

## Coronavirus / COVID-19 outbreak



Update 14 October 2020

### **information about EPSU meetings:**

- [\*\*EPSU GEN 5 2020 "Cancellation of upcoming EPSU meetings COVID-19"\*\*](#)
- [\*\*EPSU Gen 6 2020 "EPSU Executive Committee meeting postponed"\*\*](#)
- [\*\*EPSU Gen 7 2020 "Cancellation of EPSU meetings in April and May"\*\*](#)
- **EPSU GEN 8 2020 Message of Solidarity to all affiliates - EPSU leadership** ([EN](#) - [FR](#) - [DE](#) - [ES](#) - [IT](#) - [SV](#) - [RU](#) - [TR](#) - [HR](#) - [SRB](#))
- **EPSU GEN 16 2020 Arrangements for upcoming EPSU meetings in Autumn 2020 due to COVID-19** ([EN](#) - [FR](#) - [DE](#) - [ES](#) - [SV](#) - [RU](#))

### **EPSU statements**

- [\*\*On the European response to COVID 19\*\*](#) (12 March)
- [\*\*On the Corona virus related to workers and our public health systems\*\*](#)

(5 March)

- [EPSU paper on strategies to leave lockdown](#) (29 April)
- [European Health Action week - Fighting for health and care beyond the pandemic](#) (October 2020)

## Open letter

- [To the European institutions and national governments on protecting health workers](#) (16 March)
- [EPSU, the European trade union federations and ETUC demand COVID-19 is recognised as occupation disease](#) (27 April)
- [Response of the Commission to the above letter](#)
- [Joint letter of the ETUFs to the Commission to take swift action to enforce workers' rights to information, consultation and participation in order to best anticipate and manage the COVID-19 impact on jobs and workplaces](#) (20 May)

## Joint statements

- [Healthcare professionals urge authorities to guarantee protection to those in front lines against Covid-19](#) (26 March)
- [Unions and Civil Society Organisations call for public health to be prioritised over profits](#) (25 March)
- [EPSU and the Social Employers issue a joint statement on the COVID-19 outbreak](#) (25 March)
- [Joint letter of the European Trade Union Federations on personal protective equipment and more to the Commission](#) (27 March)
- [Response of the Commission](#) to the above joint letter (7 May)
- [Joint European Trade Union Federations recommendations to EWC/SE coordinators and workers representatives in SNBs, EWCs and SEs](#) (30 March)
- [Coalition to Make Whistleblowing Safe During Covid-19](#) (6 April)
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**[A joint statement of the ETUC, EPSU and other European Trade Union Federations on the occasion of International Workers Memorial Day 28 April](#)** remembering the many in health and care that got infected and died.

- **[Social Partners in Local and Regional Governments joint declaration on COVID19 and its consequences](#)** (25 June 2020)
- **[EPSU/FESE Joint Position Paper on Recruitment and Retention in Social Services](#)** (26 June 2020)
- **[Statement on Covid-19 and its aftermath by EU social partners in central governments: investing in public sector staff](#)** (9 July 2020)

## **Developments at national level**

[Statement made by of the Nordic Municipal Workers Unions on the Corona Crisis](#) to ministers in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. No austerity; Investment in public services; negotiations and social dialogue as instruments.

**Article on [the safety and staffing challenges facing health and social services](#)** (18 March)

**Article on [Fighting covid19 in prisons and detention centres in Europe: Protected prison workers - protected inmates](#)** (15 April)

**Article on [Health workers bear brunt of COVID-19 infections](#)** (3 July)

For an overview of the measures governments take in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, please consult the page of the [Pan-European Council](#) (PERC) of ITUC.

[PERC Statement on COVID-19](#)

## **Testing and Tracing Apps**

Many countries are discussing the use of tracing apps to assist in monitoring the

spread of the virus. It would allow the public health authorities to react quickly to a new outbreak. There are concerns about privacy but also about the use and ownership of the data. Please find here briefing of Unison on some of these issues. Unions are warning against the free access to data of millions by the private technology companies. In the UK rules to ensure accountability and transparency have been relaxed and suspended. [For the briefing](#)

## **Keeping informed**

**There is a number of websites that provide useful information and guidance on responses to the COVID-19 coronavirus. These include the World Health Organisation (WHO), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and various web pages of the European Commission. Below we provide links to the most relevant sections.**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR HEALTH WORKERS** This section of the [WHO](#) website contains resources relating to the protection of health workers and emergency responders. It includes links to key occupational safety and health recommendations in healthcare in light of the outbreak as well as specific recommendations on the responsible use of personal protective equipment and risk assessment and management for health workers. For more practical recommendations concerning the prevention of infection for healthcare staff caring for patients with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19, see [the Q&A section](#)

### [Hospital readiness checklist for COVID-19](#)

The [WHO also provides regular updates](#) about the development of the situation as well as practical instructions to prevent the spread of the virus. The [ILO has provided guidance](#) on the relevant standards in times of crisis like the Corona virus (Covid-19) pandemic (And in [FR](#) and in [ES](#)) . Moreover, together with UNICEF, the [ILO has issued recommendations](#) to support working families, in particular those with low income, during the pandemic. This [technical guidance by the WHO](#) identifies 10 policy objectives to prevent and manage the COVID pandemic in LTC settings, including the mobilization of additional funds.

## **Health and Safety for all workers**

A new [ILO guide on health and safety](#) (24 July 2020) details what employers are expected to do and what safety reps, unions, labour inspectorates can do to deal

with COVID19.

**ENSURING HEALTH SYSTEMS ARE PREPARED** This section of the [ECDC](#) website focuses on public health emergency preparedness. It provides useful guidance on contingency planning for healthcare services as well as infection prevention and control in healthcare facilities. The ECDC also provides links to the relevant sections of [national ministry](#) websites.

**THE RESPONSE AT EU LEVEL** The website of the European Commission lays out the [key response mechanisms](#) of the EU, such as the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS), the Health Security Committee (HSC) and the HSC Communicators' network (ComNet). The focus lies on cooperation, rapid exchange of information, swift monitoring and coordination of preparedness and response measures to COVID-19, but also joint procurement of personal protective equipment.

**DEALING WITH THE ECONOMIC IMPACT** The European Commission also website focuses on the [economic repercussions](#) of this health emergency, such as the Corona Response Investment Initiative, but also specific measures aimed at transport and tourism. In a similar vein, the [European Central Bank](#) lays out the economic relief measures centred on the Pandemic Emergency Purchase Programme (PEPP) amounting to 750 billion euro.

**The European Foundation for Living and working conditions** (Dublin) has made available its data base of policy and agreements regarding COVID. [Eurofound's COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch](#) aims to map measures introduced to cushion the social and economic effects on businesses, workers and citizens. It also includes information on the role played by social partners in the design and implementation of the measures.

### **Health and Safety Guide for Black and Asian ethnic minority people**

Data indicate that the COVID-19 virus has a significant impact on black and Asian ethnic minority people. One of the UK unions UNITE, put together a [short briefing](#) on health and safety guidance that might be of interest.

**For PSI Campaign** [Safe Workers Save Lives](#)

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