This includes photos, texts, drawings and more. The [Nantes Archives](#) are launching a collection from the inhabitants in order to preserve the memory of the health crisis linked to the coronavirus and to set up a memorable collection of private archives whose preservation and access for researchers will be guaranteed by the community. In the longer term, the city will reflect on how to show this major collection.

### Bratislava

In a bid to bring [live entertainment direct](#) to Bratislava's elderly population housed in care homes, most of whom have been in isolation for two months now, the city administration, alongside other organisations, has started organising live outdoor concerts.

### *Sport*

### Düsseldorf

"[Sports in the Park](#)", Dusseldorf's free outdoor gym, has started again. After online only courses during the coronavirus lockdown, classes are now being held outside again, applying safety measures such as respecting physical distance. Passive sport lovers can also enjoy the "Bundesliga", Germany's premier football league which is running again, although with empty stadiums.

### Nice

More than EUR 12 000 have been raised so far through a ["connected race"](#) in Nice, France. Runners and walkers can choose a distance between 5km and a marathon of 42.195km, run individually, and report their results via an app. The fee of EUR 5 per person is donated to medical research to fight COVID-19. The race was open from the 16 to 24 May.

### Budapest

In order to provide a means of safe travel during the pandemic, the municipality of Budapest has introduced the following cycling-related measures: the rental fee of public bicycles has been reduced to a [symbolic fee](#) of HUF 100 (approximately EUR 0.30) per month; 2 071 bicycles and 157 docking stations have been provided around the city, with the possibility of [online registration](#); the number of trams allowing for the [transport of bicycles](#) has been doubled, and additional, temporary [bicycle lanes](#) have been established on all key routes (see video from the [World Economic Forum](#)).

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**Information society, artificial intelligence and audiovisual/telecommunications technologies**

*Artificial Intelligence*

[France, local and regional best practice](#)

French cities, including Strasbourg, Orléans and Nanterre, are using chatbots to decentralise the distribution of accurate, verified information related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A new chatbot, enabled by machine learning, is being used by healthcare and government institutions for contactless screening of COVID-19 symptoms and to answer questions from the public. The chatbot has been launched by Clevy.io, a French start-up, making it easier for people to find official government information about COVID-19. It analyses real-time information from the French government and the World Health Organization, assesses known symptoms and answers questions about government policies.

*Audiovisual technologies*

[Spain, local and regional best practice](#)

The Community of Madrid (Spain): The Community is speeding up its entire line of aid to the audio-visual industry, taking into account the impact that the spread of COVID-19 is having on the sector. In addition, it will increase its support for the development of audiovisual projects, up to a sum of EUR 1.6 million.7

Region of Murcia (Spain): The regional Ministry for Education and Culture has launched a programme called "Plan CREA". Its goal consists of promoting culture and enhancing it with economic aid, given the coronavirus situation. EUR 5 000 will be given to those audio-visuals that are made publicly available in the region. The money has been provided by the Institute for Cultural Industries and the Arts (ICA) and the regional Ministry for the Presidency. Moreover, the councillor for culture has also explained that a new set of measures will be defined to boost the cultural and creative industries from 2020-2022.

**Additional useful links**

**Association of European Regions**: [https://aer.eu/covid19/](https://aer.eu/covid19/)
**European Research Council:**
[https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/magitems/ERC_actions_on_Covid-19.pdf](https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/magitems/ERC_actions_on_Covid-19.pdf)
**European Medicines Agency:** [https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/human-regulatory/overview/public-health-threats/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/covid-19-whats-new](https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/human-regulatory/overview/public-health-threats/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/covid-19-whats-new)
**European Commission**: [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)

**EU support for the cultural and creative sectors:**
https://ec.europa.eu/culture/news/coronavirus-how-eu-responds-outbreak-support-cultural-and-creative-sectors_en; https://creativesunite.eu/

**EU Learning Corner:** https://europa.eu/learning-corner/home_en

**JRC (Science Hub):** https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en

**EU local news**: https://www.themayor.eu/en

**EPRS and other EP publications**: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/home.html
 See also https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/priorities/eu-response-to-coronavirus

**ESPON  programme**:  https://www.espon.eu/collecting-experiences-and-evidence-local-and-regional-responses-covid19

**Eurocities**: https://covidnews.eurocities.eu/

**CEMR:** https://www.ccre.org/en/actualites/view/3994

**OECD New Digital Hub for COVID-19:** http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/

**ERRIN news:** https://errin.eu/news (primarily R&I /regional focus)

**EARTO news:** https://www.earto.eu/news/ (primarily R&I)

**EUA (European University Association):** https://eua.eu/news/

**Vanguard Initiative:** https://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu/news

**Lisbon Council:** https://lisboncouncil.net/news-a-events.html (Digital/AI/Social/R&I)

**Bruegel:** The latest on COVID-19

**CEPS:** Research on COVID-19

**WHO:** Coronavirus Dashboard