

**SIGMA**

Creating Change Together



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Public Administration: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

***Mapping the EU member states' public administration responses to the COVID-19 pandemic
(for EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries)***

PART 2

Public service and human resource management

1-7 April 2020

This informal mapping exercise was prepared by internal and external SIGMA experts, following a discussion with the European Commission, using publicly available information and some informal insights (collected between 1 and 7 April 2020). It provides a summary of how EU member states and selected OECD countries have managed the COVID-19 crisis initial stage with regard to the functioning of the government and the public administration. The mapping has been compiled as a source of information and inspiration for decision-making and decision implementation by policymakers in EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries.

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What arrangements regarding teleworking? What is the share of civil servants teleworking? What is the share of civil servants still coming to the office?

AUSTRIA

All Government employees are teleworking, however key officers are requested to stay in the office to assist the crisis management team whenever necessary.

BELGIUM

Teleworking is generalised. The vast majority of public services is closed (but operational to the extent possible) and the general rule is staff who can do telework work remotely. For those who keep working, the adaptation of working hours is encouraged in order to avoid commuting during rush hours. All meetings, internal and external, are held by video-conferencing, skype, etc. If this is not possible, the meeting will be cancelled/postponed. As regards international relations and networks, all missions to other countries have been cancelled. Meanwhile, most international meetings have been cancelled by the organising country. The national recruitment agency has cancelled all selection and language tests (PC tests, written tests, interviews). The national training centre has cancelled all courses, seminars and other development activities.

Teleworking is compulsory in all non-essential businesses, whatever their size, for all staff members whose function is suitable. For the functions to which teleworking at home cannot apply, companies must take the necessary measures to guarantee compliance with the rules of social distancing, in particular the maintenance of a distance of 1.5 meters between each person. Non-essential businesses unable to comply with the above measures must close.

These provisions do not apply to companies in crucial sectors and essential services (selected exceptions from the public sector below:

- Defence and the security and defence industry*
- Civil protection*
- Intelligence and security services*
- Institutions of justice and related professions: courts, the judiciary and penitentiary institutions, youth protection institutions, electronic surveillance, judicial experts, bailiffs, judicial personnel, translators- interpreters, lawyers, with the exception of psycho-medico-social centres for reintegration*
- The Council of State and the administrative courts*
- The Constitutional Court*
- International institutions and diplomatic posts*
- Emergency planning and crisis management services*
- The General Administration of Customs and Excise.*

CROATIA

The Government enacted a decision that in all public administration bodies at the central level “only urgent tasks shall be performed” during the state of pandemic proclaimed on 12 March 2020.

The head of each institution shall establish the list of such tasks.

In each institution, the tasks are alternatively performed by two groups of civil servants (A and B). The list of civil servants for the two groups shall be established based on the responsibilities and risk assessments (critical groups are, for example, older civil servants, civil servants using public transport, civil servants with elderly household members or small children).

Premises of public administration institutions are regularly being disinfected, restaurants at the premises are closed, in case of meetings at official premises measures of social distancing must be respected.

All other civil servants (a vast majority) are on teleworking arrangements. They have access to e-mails and hold remote meetings, but most of them do not have access to files (document management system and other information systems supporting work processes).

CZECH REPUBLIC

The Director-General for the Civil Service has made a number of statements regarding the organisation of the work of the civil service during the state of emergency, a number of which relate to human resource management. These recommendations include limiting civil service examinations; possible postponement of regular service performance appraisals; postponement of selection process for vacant posts; review of the specification of civil servants' duties; and facilitating the transfer of civil servants to support priority services, and so on. In general, these statements represent guidance for line departments rather than new instructions; however, this might change if the Government decides that more stringent measures are required in order to ensure delivery of vital services or to reduce the operating budget of the public sector.

Among these recommendations, teleworking was strongly encouraged for all civil servants whose duties permit this and has now been adopted by all departments. The exceptions are defined at the level of the individual department and have to be communicated to the Ministry of the Interior in the context of the overall plan for staffing of/access to Government buildings during the crisis. Teleworking arrangements and modalities are defined between the organisation and the individual civil servant, i.e., there is no uniform system for the whole civil service.

According the OECD Government at a Glance 2019, the Czech Republic has one of the most advanced and integrated digital Government systems among OECD countries (1st on some indicators). As such, teleworking (in the sense of full access to files and data, ability to provide services to citizens and businesses, rather than simply accessing E-mail) is not likely to generate any more difficulties than are experienced in other EU member states.

DENMARK

No precise data but all civil servants are teleworking unless explicitly exempted by management.

ESTONIA

There are no changes made to civil service regulation so far. The Estonian Civil Service Act (CSA) allows significant flexibility with regards to authority to arrange their work. Teleworking is a common practice these days for civil servants. It means that in practice, the head of each institution is in charge of arranging work during emergency situation.

FINLAND

Where permitted by the nature of the work duties, working remotely is recommended. A majority of civil servants are able to work remotely. The Government has increased the teleworking capacity by reducing some non-essential services and functions. Civil servants that are not able to telework due to the nature of their work are still able to work at the office.

No official data is available on the proportion of people teleworking. Half of civil servants are working for the security sector operative functions and most of them cannot telework.

FRANCE

Since Monday 16 March - on the double condition that work can be carried out and that the civil servants are not concerned by the business continuity plan (plan de continuité de l'activité -PCA) - teleworking

constitutes the general method of organising work and falls under common law . Employees use the equipment assigned by their employers, or if necessary their personal equipment.¹

If it is impossible to telework, employees are placed by their employers on special leave of absence (autorisation spéciale d'absence -ASA). Only public officials participating in essential work requiring physical presence actually go to their workplace. Any employee nominatively designated by their hierarchical superior as having essential work requiring physical presence is forced to physically go to their workplace. If this category of employee does not show up for work, even though all sanitary measures have been taken to protect them, they can be penalised for service not performed. This absence implies a deduction of 1/30 of their salary and disciplinary action.

GERMANY

Existing regulations have been adapted. People can still work in offices but are encouraged to work from home.

The problem was that not all ministries/administrations have had teleworking arrangement in place so far. This has led to the need for rapid adaptation in some cases. Example from one of the states:

Three types of arrangements:

- **Office presence**, mainly senior management and indispensable services such as IT and mail
- **Teleworking**, when professional laptop and access to intranet is available
- **Working at home**, when no professional devices and/or access to intranet is available. However, being reachable via phone or (private) e-mail is indispensable. These people need to check in with their superiors at least once a day.

In most administrations, a tracking system for presence is in place. As this is not available any more for teleworking staff, presence at the home workplace has to be reported by each staff member and recorded by the superior on a daily basis.

No official data is available about the share of civil servants teleworking. Estimations suggest that it is around ¾ of staff. Some heads of administrations have organised “turn around” presence, where teleworking staff come to the office once a week. Senior management presence is almost always assured.

HUNGARY

Since all government offices are open (though in-person service provision is reduced and opening hours are limited), there are no general, mandatory teleworking arrangements for civil servants in place. The general guidance issued is very supportive of teleworking. However, the ministries and other government institutions are still trying to operate more or less in their normal way although the share of civil servants teleworking is increasing but unknown in numbers.

Teleworking arrangements are regulated by the Civil Service Act (CXCIX/2011) and the corresponding Government Decree 30/2012 (III.7.).

IRELAND

Prior to 24 March, all staff were encouraged to work from home if possible, but all Government offices remained open and many officials with single office space may have opted to work in the office. Since a further step-up on 24 March, and a subsequent announcement on 27 March, most offices are now closed and all their staff work from home. However, services requiring interaction with the public continue with social distancing measures applying, e.g. a lot of work of the courts is paper based; wills, for example, cannot be taken out of the office. Accordingly, the Courts Service is limiting its public interfaces to a

¹ https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/files/files/covid-19/20200331-questions_reponses_FP.pdf

minimum number of offices, and staff are alternating between working from home and in the office on a rota basis.

While there is variation, certain Departments have 90% of staff working remotely. However, calculating the overall share of civil servants teleworking and coming to the office is not a priority at this stage. Post-crisis, this will be a key factor in assessing how effectively the civil service operated but that is for the future. Minimising the number who need to come to the office is a priority. Another priority is to reallocate staff on a temporary basis to priority areas for essential work.

ITALY

The coronavirus emergency is accelerating a digital revolution within the Italian administration.² The administration is focused on introducing smart working solutions.³

According to a recent circular on smart working, signed by the Minister of Public Administration (4 March 2020),⁴ it includes four working solutions:

Teleworking: the Government has established and is in the process of gradually putting in place several security IT protocols to support this more widely.

Flexible working time: it is applicable to those public services which require physical presence of civil servants in offices/workplace. Individual decisions and cases are agreed between the civil servant and administration to allow for a better balance between professional/business needs and private life.

Rotation: it is applicable to those public services which require physical presence of the civil servant at the workplace. It consists of a regular rotation of employees to work at predetermined time slots in order to deliver various organisational and functional needs of a specific service. The Government envisages working slots covering a 24h period. It ensures continuity of the service, while avoiding the presence of too many civil servants in the offices at the same time.

Specific working arrangements: consist of mutually agreed working calendars considering a higher or lower number of working hours compared to the statutory one (35 hours a week).

While these working arrangements were already in place, the Decrees #IoRestoInCasa and #CuraItalia,⁵ consider and promote **remote working as normal working practice** until the end of the emergency. The Government encourages all institutions to extend this practice as much as possible and has simplified procedures to access these working arrangements and granted permissions to categories of civil servants originally excluded.

Further Guidelines for public sector employees⁶ include useful recommendations and tips for working online safely and on 17 March 2020 similar guidance prepared by the Agency for Digital Italy (AgID) has been made available in the Vademecum.⁷

² <http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/Lavoro%20agile%20e%20COVID-19>

³ http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/sites/funzionepubblica.gov.it/files/documenti/SW_COVID/DIRETTIVASG_lavoro_agile_misure_temporanee.pdf

⁴ http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/sites/funzionepubblica.gov.it/files/Circolare_n_1_2020.pdf

⁵ On 4 March 2020, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers issued a Decree containing temporary measures on agile work, which will remain in force until 31 July 2020, except for any subsequent changes due to the evolution of the health emergency situation. This Decree was a follow up of the Resolution issued by the Council of Ministers on 31 January 2020, with which it declared the state of emergency on the national territory to continue for six months; the law-decree on 23 February 2020, n. 6, containing urgent measures regarding the management of the emergency raised from COVID-19; the decree of the President of the Council of Ministers on 1 March 2020, containing implementing provisions of the law-decree of 23 February 2020; the directive of the Minister for Public Administration n. 1/2020 of 25 February 2020.

⁶ <http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/lavoro-agile-e-covid-19/linee-guida>

⁷ <https://www.agid.gov.it/index.php/it/agenzia/stampa-e-comunicazione/notizie/2020/03/17/smart-working-vademecum-lavorare-online-sicurezza>

The Decree #CuraItalia, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 17 March 2020, allows for the provision of IT equipment (laptops and tablets) to employees of the Public Administration in order to promote smart working.⁸

The Civil Service Department monitors remote working arrangements introduced within the public administration to verify the effects of regulatory measures.

*A **significant majority of civil servants at the central level are** teleworking (except for police forces). Precise data is not available for the central level.*

*At the **regional and local level**, monitoring data (updated twice a week) shows that 73.2% of civil servants are using smart working solutions⁹: an estimated 65,242 civil servants are working in regional and local administrations, 46,676 of them are benefiting from smart working arrangements¹⁰ and only 1,162 of them are teleworking. This can be explained by the fact that most of the regional and local administrations are front-office service providers.*

LATVIA

The State Chancellery (institution responsible for HR policy in public administration) together with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (institution responsible for IT policy and client service policy in public administration) had prepared and issued Guidelines on the Organisation of Work, Pay and Client service in Public Administration Institutions during the Emergency¹¹.

The decision on how to organise the work of the public institution is left to each manager, however, it is strongly advised to telework. There is an explicit explanation on how to organise the work of staff still required to be in the office. Taking into account the limitations set by the Government and the Parliament during the state of emergency, the manager of the institution is responsible for ensuring that the work of the institution and the performance of its functions continue.

Currently no information is publicly available on the share of civil servants and public employee's teleworking or staff still coming to the office.

LITHUANIA

On 12 March, the Head of the Emergency Situations Operations Centre passed a decree ordering public sector institutions to organise work remotely to the maximum extent possible¹².

No official data is available on the share of people teleworking, even the administration does not possess this data.

NETHERLANDS

The number of people that can work from home has been increased by disposing a number of login keys and tokens for VPN connections with the network. All files and applications can be accessed as usual, provided that the civil servant has a computer with working internet. Meetings are organised by telephone, or by newly installed WebEx accounts. The use of WhatsApp, Skype, Facetime etc. is not allowed to discuss classified subjects.

⁸ <http://www.mef.gov.it/covid-19/Sostegno-ai-lavoratori-e-garanzia-dei-redditi/>

⁹ <http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/lavoro-agile-e-covid-19/monitoraggio-lavoro-agile>, updated information by 03 April 2020

¹⁰ http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/sites/funzionepubblica.gov.it/files/documenti/SW_COVID/Monitoraggio/regioni_sw_3aprile.pdf

¹¹ Link to Guidelines (in Latvian language):

https://www.mk.gov.lv/sites/default/files/attachments/vadlinijas_darba_organizacijai_arkarteja_situacija_27032020.pdf f These Guidelines are regularly updated.

¹² <https://sam.lrv.lt/uploads/sam/documents/files/V-351.pdf>

There is no official estimate of the share of staff teleworking but a good estimate would be that over 90% of policy advisors are working from home. Only people working on critical tasks or preparation of the political decisions where face-to-face meetings are required, or where meetings or service deliveries (like ICT-service desks), are allowed to come to the office. Even then this is only allowed after they have notified the security beforehand.

POLAND

In Poland several extraordinary measures have been introduced by the Law of 2 March 2020 on specific solutions related to the prevention, counteraction and fighting COVID-19, other infectious diseases and crisis situations caused by them. This Law also regulates many other key aspects of the functioning of the State during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This Law introduces, among others, the possibility of remote work: In order to counteract COVID-19, the employer may instruct the employee to perform, for a fixed period, work specified in the employment contract, outside the place of its permanent performance (remote work). According to the Law, the remote work may be ordered only on a fixed-term, no longer than 180 days.

Information regarding the civil service

The Law of 2 March was a basis for the Head of Civil Service (HCS) as the central organ of government administration responsible for the civil service issues, to issue a recommendation letter to all Director Generals (DGs). The HCS recommends the development of transparent rules of the remote work and communicating them to the employees. In particular, they should include:

- determining the exact location in which the remote work is to be carried out with underlining the goal of introducing it, which is to fight and prevent COVID-19. The location should not be changed, and leaving it should be minimised,*
- an indication that, as a general rule, the time and work schedules used so far have not changed. Developing and applying methods for reporting to the employer the employee's readiness for work and possible breaks in work,*
- determining the manner in which the supervisor will supervise the employee's work (communication methods / channels and orders for receiving work results, methods of co-acceptance of draft documents, etc.),*
- defining information security rules, including rules for using official and private equipment.*

Additionally the HCS underlines the employer's obligation to provide the employees with the necessary equipment, also in case where there is no possibility or consent to use private equipment (which may be used only on a voluntary basis).

Example of concrete solutions in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister (CPM)¹³

The DG of the CPM developed and issued such rules, as recommended by the HCS, and communicated them to the employees. Issues addressed in these rules include: place of remote work (place of residence/home), duration (until further notice, no longer than 180 days), working time and schedule (not changed), under remote supervision of manager (supervisor), including work content, results and "attendance list", health and safety, safety of information, leaves and breaks, recommendation to stay at home due to COVID-19, recommendation to use leave or overtime in cases where remote work is illusory or impossible.

The CPM implemented the possibility of remote work on 12 March – immediately following the announcement of an epidemic emergency. Employees received a remote work order by e-mail or directly, as mentioned above without the necessity of any amendments in labour contracts or agreements.

As on the 23rd March – in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister:

¹³ based on information provided by the Polish Government to EUPAN network

- *there is more than 85% of staff outside the seat of the CPM and 74% of staff perform remote work. The management of the CPM undertakes actions so that the number of people working remotely increases;*
- *nearly 400 CPM employees have been equipped with laptops with access to services necessary for work. New laptops are being issued to people who could not collect them before, including those returning from holiday leave and sick leave;*
- *in addition, employees can also work remotely using other means, including business/company phones, tablets and shared desktops that are suitable for working at home;*
- *in the CPM buildings, an adequate amount of disinfectants for personal use was secured. All participants of meetings organised in the CPM undergo disinfection after each meeting.*
- *a mandatory temperature measurement of people entering the headquarters of the CPM was implemented. People whose body temperature deviates from the norm are asked to return home and, if necessary, be directed to appropriate medical services;*
- *stationary work is performed only by employees who perform duties that require presence at the seat of the CPM, among others who perform tasks related to the handling of clause documents, which excludes the possibility of using telework. Stationary work is also performed by, among others, those responsible for communication, functioning of ICT devices and organisation of video conferences.*

PORTUGAL

The minister in charge of Public Administration, except for essential services, determined:

- *The guidelines on teleworking, including the determination of jobs requiring on-site work;*
- *The guidelines on COVID-19-related compulsory mobility;*
- *The guidelines to require public employees to exercise functions in a different place than usual, in a different entity or under different working conditions and hours;*
- *The co-ordination with the municipalities with regard to local public services;*
- *The information to citizens regarding administrative services;*
- *The support to public employees through information, support instruments and innovative practices about teleworking.*

ROMANIA

All staff are encouraged to work from home if possible, but all offices remain open.

There are no official figures on how many officials have opted for teleworking. Some do not want to lose extra-wage benefits, and continue to go to the office.

SLOVENIA

Teleworking is the default modus operandi for the civil service. Only a very limited number of civil servants, whose physical presence in the office or in the field is indispensable for normal working processes, come to the office.

The Ministry of Public Administration ensures remote access to files, mail and databases to civil servants at the request of the managers of institutions. In many cases, access to files (use of document management systems) is not enabled. In such cases, managers organise work in such a way that one person or a limited number of persons are present in the office and are able to respond to requests for access to specific files via e-mail. The Ministry has ensured the use of WebEx and MS Teams throughout the public administration.

The Ministry of Public Administration has issued guidelines for teleworking that include an obligation to submit weekly reports on the work performed. Managers who consider that, due to exceptional circumstances, it is not necessary for certain civil servants to work (they are temporarily redundant), are asked to take decisions individually on “temporary unemployment” (legislation refers to it as “waiting for work”), following the rules of general labour legislation. The situation varies from ministry to ministry and from agency to agency. As of 1 April there were no such cases in the Ministry of Public Administration, whereas there were approximately 1500 such cases in the Financial Administration (national tax and customs authority) which is approximately 40% of all employees.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

All staff whose duties permit them to telework are encouraged to do so. The working arrangements are agreed at the level of the employing organisation.

SPAIN

After informing the trade unions, the DG Civil Service (of the national Government) adopted resolutions:

- suspending activity in workplaces and allowing staff to remain at home*
- allowing through decisions by each ministry/public body*
- all staff continue to be available to provide any service required*

Some regions have published specific teleworking instructions and manuals.

SWEDEN

No special rules - the general recommendations apply for the civil service as well. Encourage homework wherever possible.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

Teleworking/working from home arrangements is and has been very common within the UK civil service for several years already. This has helped build up the necessary IT capacities and knowledge. In recent years, the IT equipment has been upgraded to allow remote working, and many civil servants have access to e-mail through laptops and smart phones. The guidance on working remotely has already been in place so staff know how to work remotely.

The unprecedented requirement for the majority of people to work remotely due to COVID-19 has resulted in certain new IT features being rolled out earlier than planned, for example Microsoft Teams (a secure, accredited service to assist video conferencing for small, private meetings, as well as large, collaborative meetings), and more guidance focusing on physical and mental health as well as online security being created.

Although working from home is now the default Government position, there are still some staff performing critical roles working in the office. The number is determined on a case-by-case basis and there is no central guidance on how many people should be in the office. Departments introduced new guidance on working in the office focusing on social distancing and workplace hygiene.

KOREA

The Ministry of Personnel Management (MPM) is the main body that oversees strategic HR management. As part of the PMO crisis staff, it has taken some specific measures to ensure the smooth functioning of the public sector in implementing government decisions relating to the crisis while ensuring the safety of civil servants.

The MPM established and enforced guidelines on Flexible Work for Civil Servants and to Prevent COVID-19 Spread. It includes (1) granting sick leave, official leave, and teleworking for the COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases, (2) granting pregnancy leave for pregnant women who are unable to work from home, and (3) taking advantage of flexible working systems.

Most civil servants who can work from home have been encouraged to do so. However, the country is not in lockdown and, as such, more public services are still operating in Korea than is currently the case in many other countries. It is now compulsory to have a specified proportion of staff work from home or at one of the Smart Work Centers across the country.

The MPM established and enforced a Manual for Preventing COVID-19 and Maintaining Business Continuity. It includes actions to be taken to maintain business continuity in the event of confirmed cases. Especially, while teleworking, the civil servants can use the government remote working portal. In order to maintain human resources development functions, The Korean Office of Personnel Management uses a highly regarded system called E-Saram, which is a standardised electronic personnel management system that supports government-wide personnel operation. Through this system, each government agency can electronically manage a variety of personnel related tasks such as transfer, promotion, pay and leave. This system also manages teleworking arrangements.

MPM has replaced collective training or education programmes with e-learning or individual task learning.

What other flexible working arrangement (part-time work, distribution of working hours over 7 days...)?

AUSTRIA

Federal employees are expected to work from home according to normal business hours. In special cases overtime is being requested to accomplish urgent (logistics etc.) services.

BELGIUM

Guidelines for civil servants issued by the federal authorities¹⁴, applicable on 1 April 2020 state "If you are not sick, you should continue to work as usual but:

- the possibility of teleworking is encouraged with the agreement of your supervisor, when the function allows,*
- staggered work schedules are encouraged to avoid commuting between your home and your workplace during peak hours. This according to the needs of the service and in consultation with the service managers."*

CROATIA

No new flexible working arrangements have been introduced; the existing ones can be applied at the managers' discretion.

CZECH REPUBLIC

The specific working arrangements of employees are worked out on a case-by-case basis, at the level of the public sector organisation. For example, while schools are closed, teachers are expected to work remotely, using different e-platforms to teach normally, with no adjustment in working hours. Doctors, dentists, pharmacists and all medical staff are prohibited from taking leave during the emergency state and are expected to work normally (though in practice many have remained closed because they have not had access to protective clothing or equipment that is now mandatory for interaction with patients). For the moment, no amendment to the Civil Service Act has been made to take into account working arrangements during the crisis.

DENMARK

The Government has made existing rules of "work sharing" even more flexible and less bureaucratic. As an alternative to termination, it is now easier to agree that working hours and therefore also pay are reduced for a maximum period of 13 weeks.

ESTONIA

The CSA already allows significant flexibility, no special regulations have been adopted because COVID-19 emergency situation.

FINLAND

No information available.

¹⁴ <https://fedweb.belgium.be/fr/actualites/2020/coronavirus-covid-19-nouvelles-directives-%C3%A0-partir-du-12-mars-2020>

FRANCE

Work flexibility has been implemented for certain professions. For example, a childcare system is organised exclusively for personnel essential to the crisis management, and in particular nursing staff.

GERMANY

All existing work arrangements stay in place. In the German public administration, there are many people working part-time (mainly women).

Administrations usually apply rules for “long-term work time accounts”, on which staff can collect overtime work and then take overtime for free days.

HUNGARY

Most of the government services are functioning with reduced opening hours. The Government one-stop shops accept clients only with prior appointment. Certain government services (e.g. some family protection services, family planning and certain youth protection) is functioning only via telephone. No formal regulation has been issued regarding this.

IRELAND

There has been some discussion in the media, and announcements from employee representative bodies, that additional hours need to be recognised but there has been no announcement about this so far.

ITALY

See above.

LATVIA

Flexible working arrangements are foreseen by the Law on Civil Service (regulating work relations of civil servants) and Labour Law (regulating work relations of public servants that are not civil servants).

A term “forced downtime” is used to describe the situation when civil servants and public employees are asked to stay at home without carrying out their direct functions.

LITHUANIA

The most common type of working arrangement is teleworking and flexitime. Where people have to be present in the office, the rule is that no more than one person is present in a room.

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour recalls that remote work is recommended for coronavirus quarantine in budgetary institutions, except when it is necessary to perform certain functions in the workplace or to carry out the necessary emergency work. If the direct duties of a staff member of the budgetary authority are reduced due to quarantine, they may be employed in the performance of other functions required for the operation of the body. Employers cannot force employees to take paid annual or unpaid leave without their consent. An employer can only insist that an employee takes paid annual leave if they have accrued more than one year. During unpaid leave, the employee is not covered by social insurance.

The Ministry of Interior recommends that all municipal and state agencies prepare and provide services remotely. Citizens should be able to submit requests, complaints and communications to the body remotely. Unless necessary, interested parties are encouraged not to go to the offices, but to enquire by e-mail or telephone.

NETHERLANDS

The Dutch Government policy is stated as follows “the cabinet calls on employers to allow employees to work at home as much as possible until 28 April 2020. In addition, it is your call to spread the working hours of your employees as much as possible” (see <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/veelgestelde-vragen-per-onderwerp/werkgevers-en-ondernemers>).

There has been no official announcement about applying this to civil servants but it is a matter for individual managers to deal with distributing hours. Certain groups of employees within the public sector are under pressure to deliver services. This situation requires Government employers to organize work differently than usual. On the one hand, to fulfil requirements often outside normal office hours, but also on the other hand, to ensure the health of personnel.

POLAND

No specific solutions have been introduced as regards working arrangements in the public administration.

PORTUGAL

The National Health Service (Serviço Nacional de Saude) has adopted exceptional human resources measures, which include removing overtime ceilings, simplifying hiring procedures (including retired doctors), facilitating mobility, postponing annual leave entitlements.

High-risk staff assigned to face-to-face service: managers must identify high-risk employees, due to their age or special health conditions and adapt, as far as possible, the respective working conditions guided by the current Contingency Plan. These workers should preferably be assigned to BackOffice functions or be placed on teleworking.

ROMANIA

In some institutions, a system of rotation was introduced (one week in the office/one week teleworking).

Institutions within the National Defence System, Public Order and National Security may hire personnel from external sources without competition, for a fixed period of six months.

Health units and social assistance services may hire medical and auxiliary staff, pharmacists, laboratory staff and other needed personnel without competition, for a fixed period of six months.

SLOVENIA

Part-time work and flexible distribution of working hours are possible according to civil service and general labour legislation. Their use in the current circumstances depends on individual managers.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

As yet, no formal instructions have been developed except in specific sectors such as health and social services. For example, medical staff who work part-time are expected to move to full-time work. Any inactive medical staff who wish to work will be offered temporary contracts. There is also a proposal being developed to hire Slovak medical staff currently working abroad using temporary contracts.

SPAIN

Not on the agenda.

SWEDEN

No special rules.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The flexible working policy has already been in place in the UK for many years and there are regulations on this providing flexibility especially to parents and carers. This includes arrangements such as only school term-time working, compressed hours, job sharing and part-time working. The flexible working policy has not changed and it is expected that many officials could easily apply and use them in the current crisis situation.

There are other arrangements being tested and introduced within the health system and hospitals to make sure medical services for other critically ill patients (e.g. Cancer) can be continued. Non-priority surgeries are all cancelled. At the same time, doctors whose services are not needed/used are being retrained to run critical services (e.g. manage the ventilator machines).

KOREA

Civil servants who are to take care of their children during the day due to lack of childcare or schools are able to work from home or take child care leave or annual leave as part of the Government's parental protection.

If civil servants cannot telework, how are they paid?

AUSTRIA

There is no (negative) impact on payments whatsoever.

BELGIUM

People who can't telework are allowed to come to the office, where the necessary measures related to 'social distancing' and health safety are taken into account (see above).

- *It is possible to place some civil servants in the position "activité de service" even if they do not work they obtain "une dispense de service" (exemption from service). This is for functions where missions/tasks are not critical but they cannot work from home. Exemption from service means the agent has permission to be absent during hours of service, with maintenance of all rights.*

CROATIA

All civil servants who do not perform urgent work in their usual workplace are considered to be teleworking, so they are all normally paid 100% of their salary. No redundancies have been formally established.

CZECH REPUBLIC

No information on this, but it would seem unlikely that they would not be paid in the absence of any legal basis for withholding salary.

DENMARK

100% pay during teleworking. It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that the employees have the equipment to be fully productive.

ESTONIA

Apparently, no central decision on that potential issue has been made so far.

It is at the discretion of each head of institution.

FINLAND

If a civil servant cannot telework due to the nature of their work, they can work from the office.

FRANCE

If it is not possible to telework, the member of staff is placed by their manager on a special leave of absence. The member of staff benefits from their full remuneration as well as from the maintenance of their promotion and retirement rights. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in order to protect the most vulnerable staff, those concerned are invited to stay at home, and not to physically attend work premises. A list of 11 pathological criteria was defined by the High Council for Public Health (Haut conseil de la santé publique -HCSP) on 14 March 2020.

GERMANY

All civil servants continue to get paid 100%, even those that cannot telework.

HUNGARY

To date, there is no special arrangement related to the working conditions (including payment) for civil servants in general. Their working conditions do not deviate from normal working conditions (e.g. species working hours, distribution, or work over extended period are not declared), hence their payment is also not changed. Everyone is normally paid.

IRELAND

When the closure of public buildings was announced, staff were given a short amount of time to obtain all they needed from the office. Civil service staff should have access to all they need to work from home. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has in recent years been preparing a suite of 'build to share' applications to facilitate remote working. In certain cases, they may not be able to work from home and they will continue to be paid as normal, since no announcement to the contrary has been made. This is consistent with the overarching policy of minimising the number of people not remaining indoors.

ITALY

All civil servants are working. Based on the current legislation and the approved decrees, civil servants not able to work from home are working in accordance to other forms of smart working solutions and continue to be paid.

Public Administration institutions can also request the presence of their employees on a "rotation" basis, combining various types of working arrangements. Non-essential activities and those strictly functional to emergency management are either carried out remotely or by physical presence in the workplace. The institutions identify activities that can be carried out remotely and those requiring a presence in the workplace, adopting various forms of rotation to ensure a minimal presence of staff in the office whenever possible.

LATVIA

In case there is a situation that civil servants or public employees cannot perform their work functions, they are paid according to their previously set salary. The work timesheets in these cases indicate that that person is on "forced downtime".

LITHUANIA

So far, there has been no evidence that salaries have been reduced.

NETHERLANDS

The policy of successive governments has been to encourage teleworking so at this point in time, cases where teleworking is not possible would be very rare. Furthermore, Dutch labour legislation requires any employer who wishes to cut employees' hours owing to lack of work to obtain permission from the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs to introduce a temporary working time reduction for salaried employees. Approval is subject to certain conditions, one of which is that the request is the result of "extraordinary circumstances"; the Dutch Government has confirmed that COVID-19 is such an extraordinary circumstance. This can last for 24 weeks (four six-weekly periods) during which the employee continues to be paid in full. This applies to all employers and all employees.

There has been no official announcement about this point but it seems as if all civil servants keep their salary payments.

POLAND

No special rules have been introduced.

PORTUGAL

Civil servants and public employees are considered to be in a situation of justified absence, according to Lei 35/2014, Geral do Trabalho em Funções Públicas (Article 134), so they keep receiving their full salaries (similar to when taking annual leave).

ROMANIA

This issue is not regulated as teleworking is optional and there are no restrictions on officials working in the office.

SLOVENIA

In the case that civil servants cannot telework due to the nature of their work, for technical or any other reasons, the “waiting for work” instrument applies. Civil servants who are in this situation following a decision by their manager receive 80% of their average salary (full salary, including supplements and incentives) over the previous three months. This is not a new arrangement, it is a regular instrument of the general labour law.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

No information currently available.

SPAIN

All civil servants are paid regularly and no initiative to question their salaries is on the agenda.

SWEDEN

Fully paid.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

In theory, everybody should be able to work from home. If somebody does not have access to Wi-Fi at home, they can “tether” – turn their work smart phone into a mobile hotspot or portable Wi-Fi router, which creates a small-localised wireless internet connection that can be used to get on-line with their work laptop. Staff can also purchase supporting kits for working remotely, such as, a laptop riser or a chair or a big screen and ask for reimbursement (within set budget limits). A special budget is allocated to NHS/Health Service staff to buy supporting kits to work flexibly, where needed.

However, if there are circumstances not allowing people to work from home such as childcare responsibilities because of school closure, they can request to take special leave with pay (paid at normal full pay). This is to be reviewed regularly but can continue for the entire period of the school’s closure. The usual limits of special leave do not apply in those cases.

Government has recognised certain professions/sectors as being critical, and children of those critical employees can still go to school. This also helps manage the pressures within NHS given the shortage of staff.

KOREA

There has been no adjustment to the civil service law. As such, there is probably no basis for alteration to pay. The decision to telework is largely on the basis of function not the technological capacity to telework.

***Are civil servants being sent on mandatory annual leave? If not, is use of annual leave recommended?
Any other special arrangement on absence management?***

AUSTRIA

Employees who are NOT indispensable are requested to use leftover vacation days of the previous year.

BELGIUM

No special arrangements are being introduced at this stage.

CROATIA

No mandatory annual leave and no recommendations as to annual leave.

CZECH REPUBLIC

On a case-by-case basis, at the level of the public sector organisation.

DENMARK

The Government agreed with unions that large parts of nonessential public sector employees will take 5 days of annual leave.

ESTONIA

Apparently, no central decision on that potential issue has been made so far.

In CSA there are no rules for temporary unemployment or for the situation where the civil servant cannot perform duties because of the emergency situation. The clauses of the Labour Act regarding temporary reduction of salary do not apply to civil servants. Therefore, for the civil servants in Estonia there are more or less three options: 1) continue working by using suitable working arrangements for the emergency situation, 2) personal agreements to take annual leave or to go on unpaid leave, which of course requires the consent of the civil servant, 3) layoff procedure according to CSA.

The ultimate working arrangement is at the discretion of each head of institution.

For those working under the Labour Act, employers can use the existing regulations in labour legislation specifying the terms of layoffs, temporary leave, temporary reduction of salaries up to three months in case of economic difficulties, and use social security measures in case of loss of job.

FINLAND

Generally, the employer and employee agree on when the annual holidays are taken. The employer can decide on the timing of annual leave within the time limits determined in the Annual Holidays Act. The time when the annual leave is taken may be changed by a mutual agreement between the employer and employee, excluding workers in the health care sector.

FRANCE

Law n ° 2020-290 of 23 March 2020 on the emergency to address the epidemic of COVID-19 authorises the Government to take, by decree, any measure as regards employment law, social security law and of public service law, having as its object "to allow any employer to impose or modify the dates for taking part of the paid holidays within the limit of six working days, by derogating from the notice periods and the methods of taking this leave (...) ". The special leave of absence is not taken into account in the

calculation of annual leave. Absence due to special leave of absence does not generate days of time off in lieu (RTT).

GERMANY

So far, there is no regulation/practice concerning mandatory annual leave. In some of the Länder, it is now being discussed whether people should have to take overtime hours first. No decision yet.

HUNGARY

This is not proving an issue so far. There have been no demands for annual leave to be taken.

IRELAND

This is not proving an issue. There is no demand for annual leave and staff are not forced to take it. Staff may apply for special leave with pay if they have to care for someone who needs to isolate for COVID-19 reasons. There is a recognition that staff working from home with young children in the house will be less productive than normal.

ITALY

The Legislative Decree 18/2020 provides for an additional 12 days of annual leave already provided by the current regulations. Annual leave days can be used during the months of March and April 2020 if the conditions/needs of public sector organisations allow for it.¹⁵

For activities which, by nature, cannot be carried out remotely, the relevant administrations can adopt alternative tools such as, rotation of staff, use of annual/sick leave, or reduced hours in compliance with the discipline defined by the national collective bargaining agreement "Article 87, paragraph 3, L.D. 18/2020.

The #CuraItalia decree establishes for both the public and private sectors, that illness, quarantine or fiduciary stay at home is considered sick leave.¹⁶

Public sector institutions are recommended to encourage the use of annual leave or other forms of leave and recuperation allowance.¹⁷ Annual leave or recuperation of time are not mandatory (trade unions opposed these recommendations).

LATVIA

Civil servants are currently not sent on mandatory annual leave, however, they can choose to opt for annual leave, if they want to request it.

LITHUANIA

No. According to Government resolution No. 207, "Declaring Quarantine on the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania", mandatory annual leave for employees of state and municipal institutions, as well as health care institutions, will only be possible when all other options have been exhausted, that is if telework is not possible or an employee does not give consent to work in another position.

The Minister of Social Security and Labour emphasises that the Government urges employers in the entire budget sector to maintain the same wages so that staff income will not decrease during this difficult period. If a suspended activity during the quarantine results in a loss of revenue for the budgetary authorities,

¹⁵ <http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/lavoro-agile-e-covid-19/faq>

¹⁶ <http://www.mef.gov.it/covid-19/index.html>

¹⁷ Decree of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of 8 March 2020.

these losses should not be dealt with at the expense of the staff, but ways to compensate should be found in conjunction with the Budget Appropriations Manager.

NETHERLANDS

Not aware of people being forced to take annual leave or of this being recommended. It should be noted that Dutch labour law allows for mandatory leave having to be taken. For example, if a school indicates that it will close the next day, then even an essential employee is entitled to paid leave until an arrangement is agreed for taking care of the children, as long as this is only for a short period. If it lasts longer, then the employee will have to take holiday days or take unpaid leave. Theoretically, this can apply to the civil servants as well even if there is no evidence of it happening in reality.

People can take their annual leave as usual, through the Employee Self Service system. Medical leave continues as usual: employees call their manager who registers the employee as ill. There is a special provision for corona virus, namely, in cases of quarantine or if someone must take care of ill relatives, the manager can allow extra days of leave. In all cases, the civil servants keep their salary payments.

POLAND

Civil servants have not been sent on mandatory annual leave. Annual leave has not been recommended.

In case of enterprises belonging to critical infrastructure, annual leave already granted has been revoked, and no new leave granted - and those staff on leave were required to return to work.

PORTUGAL

No data available.

ROMANIA

For the time being, the staff are not obliged to take annual leave.

SLOVENIA

Civil servants whose work is not indispensable are recommended (but not obliged!) to request the remaining annual leave from 2019 and two weeks of 2020 annual leave, and informed that it might be difficult later in the year to enable them to use annual leave exactly in the desired periods. This can be (at least temporarily) an alternative to the previously explained mechanism of "waiting for work". No special legal arrangements have been introduced nor are planned to be introduced.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

No. The Government is trying to work through staff transfers to relocate staff to areas where they are needed most.

SPAIN

Not on the agenda.

SWEDEN

No.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

No one is being sent on mandatory annual leave because of the current situation. Furthermore, it is not recommended to use annual leave in the current situation. However, it is emphasised that it is important to feel able to take annual leave, if needed. There are discussions within some departments/ministries about a possibility of relaxing the rules on annual leave to allow staff to carry forward their leave days for up to 2 years, but there is no final decision on this yet. All absences due to COVID-19 must be recorded in the usual way. However, directorates within Department/ministers often keep their own records and ask employees to record regularly if they work or are absent (and the reasons for that) to manage absence and resources.

KOREA

No. Civil servants continue to work normally in most cases.

Any new, special regulations for working overtime (removing limitations to overtime work e.g. for medical staff)?

AUSTRIA

Austria has already extremely flexible overtime work arrangements for health personnel allowing – within an average of 17 weeks up to 72 h working time per week. This can be extended to 52 weeks if necessary.

<https://www.jusline.at/gesetz/kaazg/paragraf/3>

<https://www.jusline.at/gesetz/kaazg/paragraf/4>

BELGIUM

No specific (additional) regulations have been introduced. The only measure is childcare. Schools (kindergartens, primary and secondary schools) have not been closed, but all classes were suspended. All pupils stay at home (95%) and receive tasks from their teachers via digital platforms. The reason why schools have not been closed although lessons have been suspended is to ensure day care for children whose parents work in medical care, public security and other essential occupations. This means that most children stay at home and most teachers can work from home as well. Universities: all courses are held through distance learning. This measure has been prolonged until the end of the academic year. Doctors and all medical staff in hospitals continue to work, more than ever. General Practitioners handle quite a number of consultations by telephone, advising their patients to either stay at home, go to a medical triage centre, which has been installed for COVID-19, or in the most urgent cases to go to the Emergency hospital.

CROATIA

No new arrangements.

CZECH REPUBLIC

The recommendation of the DG for the Civil Service is that all public sector organisations should work to ensure that they can deliver their services in the context of the emergency measures and decrees, which implicitly means reducing human resources allocated to non-priority activities and increasing resources in priority areas. In cases in which specialist skills are required, this is likely to mean that some staff will be required to work longer hours. According to the Civil Service Act, overtime is limited to 150 hours per year or 8 hours per week. In the absence of revision of this Act, additional overtime to deal with the crisis would have to be agreed with the individual.

The ministries of Health and of Employment and Social Affairs have developed instructions for both public and private sector organisations and businesses on how to ensure the health and safety of employees. These instructions include recommendations on working hours and working conditions, with the basic principle being that the employer is liable for the well-being of employees. As such, employees may work overtime and adjusted hours, but they have the right to refuse to do so, particularly when they consider that their working environment does not adequately guarantee their safety from infection.

DENMARK

No, existing agreements on the Danish labour market are flexible enough. Flexicurity a la Denmark.

ESTONIA

No.

FINLAND

No information available. However, under the Emergency Powers Act, the employment authority (TE office) has the power to issue an order to work to a person covered by the obligation to work. A work order may be issued for a maximum of two weeks at a time, and it may be renewed once. Under the Act, health care workers may be asked to work overtime.

FRANCE

The texts in force already provide for measures making it possible to derogate from the minimum guarantees of working time, and in particular as regards overtime and its uncapping. In addition, different authorities intervene on different sectors of the public service - the state public service, the territorial public service and the hospital public service - to allow the uncapping of overtime.¹⁸

Article 17 of the Working Time Directive (2003/88 of 4 November 2003) allows derogations from the minimum guarantees in terms of working time for activities characterised by the need to ensure continuity of service (care in hospitals ...), subject to granting to the staff concerned of at least the equivalent periods of compensatory rest. In exceptional cases, when the granting of such equivalent periods of compensatory rest is not possible for objective reasons, appropriate protection must be afforded to the workers concerned.

***In the hospital public service:** when the needs of the service so require, agents may be called upon to work overtime in excess of the hourly limits defined by the work cycle (....) (Article 15 of Decree 2002-9). On 5 March 2020, a decision was taken to allow the uncapping of overtime hours and to authorise public health establishments, on an exceptional basis, for the period from 1 February to 30 June 2020, and for staff involved in taking care of patients, to make transitional use of overtime beyond the ceiling fixed by the aforementioned Article.*

GERMANY

In the current situation, arrangements for overtime work in the general administration has been restricted and can be claimed and counted for by individual staff only when evidence shows that it was institutionally necessary.

The institutional necessity is recognised of course for medical staff. (tbc)

HUNGARY

New higher limitations for overtime have been introduced for the health care sector, the police and some other law enforcement agencies.

IRELAND

No special regulations have been announced.

ITALY

As a general rule, overtime is not compatible with teleworking. However, overtime is possible and can be agreed between the administration and individual civil servants.¹⁹

The #CuraItalia decree, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 17 March 2020, contains measures to fund overtime for workers of the National Health Service. The Government has mobilised resources, amounting to approximately EUR 3.2 billion, to guarantee and provide the health system with the personnel, tools and

¹⁸ DGFAP

¹⁹ https://www.giustizia.it/giustizia/it/mg_1_8_1.page?contentId=SDC252056

means needed to combat the crisis and to support civil protection and law enforcement agencies to assist people affected by the disease and to prevent, mitigate and contain the pandemic. EUR 250 million has been allocated to cover overtime of healthcare workers.²⁰

LATVIA

According to the Government regulation No.103 on Announcement of the State of Emergency, a limited number of state institutions (e.g. healthcare institutions, the Ministry of Healthcare, State Revenue Service, the Ministry of Defence and its institutions, the Ministry of Interior and its institutions, the Ministry of Education and its institutions, etc.) can increase normal working hours, as long as they do not exceed 60 working hours per week. This increased work is paid according to special provisions as foreseen by the Law on Civil Service and the Labour Law.

LITHUANIA

No changes introduced.

NETHERLANDS

See next question.

POLAND

In case of enterprises performing activities consisting of providing systems and critical infrastructure in relation to the Law on crisis management (for example, supply of water, fuels, energy, communication, finances, IT networks, health protection etc.) and their subcontractors or sub – suppliers, employers they are allowed, for the limited time period, not longer than until the revocation of the state of epidemic or the epidemiological threat to: 1) modify the organisation of work or work time schedules and 2) oblige employees to work overtime to the extent that is necessary to ensure continuous, uninterrupted functioning of the enterprise.

PORTUGAL

No data available.

ROMANIA

There are no special regulations in this respect.

SLOVENIA

The Law on Urgent Measures to Limit the Spread of COVID-19 and Mitigation of its Impact on Citizens and Economy (hereafter: the Law on urgent measures²¹) envisages raising the limitation of overtime work to 20 hours weekly (total 60 working hours per week) and 80 hours monthly in the public sector. With consent of the public servant, even these limits can be exceeded in individual cases.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

No information currently available.

²⁰ <http://www.mef.gov.it/covid-19/index.html>

²¹ The Law was enacted in the National Assembly on 2 April 2020. Most of the measures envisaged in the draft law are supposed to apply in April and May 2020, some of them shall apply retroactively (as of 13 March). If the state of epidemic is not recalled by 15 May, the measures will apply until 30 June. Of course, the Parliament can later further extend the time of application by amending the Law.

SPAIN

Any overtime related to the COVID crisis is compulsory and classified as a case of force majeure, the number of hours can exceed the maximum of 80 hours per year set in the labour legislation. According to the applicable legislations, these hours should be compensated for or paid, but this is not currently on the agenda.

SWEDEN

Yes, in Region Stockholm for example all hospital staff are placed under a special crisis agreement which was triggered last week. They are doubled paid and the working week is extended to 48 hours.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

As a response to COVID-19, staff are expected to work flexibly. For some sectors, like health, this may result in working overtime. However, there is no special overtime rules as the guidance for payment for working overtime already existed. However, the scope and number of staff claiming for overtime payment can expand.

KOREA

Yes, as part of the guidelines on Flexible Work for Civil Servants.

Arrangement for paying for extra workload (health care etc.)?

AUSTRIA

<https://www.jusline.at/gesetz/kaazg/paragraf/5>

Overtime (40h+) and supplements are paid according existing regulations.

BELGIUM

On 2 March, the Belgian Government decided to pay a bonus of EUR 1450 to doctors, nurses or pharmacists, on the front line against COVID-19. The Government is expecting 10,000 applications, which would bring the cost to EUR 14.5 million. In addition, a reduction of the personal social security contributions is being discussed (apparently, no final decision has been made on this yet).

A Regional Employment Office in Brussels (Actiris) planned to pay a telework allowance of EUR 20 per month to all agents who now work from home, as a recognition and to offset part of the energy costs at home. The Brussels Government decided not to authorise the granting of a grant for teleworking to all regional staff working at home during the coronavirus crisis and to have the decisions already taken in this sense cancelled within the Brussels administrations. Such compensation does not currently exist in regulatory texts. Beyond the regulatory aspect, there is the symbolic aspect. "The office and the ministry are public institutions which can pay their workers 100% and not have to resort to temporary unemployment for force majeure like so many other sectors. While the various Belgian public entities are trying to find the means necessary to help citizens and businesses, public money should be used for purposes other than a telework allowance

<https://www.lecho.be/dossiers/coronavirus/les-primas-pour-le-teletravail-durant-la-crise-interdites-dans-la-fonction-publique-bruxelloise/10217073.html>).

CROATIA

No new arrangements. According to the collective agreement for health care, the following supplements apply: 40% for night shift, 25 % for work on Saturday, 35 % for work on Sunday, 50% for overtime work, 150% for work on holiday. Supplements are not mutually exclusive.

CZECH REPUBLIC

So far, no special measures have been introduced to supplement the wages of staff working long hours or working in exceptional circumstances. Nevertheless, the appointing authority is free to use the usual tools, such as overtime payments or special bonuses for performing extraordinary tasks relating to the crisis.

DENMARK

Decentralised, dependent on the union agreement (no actual cases that I know of).

ESTONIA

No, this can be done by the hospitals and other healthcare facilities, which in most cases are private law institutions. Their salaries are not regulated centrally. So far there has been no information about changes in collective agreements.

FINLAND

Finland has no corona-specific supplements in wages. Already existing supplements are used when needed.

FRANCE

Yes. Please see preceding section.

GERMANY

Existing arrangements prevail for the moment. In the civil service and public administration overtime does not get paid. It can, in some cases, be collected on long-term work time accounts and be claimed for free days.

HUNGARY

For healthcare workers the Prime Minister announced a 20% salary increase on 4 April. Also, a one-off HUF 500.000 (ca. EUR 1400) will be provided to healthcare workers in the upcoming months.

IRELAND

No public sector staff are being paid more owing to extra workload from COVID-19. Non-salaried staff who are entitled to overtime and allowances will receive this in the normal way and consequently the pay bill may increase slightly.

ITALY

The #CuraItalia decree contains additional measures and funding for the health sector and civil protection providing funds to pay for the overtime of doctors and nurses.

An average of 20,000 new hires has already been approved for the national health system to address the shortage. Extraordinary measures have been adopted for the recruitment of health personnel, within the framework of the regulations on public employment. It also provides access to the National Health System of medical personnel having a one-year fixed-term contract.

If it is not possible to recruit new staff, there is the possibility of requisitioning retired medical staff.

Special allowances are granted to civil servants on rotating timeslots. These are not new, but it is expected that many officials will be using it in the current situation. In particular, it provides extra pay as per the below²²:

- EUR 9.53 per day for any afternoon time slots*
- EUR 15.20 per day for any night or holiday slots*
- EUR 29.40 per day for any night and holiday slots*

A weekly reporting system has recently been introduced for those civil servants who are working from home.

LATVIA

According to the decision of the Government, health care employees directly involved in battling the COVID-19 crisis (e.g. Emergency Health Service, Latvia Infectiology Centre, etc.) can receive an additional 20 to 50% pay. Currently the Government has allocated EUR 8 million for the coming three months and the Ministry of Healthcare is responsible for defining criteria for different groups of employees.

²² [National Collective Labour Contract 2016-2018 \(still in place\)](#)

LITHUANIA

A payroll bonus for all health workers fighting coronavirus was proposed by the Government on 1 April but was not adopted by the Parliament. The opposition parties started to suggest even higher supplements and the coalition did not support the changes. The situation is still unfolding.

It is expected that on 8 April the Parliament will adopt an amendment of the Act on the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases. According to this amendment, the coefficients of the fixed part of the official salary (for employees of budgetary institutions) or monthly salary (for employees of public institutions) are increased from 50% to 100%, depending on the nature, complexity and level of responsibility of the specific employee of the health care institution. This applies from the beginning of the month of the announcement of quarantine (i.e. retrospectively) until the end of the month in which the quarantine ends, when employees organise and provide health care services to patients with particularly dangerous communicable diseases or implement epidemic prevention measures.

NETHERLANDS

The Government has recognised that certain employees are putting in an extra effort. They will benefit from the Policy Framework for Extra Rewards, which is a custom-made methodology to grant crisis compensation to certain functions. The Cabinet has said people in vital functions (health workers, teachers, doctors, etc.) will get extra awards.

In the past, there have been “inconvenience” payments granted to policemen, for extraordinary assignments and extra work. These probably will apply now as well.

POLAND

No specific solutions have been adopted – overtime is rewarded in accordance with general rules. Special regulations concerning sickness benefits for medical staff who, because of having been in contact with patients infected with COVID-19, have to remain in quarantine (they are entitled to 100 % sickness benefit).

PORTUGAL

No data available.

ROMANIA

There were discussions on possible measures to award a fixed bonus of EUR 500 for all doctors and nurses who deal with COVID-19 patients, but no official decisions have been adopted so far.

SLOVENIA

The Law on urgent measures increases the already existing supplement for performing work in “dangerous circumstances and under pressure” from 45% to 100% of the basic salary. The supplement shall be paid for the time (hours) in which the work is performed in such circumstances. For instance, doctors and nurses who deal with COVID-19 patients will be considered as working full time in such circumstances.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

No information currently available.

SPAIN

See previous question.

SWEDEN

See above.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

No new formal procedures have been introduced for paying extra because of the current situation. There are already provisions for paying extra for work.

It should be noted that over half million people have volunteered to support NHS/health services, and these people will not get paid at all. In addition, the military is also helping the health sector, especially to set up and run temporary hospitals (e.g. London ExCel exhibition centre has been turned into a hospital with over 4000 beds, supported by the military).

KOREA

The MPM streamlined recruitment of and improved compensation for specialists and experts, including epidemiological investigators, responding to COVID-19 at the frontline.

What measures have been introduced to create fiscal space to fund health care, economic measures etc. against COVID-19 (salary cuts, freeze of recruitment, promotions...)?

AUSTRIA

No measures known.

BELGIUM

At this time no specific measures have been announced in this regard. During and after the financial crisis the effects were also limited. No salary cuts were introduced at that time. Recruitment slowed and clearly, budgets were restricted.

The BOSA (Federal Public Service Policy and Support) has cancelled or postponed, currently until 3 May, all selection and linguistic tests (computer tests, written tests and oral interviews). Applicants who were already registered for a test session which was to take place on the premises of Selor by 3 May inclusive will be unsubscribed and informed individually about this. All on-site training and other events were cancelled, but the offer of on-line training courses increased.

CROATIA

As a response to the decrease in public revenues due to the lower economic activity as well as a response to the increase in public spending to fight the pandemic (and the earthquake in Zagreb) and to support the economy the Government adopted several instruments.

The Government issued a Decision on Restrictions of Budgetary Spending (Official gazette 41/2020 of 3 April 2020): only the spending for necessary tasks is allowed; new recruitments are prohibited (including contractual employments) regardless of the source (health services are exempted as well as specific employment that has to be approved by the minister of finance); all public calls and public procurements that are not necessary are suspended (exempted are only the procurements and calls related to the COVID-19 pandemic measures or earthquake measures, as well as specific cases which have to be approved by the minister of finance).

The sanctions for those who do not apply the measures are provided in accordance to the Law on Budget and Law on Fiscal Responsibility.

Also, the Government Decision on the Suspension on the Fiscal Rules (Official gazette 41/2020 of 3 April 2020) temporarily suspended the rules on the share of public spending in GDP and corresponding convergence rules.

It is expected that salary cuts for public services (except for health workers, police and civil protection system) will be introduced in the following weeks, most probably by the suspension of certain parts of the collective agreements for civil service and for public service (in public service more than 2/3 are health and education employees). The Government has public support for the salary cuts (public opinion polls show 70% support; even 60% of public servants themselves support their own salary cuts)

The longstanding issue of the territorial structure and the local Government that is very fragmented also came into public focus with the problems raised by the citizens in relation to the pass for mobility. Given the fact that the political support for the reform of local Government was traditionally weak, despite public support for the decrease of the number of local units (currently 455 local units), the issue may become relevant and political support more prominent. Especially concerning the regional political parties' (such as the Istrian Democratic Union) plead for the issuing of the e-passes for the area of the former community of municipalities that were replaced by local Government units in the 1993.

CZECH REPUBLIC

So far, allocations relating to the emergency measures have been made from the State Budget (an increase in the budget deficit up from CZK 40 to CZK 200 million) and do not identify specific savings to be made from the public administration's operating budget envelope.

DENMARK

None. Denmark is fortunate to have adequate fiscal space, so efforts are aimed at keeping as many people employed as possible during this period.

ESTONIA

The Government has prepared a supplementary budget, with a number of measures to alleviate the negative effects of recession. None of these measures have been related to HRM decisions such as salary cuts, recruitment or promotions freeze.

The supplementary budget draft law has introduced a number of measures to create fiscal space and to cover higher medical costs as well as to ease the economic situation of households and companies.

More about the measures is provided under the public financial management section.

FINLAND

None of the reasons mentioned above have been used to fund the fiscal space to fund health care etc. The Government has announced that it will increase the national debt to fund these functions.

FRANCE

No measures have been introduced such as the ones cited above e.g. salary reductions, freezing of promotion....

GERMANY

No salary cuts, nor freeze of promotions or recruitments have been decided for the moment. However, some negotiations for new tariff contracts with trade unions have been suspended, e.g. in the public transport sector.

HUNGARY

There have been no salary cuts or freezes on recruitment so far. The fiscal space-related measures are so far not affecting the civil service system.

IRELAND

There have been no salary cuts or freeze on recruitment; there is pressure for a recruitment drive in the health sector. There have been no announcements regarding promotions but to defer already agreed promotions would not be practicable. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there could be a delay in filling vacancies in non-essential areas, but so far this is not being considered as a cost saving measure.

ITALY

There have been no salary cuts or freezes on recruitment at this time. Dismissal procedures have been suspended for the two months following the date of entry into force of the #CuraItalia decree (18 March 2020). During this period, regardless of the type of contract, the employers cannot terminate any contract for whatever reason including dismissal on economic/financial grounds. As per the #CuraItalia decree, it

guarantees that nobody will lose his or her job because of the pandemic. With an allocation of EUR 10.2 billion, employment and income is guaranteed, enhancing the entire system of social safety nets.²³

The #CuraItalia decree introduces various incentives, including financial incentives and bonuses.

There is agreement for a recruitment drive in the health sector (see also answer to Q#6).

There have been no announcements regarding promotions.

LATVIA

Currently no decisions have been made to cut salaries in the public sector. The Government is using financial resources available in the Treasury and has borrowed additional funds by issuing bonds.

LITHUANIA

No measures have been introduced.

NETHERLANDS

Owing to the strength of the public finances, the costs of the measures taken up to now will not lead to the excessive budget deficit procedure being breached. So, at this stage there is no requirement to generate savings although by year end there will be reallocations between underspending programmes and those which have had to overrun.

POLAND

No specific legal provisions were adopted. The Head of Civil Service has issued some recommendations concerning recruitment but those are related to health concerns. For example, it was recommended to cancel or suspend (depending on whether the time period for receipt of application has expired or not) or not to launch new procedures, unless it is possible to conduct the whole recruitment process by electronic means.

PORTUGAL

No data available.

ROMANIA

The Ministry of Finance will perform all of the required budget amendments, but there are no other decisions in this regard.

SLOVENIA

No measures so far. The Law on urgent measures envisages a 30% salary cut for the Prime Minister, ministers, state secretaries and members of parliament as a gesture of solidarity, with the aim to increase trust in the Parliament and Government, which is needed for effective crisis management.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

No action as yet, but this is likely to come once the Government has assessed the fiscal situation.

²³ <http://www.mef.gov.it/covid-19/Sostegno-ai-lavoratori-e-garanzia-dei-redditi/>

SPAIN

Not on the agenda.

SWEDEN

No information available.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

No changes have been introduced or announced yet, but there are simplifications introduced in recruitment within the health sector. A lot of administrative process-related rules have been suspended within the NHS, in particular. For example, recruitment of health staff that normally takes 3+ months, is being done within 1 week by shortcutting the process, or reducing the reporting requirements on the front-line (e.g. hospitals, GP surgery etc.). Additionally, the Government is considering introducing re-deployment schemes so that staff from other departments can move to the sector/department for temporary support, maintaining their link to parent department.

KOREA

Senior civil servants, including the Prime Minister, have taken a voluntary pay cut of 30% until June 2020.

This is not the first time that state officials have voluntarily cut their salaries. In December 1997 at the height of the Asian financial crisis, Korea's prime minister returned 30% other ministers 20% of their pay. The Government is considering extending the pay cuts further down through the civil service, as in previous crisis periods. During the 2008 financial crisis, the salaries of all civil servants were frozen for two years from 2009 to 2010.