

Special Annex to the 31st EMN Bulletin

EU Member States & Norway: responses to COVID-19 in the migration and asylum area

April - June 2020

| INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM AND RESETTLEMENT | |
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| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |
| Austria | For the duration of the measures taken to restrict freedom of movement or interpersonal contact, applications for the extension of the residence permit regulated in Art 57 Asylum Act 2005 shall not be submitted in person, but by post or by electronic means. |
| Belgium | <p>On 17 March, the Immigration Office decided to suspend the registration of new applicants for international protection. On 3 April, a system of online registration was put in place. By filling in an online form, the foreigner gets an appointment at the arrival centre to file his or her application. Priority is given to families with children and vulnerable asylum seekers.</p> <p>On 13 March it was decided to suspend the interviews at the Office of the Commissioner general for Refugees and Stateless Persons in order to prevent the coronavirus from spreading. From 8 June onwards, personal interviews gradually resumed. To guarantee the safety of staff and applicants, different protective measures were taken. In a short video these measures are explained.</p> |
| Bulgaria | <p>The state of emergency which entered into force on 13 March 2020, was lifted on 13 May 2020. An emergency epidemic situation was declared in Bulgaria for the period 14 May – 14 June. It was subsequently extended until 15 July 2020.</p> <p>The State Agency for Refugees with the Council of Ministers (SAR with CoM) has resumed the conduction of procedural actions on submitted applications for international protection since 15 May 2020. The work of the courts has also been resumed, including the hearings concerning the procedure for conducting proceedings on applications for international protection of third-country nationals. In the context of the emergency epidemic situation, outgoing and incoming transfers under the Dublin Regulation have not been resumed at this stage.</p> <p>The declared emergency epidemic situation preserves some of the restrictions imposed in March, related to physical distance, use of personal protective equipment in public premises. The measures are valid for both Bulgarians and foreigners residing in the Republic of Bulgaria, including third-country nationals accommodated in the territorial divisions. The available reception capacity allows accommodation of asylum seekers, following the recommendations for social distance. All sanitary measures within the registration and reception centres of SAR with CoM continue to be taken. School-age children from the territorial divisions of SAR with CoM participated in an online education process within the school year.</p> <p>The entry of third persons into the registration and reception centres of SAR with CoM continues to be restricted. However, there is an exception for persons directly involved in the administrative proceedings, e.g. lawyers representing third-country nationals, representatives of unaccompanied minors, social workers from the relevant authorities, etc. The access of third persons is granted according to all rules for prevention.</p> |
| Cyprus | Following a decision of the Council of Ministers, dated 29.04.2020, Cyprus public service, including asylum and migration authorities, resumed its normal operations, as of 04.05.2020. That means that asylum applications are accepted for submission and their examination proceeds as usual. However, according to the instructions of Ministry of Health, special health measures must be taken in all public offices, including that only 1 person per 8 square meters can be present (including the personnel). |

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| Germany | <p>In the asylum procedure, personal interviews have been resumed to a limited extent, taking into account the requirements of infection protection law. For this purpose, there are special rooms in all branches of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees nationwide that contain cutting discs. Disinfectants and mouth/nose protection are also available. The health protection of all those involved in the procedure is a priority at interviews.</p> <p>Since mid-June 2020, also Dublin transfers to and from Germany was gradually resumed.</p> |
| Estonia | <p>All migration proceedings were temporarily suspended as of March 16 until the end of the emergency situation (May 17). Migration proceedings have now returned to normal.</p> |
| | <p>Multiple changes came into force on May 7 due to COVID-19. For example, changes were introduced to the AGIPA whereby due to an emergency, an emergency situation or a large number of applications (large number refers to thousands of applications) the registration of applications for international protection could be postponed and the decision to detain applicants could be made without the descriptive and reasoning part. The applicant shall have the opportunity to contest the decision to detain without the beforementioned parts and the court shall submit such parts at the first opportunity. Additional amendments were introduced for accommodation and detention of applicants for international protection in emergency situations on 26 June.</p> <p>Legislative changes came into force on 27 June whereby the Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB) needs to review the list of safe countries of origin at least once a year.</p> <p>Further changes came into force on 27 June whereby in a decision to reject an application for international protection or together with it, a return decision shall be issued to the foreigner. Execution of an issued return decision shall be suspended, and the applicant shall have the right to stay in Estonia until a final decision is made.</p> |
| Finland | <p>Only a few asylum applications have been submitted during the coronavirus pandemic</p> <p>The number of new asylum seekers has clearly decreased during the coronavirus pandemic. No asylum applications have been submitted at the Finnish borders after the restrictions on border traffic came into force on 19 March 2020.</p> <p>https://migri.fi/en/-/koronaviruspandemian-aikana-on-jatetty-vain-vahan-turvapaikkahakemuksia</p> |
| France | <p>The emergency law to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak dated 23 March 2020 and its related ordinance dated 25 March 2020 provide a 90 days extension of the validity of asylum application attestations (proof of registration of the asylum request) which expire between 16 March and 15 May 2020.</p> <p>The Law n°2020-734 dated 17 June 2020 provides that the payment of allowanceS for asylum seekers which should have finished as from March 2020 will be extended until 31 May 2020.</p> <p>Very few asylum applications were registered during this period, mostly those which require an urgent processing. The 21-day deadline period to lodge an asylum application with the OFPRA was suspended.</p> <p>Registration of asylum applications and interviews with asylum seekers resumed respectively as from 11 and 25 May.</p> |
| Croatia | <p>Measures reported in the previous period (January-March 2020) are still in force.</p> |
| Ireland | <p>Since 27 March, the Department of Justice and Equality has continued to update a FAQ document outlining information on the impact of COVID-19 on immigration and international protection services. All measures are under review .</p> |
| | <p>All substantive interviews at the International Protection Office (IPO) continue to be postponed until further notice. The IPO will provide a limited service to new applicants only until further notice. The International Protection Office reception is opening with limited hours.</p> |

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| | <p>Temporary Residence Certificate (TRC) Renewal Appointments and call-backs are suspended up to and including 20 July. Applicants whose TRCs are due for renewal between 27 March and 20 July will automatically be issued a new card.</p> <p>All International Protection Appeals Tribunal (IPAT) hearings continue to be postponed until further notice (update on Q1 material, unchanged). Since the week starting 25 May, IPAT resumed the issuing of decisions which have been completed and signed by Tribunal Members, however, due to the current restrictions, staff presence must be limited.</p> <p>On 23 April, the Department of Justice and Equality and the HSE issued a joint statement on the measures put in place to protect direct provision residents during COVID-19.</p> <p>On 26 May, the Oireachtas Special Committee on the Covid-19 Response, which was established in May 2020 to consider and take evidence on the State's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, discussed direct provision centres with officials from the Department of Justice and Equality and from the HSE.</p> <p>On 5 June, the Department of Justice and Equality announced its intention to conduct an internal review, in collaboration with the HSE, of its action taken on direct provision in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, to inform action taken in any subsequent phases.</p> |
| <p>Italy</p> | <p>To avoid spreading the infection of covid-19, measures have been taken that modify certain aspects of the international protection application procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the police Immigration Offices are closed to the public, but people can go to the Questura to manifest the intention to apply for international protection; the request will be examined as quickly as possible; ■ the offices of the Territorial Commission are currently closed to the public, and the interviews are suspended; ■ following the 'Cure Italy' Decree formal adoption, all residence permits are valid till 31 August 2020. All recognition and identity documents, issued by the competent Italian authorities, which have expired or expired in the days following 18 March 2020 are extended to 31 August 2020. The validity for expatriation remains instead that indicated on the document (Art. 104 DI Cura Italia, adopted on 17 March 2020, n.18); ■ reception facilities are still required to take the necessary precautions and to implement the necessary hygienic and sanitary requirements; ■ all health measures within detention and repatriation centres are still in place. <p>Migrants who receive a denial for an application of international protection have more time to appeal. The time limits for appealing against denials (30 or 15 days depending on the case) have been suspended from 9 March to 15 May 2020. Therefore, if a migrant is denied protection on March 16, 2020, the deadline for appealing will start on May 16.</p> <p>Additionally, the overriding public interest determines the need to ensure the continuation of the reception also for those who are no longer entitled to stay in reception centres during the national health emergency.</p> |
| <p>Lithuania</p> | <p>In response to the COVID-19 emergency, Lithuanian NGO "Artscape" has mobilized a network of mutual assistance and volunteering in the online space STREAM. The initiative seeks to promote the involvement of the local community in supporting refugees and asylum seekers during COVID-19 by providing online activities such as language training, workshops, healthcare counselling, IT education and other. More: https://mipas.lt/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/THE-STREAM-2.pdf</p> |
| <p>Luxembourg</p> | <p>The opening hours of the reception desks of several public administration institutions, including the ones that deal with migration and asylum issues, were further adapted as deconfinement started on 11 May 2020, however, the opening hours have not returned to normal with some information desks still</p> |

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| | <p>closed. For example, the reception desk of the Department for Refugees, which is in charge of extending the certificates for lodging an application for international protection ("pink paper") is closed until further notice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In light of the state of crisis imposed by the Government to fight against the Covid-19 outbreak, applications for international protection and certificates for filing an application for international protection, namely the "pink papers" that were due to expire were extended for the entirety of the state of crisis. In addition, these measures were automatic so that the persons concerned did not have to take any specific steps or requests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ According to the Communication of 24 June 2020 by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs concerning temporary immigration measures, a new certificate "pink paper" concerning the registration of an application for international protection will be sent to all applicants who arrived before 16 March 2020, except in specific cases, in the coming days. All applicants who arrived after 16 March 2020 will be invited for an appointment at the Directorate of Immigration to request, in person, the extension of their certificate. ■ As indicated in the answer to the Parliamentary Question N°2041 of 9 April 2020 since the beginning of the state of crisis the National Reception Office has transmitted all the official government recommendations to residents of accommodation facilities. The instructions concerning confinement, barrier gestures and displays are disseminated in the mother languages of the residents. The internal regulations of the facilities have been adapted to the containment measures announced by the government. ■ Semi-open return facility (SHUK) in cooperation with the Health Inspection Department took a series of to minimize the risk of contamination and exposure to Covid-19. Psychosocial staff have provided information and awareness campaigns (both orally and through posting) on the importance of the elementary hygiene measures to minimize the risk of infection, as well as on the symptoms of the disease and what to do if symptoms are found. ■ Systematic COVID-19 screening tests have been implemented and a nurse from the Health Inspection Department is on site 8 hours a day. The positive cases were almost hermetically separated from the non-infected. Since 24 April 2020, the SHUK has no longer hosted a positive COVID assignee, any new infected being transferred to a dedicated facility. |
| Malta | <p>The Office of the Refugee Commissioner ceased all face-to-face services between 13 March and 17 May. The Office of the Refugee Commissioner resumed face-to-face services as of Monday 18 May 2020. These include issuing/renewal of Asylum Seekers' Documents and protection certificates, registration and lodging of new applications, and personal interviews. However, to limit the number of people at our premises, services are being provided after appointments are made.</p> <p>New requests for international protection are currently being received exclusively via email, following which the person concerned is contacted in order to proceed with the lodging of the application.</p> |
| Netherlands | <p>Asylum procedure resumed via interviews by videoconference</p> <p>The asylum procedures gradually are resumed, using videoconferencing systems. This mainly concerns matters that lend themselves to an accelerated procedure, but also additional hearings in the extended asylum procedure and registration hearings of foreign nationals who have recently arrived in the Netherlands.</p> <p>Legal decision period for asylum applications extended</p> <p>In May 2020 it was decided that the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) will have 6 months longer to decide on an application for asylum, because all the asylum procedures were temporarily suspended due to the corona measures. The IND normally has 6 months to decide. In April 2020 the European Commission determined that the decision period during the corona crisis may be extended by a maximum of nine months.</p> |

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| | <p>All courts in the Netherlands reopened</p> <p>Since May 2020 all courts in the Netherlands are reopened after being temporarily closed by the corona measures. This means that the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) is also present at hearings again. The IND is responsible for the legal representation of the IND and other migration authorities in appeal proceedings before the Court, Council of State and international courts.</p> |
| <p>Poland</p> | <p>The emergency state was introduced on 13 March 2020; then the epidemic state on 20 March. All direct customer services in offices (including hearings and interviews) responsible for foreigners' matters has been suspended since 16 March (including the Office for Foreigners, the body responsible for asylum procedures).</p> <p>Besides, deadlines for completing formal deficiencies, including in particular confirmation of personal appearance and giving fingerprints, as well as deadlines for submitting other documents that expire when the offices are closed will be counted from the date of resumption of direct service, without negative consequences for the customer.</p> <p>Immigration services have returned to operate on-site services in May. Visits are arranged by phone or via the Internet for a specific day and time. All direct contacts occur with notification of sanitary and safety requirements of both clients and employees of offices, such as wearing protective masks / helmets, gloves, or disinfecting hands and surfaces.</p> |
| <p>Portugal</p> | <p>The COVID- 19 pandemic led to the introduction of a state of public emergency in Portugal. In this regard, national authorities have closed to the public or access was allowed upon prior notification. Portugal took measures to an automatic extension of expiring/expired documents. These measures do not correspond to any situation of extraordinary regularization of migrants or applicants for international protection, but rather to act in epidemiological prevention and guarantee access to the public and private health system of all foreign citizens with pending cases or expired documents, that continue to be considered as valid until 30 October 2020.</p> <p>From 1 May 2020 the use of masks is mandatory when accessing or staying in public service premises. Portugal started on 2 May 2020 a period of lack of definition, changing from a state of emergency to a state of calamity, and the return to normality was applied gradually, with changes to that on 18 May, 1 June and 15 June.</p> <p>During the emergency period, the asylum procedure was suspended between 27 March and 2 May by Ministerial Order.</p> <p>Between 1 April and 30 June, 47 requests for international protection were made.</p> <p>Dublin procedures remain uninterrupted. However, travel restrictions have resulted in de facto discontinuation of Dublin transfers. All Dublin transfers have been suspended since 13 March as all airports remain closed (other countries were informed via DubliNet).</p> <p>The epidemiological situation in Portugal caused by COVID'19 has required extraordinary measures to be taken to prevent the spread of the disease, seeking to reduce the risks to public health associated with care, at both level, for workers in the Immigration and Borders Service (SEF), or users of these public services.</p> |

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| | <p>Between 27 March and 3 May, although the Asylum and Refugee Office has continued to function for the presentation and registration of new applications for international protection (32 applications were lodged), all legal deadlines were suspended in order to guarantee the rights of all foreign citizens with lawsuits pending. Interviews were interrupted between 13 March and 3 May.</p> <p>Resettlement was suspended.</p> |
| Slovenia | <p>On April 30 oral hearings were enabled, which means that the competent authority did not consider only urgent applications but also other applications for international protection. As well a personal interview could be conducted, but according to the recommendations under protection measures (protection equipment, mask, disinfection, distance, etc.). Newly arrived persons declaring the intention to file an application for international protection were placed in quarantine for 7 days after arriving in the Republic of Slovenia.</p> |
| Slovak Republic | <p>In the reception centre still the undertaking of medical check-up precedes other procedures. The asylum seekers in general are provided by the face protection mask and are informed about the measures and need to keep the hygienic standards by reception and/or accommodation centres' doctor(s) and nurse(s). They are handed out leaflets with additional information about hygiene. The visits in the reception and accommodation centres are limited.</p> <p>Throughout June some of the measures were loosened in line with the measures implemented in the whole country. This concerns e.g. quarantine measures set by the centres' doctors in line with the measures on national level for those who have travel history, measures related to group activities, counselling on individual basis, etc.</p> <p>Transfers between centres are possible again.</p> <p>Most strict measures are still in place in the reception centre (the quarantine centre) where also the asylum seekers with travel history are placed in isolation for the necessary period of time.</p> |
| Sweden | <p>On 11 May, the Swedish Migration Agency decided to introduce temporarily a new method for the collection of fingerprints of asylum seekers due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The method now used does not require any physical contact between staff and asylum seekers and hence reduces the risk of a spread of the Covid-19 virus. Furthermore, on 25 May the Migration Agency decided on detailed guidelines for the use of Skype and video conference facilities to conduct personal interviews for an application for asylum. Finally, on 7 April it was decided to temporarily suspend the transfer to Sweden of refugees granted resettlement in the country.</p> |
| UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS | |
| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |
| Austria | <p>Due to the necessary restrictions on freedom of movement and interpersonal contact and the current or future closure of initial reception centres, it is possible to transfer unaccompanied minor asylum seekers not only to initial reception centres but also to a regional directorate of the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum.</p> |
| France | <p>During the lockdown, the French government provides for the continuation of all missions related to the evaluation of the minority and of the degree of isolation as well as for the sheltering of persons who declare themselves as unaccompanied minors. Because of the difficulties to process evaluations of minority and isolation due to closed migration offices, the sheltering and support of this group.</p> |

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| Croatia | The protocol on the Treatment of Unaccompanied Minor has not been changed (based on the proposal of the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy) but the Guidelines on the protection of unaccompanied children in situations of risk of threat or epidemic (adopted on 25 March 2020) are in force (Guidelines were developed by Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Health and the State Inspectorate). |
| Italy | From 15 June 2020, because of the epidemiological emergency from Covid-19, the solidarity programs for the reception of foreign minors were temporarily suspended. |
| Portugal | <p>During the period under review (April, May and June), Portugal was subject to rules resulting from the establishment of a state of emergency, and from May 2, gradual phases of deflation began. In this period and considering the closing of borders that occurred in almost all of Europe, there were no situations involving unaccompanied minors or vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Regarding vulnerable groups, information was made available to refugee local accommodations to prevent contamination by Covid-19. As well as the identification of the impacts of Covid-19 on the process of receiving resettled refugees and applicants for international protection placed in ad-hoc processes resulting from the rescue by humanitarian boats.</p> <p>ACM created a permanent team of translators and increased the dissemination of the Telephone Translation Service. Besides, they were also involved in direct action on the ground with vulnerable communities, supporting other government areas such as health services and public health authorities regarding testing actions among temporary local accommodations of migrants that required immediate translation between the migrants and health professionals involved.</p> |
| Slovak Republic | <p>Following the Government Regulation from 9 April 2020 which regulated the conditions of economic mobilisation in the social area the Children and Family Centres (CFC) were specified as one of the subjects of economy mobilisation.</p> <p>The Government Resolution from 14 April 2020 approved a plan to solve and mitigate the risks of rise and spread of COVID 19 among others in facilities providing social services and CFCs. It sets concrete tasks and procedures in placing new children in relevant facilities (CFCs) after the court decision to all involved bodies (Offices of Labour, CFCs, etc.). Children are issued COVID PASSes, temporary independent groups were established, the children started to be tested, increased protection of children and employees was introduced.</p> <p>Government Resolution from 7 May 2020 (adjusted on 17 June) enabled to react to the development of the epidemiologic situation in the area of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship. This Resolution is valid only in the time of the epidemiological situation and right after its end. Following this Regulation, the CFCs adopted some changes, e.g. reception conditions, provision of isolation, quarantine groups and implementation of professional methods for these children.</p> <p>Following these governmental actions, the following rules are also implemented in the CFCs: visits of parents, relatives and associated persons are prohibited, the hygienic measures are increased (disinfection, protection tools are used, tests, etc.).</p> <p>In case of the UAMs with unknown travel history they were placed in quarantine until further notice. Interpreting is carried out exclusively in the form of conference call. The Slovak language is taught only by the employees of the facility. Schooling for those UAMs where applicable is ensured under the same conditions as for Slovak citizens - in online form.</p> |
| INTEGRATION | |
| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |

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| Austria | <p>Third-country nationals are obliged to complete Module 1 of the Integration Agreement within two years upon the first issue of certain residence permits. If the deadline for fulfilling this obligation falls into the period from 22 March 2020 to 30 June 2020, the deadline is extended until 31 October 2020.</p> <p>In April the Austrian Integration Fonds (ÖIF) launched an information campaign on general public health information regarding Covid-19 targeted migrants in Austria. It was translated into 17 languages and disseminated via a thematic section on the ÖIF's website, via social media channels and in the form of text messages.</p> |
| Estonia | <p>The Ministry of Social Affairs proposed changes to allow persons without health insurance access to COVID-19 diagnosing and treatment free of charge (Estonian Health Insurance Fund finances the costs).</p> <p>The government introduced a wide array of measures to tackle economic hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The government introduced a wage compensation scheme for employers whose income has decreased in comparison to the last year and which can be payed to employees whose amount of work or wage has decreased. The scheme was active from March to June. The conditions of the scheme are spelled out here. Also, an expert committee to revive the economy was created. Crisis measures for entrepreneurs were created.</p> <p>Ministry of Social Affairs announced that short-term foreign workers who are currently unemployed, but have the right to continue working in Estonia in case they find a job have the possibility to receive job mediation.</p> |
| Greece | <p>All beneficiaries of the Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection Programme (HELIOS) are constantly informed regarding the government's guidelines for prevention measures against COVID-19 by IOM staff and implementation partners in a language that they understand. At the same time the implementing bodies of the HELIOS programme are constantly informed of the developments and instructions regarding the pandemic and adapt accordingly to the services of the programme to the guidelines of the government, while continuing to provide high-level services to all beneficiaries of the programme.</p> <p>The General Secretariat for Civil Protection has designed and posted on its website information and advice concerning the protection against and the treatment of Covid-19 disease in 6 languages other than Greek (English, French, Albanian, Russian, Arabic and Farsi). The Social Integration Directorate (SID) has forwarded these guidelines to the Migrant Integration Centres (MICs) in order to be used when informing migrants and refugees about the basic protection measures to be taken, as well as on the need to remain calm and avoid the spread of misinformation. Moreover, in order to achieve the greatest possible information for the migrants and refugees, it was proposed by the SID a) to print the above mentioned instructions and to post them in prominent places of MICs as well as b) to add the relevant links to the websites (sites) of MICs and/or of Community Centers and Municipalities.</p> |
| Spain | <p>Due to COVID-19, integration programs requiring in-person actions were suspended. (group activities and those that objectively could not be carried out by telephone or telematic means, or under any other form of remote work). The rest of the programs continued their ordinary course. Now, with the end of the alarm state, it is expected that programs will gradually go back to normal.</p> |
| France | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experimentation of distance learning in order to allow new arrivals who have started their language training to continue their learning. Development of distance tool for civic training for French speaking migrants. ■ Promotion of distance learning tools elaborated by France's partners (linguistic MOOC from Alliance française, mobile application 'Happy FLE' from the NGO Forum Réfugiés, or "together in France" from FTDA) or by the French ministry (mobile application for the civic training, launch of a new MOOC "live and find a job in France"). ■ Processing of the most urgent applications for citizenship. ■ Extension of the deadline for implementing the upgrading of French language level required for citizenship applications because of the lockdown. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Softened measures to prove the French language knowledge during the Covid 19 lockdown and up to one month after the end of the health emergency. ■ Suspension of the processing of citizenship applications. ■ Extension of the <u>two</u>-month deadline for lodging an appeal for the requests which should have been filed between 12 March and 23 June 2020. Extension of the deadline for registering declarations of <u>citizenship</u>. |
| Italy | <p>On May 19, 2020, the Italian Government adopted Decree-Law n. 34, titled "Urgent measures in the area of health, support to work and the economy, as well as social policies related to the epidemiological emergency from COVID-19".</p> <p>It contains several novelties with respect to regularisation of residence and employment relationships. More specifically, to ensure adequate health protection and to encourage the emergence of irregular employment relationships, article 103, paragraph 1, of the above-mentioned decree enables Italian employers or nationals of a EU Member State, or foreign employers in possession of the residence permit – as envisaged in Article 9 of Legislative Decree No 286 of 25 July 1998 (i.e. long-term resident’s EU residence permit), et seq. amendments – to apply for an employment contract with foreign citizens present on the national territory or to declare the existence of an irregular employment relationship still ongoing with Italian citizens or foreign nationals.</p> <p>To this purpose, foreign citizens must have been registered (i.e. “subjected to photodactyloscopy”) before March 8, 2020 or they must have stayed in Italy before that date by virtue of the declaration of presence, in accordance with Law no. 68 of May 28, 2007, or by certificates containing a certain date from public bodies. In both cases, foreign citizens must not have left the national territory after March 8, 2020.</p> <p>Article 103, paragraph 2, enables foreign citizens, with a residence permit expired as of October 31, 2019, not renewed or converted into another residence permit, to apply for a temporary residence permit, valid only in the national territory, for a duration of six months from the submission of the application. To this purpose, these citizens must have been present on the national territory on 8 March 2020, without having left the same date. They must have performed working activities in the areas referred to in paragraph 3 before 31 October 2019. If at the end of the duration of the temporary permit, the citizen produces a subordinate employment contract or the salary and social security documentation proving the performance of the work activity, the permit is converted into a work residence permit.</p> <p>Article 103, paragraph 3, lays down the areas concerned by both procedures provided for by paragraph 1 and 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) agriculture, livestock and animal husbandry, fisheries and aquaculture and related activities; b) assistance to the person or for members of the family, even if they do not live together, suffering from pathologies or handicaps that limit their self-sufficiency; <p>domestic work to support family needs.</p> |
| Luxembourg | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In accordance with the information provided by the Ministry of Justice 25 May 2020 the service desk of ‘Certificates for Nationality’ and their offices, which receive candidates for Luxembourgish citizenship acquisition and reclamation, are open every day from 9 to 11 am. From 2 July 2020 the opening hours of the service desk of ‘Certificates for Nationality’ and their offices are every workday from 8:30 to 11:30 and 14:30 to 16:00. ■ During the period of the State of Crisis, no decisions have been taken in affairs dealing with Luxembourg nationality issues. ■ The ‘<i>Vivre Ensemble au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg</i>’ courses required in the naturalization process for acquiring Luxembourgish citizenship were <u>anceled</u> for the academic year of 2019/2020. However, the exams to obtain the certificate required for the acquisition of the Luxembourg nationality continue to be organized. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only national and international exams took place at the National Institute for Languages (INL) in person, respecting the barriers as defined by the Ministry of Health on 11 May 2020. Otherwise, all the courses provided by the INL are taught remotely/online until the end of current semester. |
| Malta | In order to ensure that participants' integration-related plans were not unduly disturbed by the pandemic, the I Belong Integration Programme was moved online by the service providers. This provided the Human Rights Directorate with the unexpected opportunity in 2020 to anticipate plans to utilize better available technologies for integration-related services. |
| Portugal | <p>The High Commission for Migration collected and displayed information from a range of national and international official and reliable sources, including a Doctors of the World – Portugal's Guide on COVID-19, in 25 languages.</p> <p>The High Commission for Migration and its partners in all Portuguese municipalities mapped the existing responses to support migrants, and with the support of the CLAIM network and Associations of Immigrants, refugees and Roma, performed a National Needs Assessment so to adapt the responses to the needs, in articulation with other entities. Plus, to guarantee immediate response to emergency situations, The High Commission for Migration identified and mobilized focal points (CNAIM directors with the support of a technician) for the North and Center regions; Lisbon; and Alentejo and Algarve (south region).</p> |
| Sweden | In March 2020, the government decided that schools that must be closed following recommendations by the Public Health Agency of Sweden may adapt their educational activities to, for example, remote or distance learning. It was recommended that Sweden's upper secondary schools, municipal adult education, vocational adult education and higher education institutions provide distance learning until further notice. On 15 June, the Public Health Agency lifted these recommendations. |
| LEGAL MIGRATION | |
| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |
| Austria | <p>As long as the freedom of movement or interpersonal contact is restricted due to measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the authority may, in the case of applications for extensions or changes of purpose, refrain from taking fingerprints and issue the residence permit without this biometric characteristic unless there is reasonable doubt as to the identity of the foreigner. The authority may also refrain from requiring the production of original documents and records unless there is reasonable doubt as to their authenticity and correctness.</p> <p>In Austria, the maximum duration of an employment permit for seasonal workers is normally not more than six months. Within a period of 12 months, employment permits may be issued or renewed for the same seasonal worker for a total duration not exceeding 9 months. Due to Covid-19, those seasonal workers who are already staying in Austria may be granted employment permits in agriculture and forestry for a total duration of more than 9 months within a period of 12 months. This measure was limited until 30 June 2020.</p> |
| | <p>In Austria, the maximum duration of an employment permit for seasonal workers is normally not more than six months. Within a period of 12 months, employment permits may be issued or renewed for the same seasonal worker for a total duration not exceeding 9 months. Due to Covid-19, those seasonal workers who are already staying in Austria may be granted employment permits in agriculture and forestry for a total duration of more than 9 months within a period of 12 months. This measure was limited until 30 June 2020.</p> <p>Applications for renewal and change of purpose are not to be submitted to the authority in person but by post or electronically as long as freedom of movement or interpersonal contact is restricted due to measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19.</p> <p>As long as measures restricting freedom of movement or interpersonal contacts exist, visas for, among others, seasonal workers shall be valid beyond their initial period of duration as long as an existing work permit is in force.</p> |

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| Bulgaria | Amendments were adopted to Article 24, Paragraph 13 of the Law on Foreigners of the Republic of Bulgaria. According to this article, third-country national whose prolonged residence permit in the Republic of Bulgaria expires up to three months after the repeal of the state of emergency, may apply for a residence extension within three months after the repeal of the state of emergency. This term shall not be considered as an interruption when a third-country national applies for a long-term or permanent residence. A third-country national whose prolonged residence expires up to three months after the repeal of the state of emergency, may enter the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria without visa up to three months after the repeal of the state of emergency. |
| Cyprus | Following a decision of the Council of Ministers, dated 29.04.2020, Cyprus public service, including asylum and migration authorities, resumed its normal operations, as of 04.05.2020. That means, that applications for the issue or renewal of residence permits are accepted for submission and their examination proceeds, as usual. However, according to the instructions of Ministry of Health, special health measures must be taken in all public offices, including that only 1 person per 8 square meters can be present (including the personnel). |
| Czech Republic | <p>In connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of the Czech Republic declared a state of emergency on 12 March 2020, which ended on 17 May 2020.</p> <p>Foreign nationals (third-country nationals) whose current residence permit in the Czech Republic has expired after 12 March 2020, must leave the territory of the Czech Republic by 16 July 2020 at the latest. For this period, the exit order for foreign nationals are not issued.</p> <p>Furthermore, based on the Czech Government's resolution from 22 June 2020, foreign nationals with short-term visa for the purpose employment / short-term visa for the purpose seasonal / visa for a stay of over 90 days for the purpose seasonal / special work visa, which validity ended after 12 March 2020 and employer arranged extension of employment relationship or new employment relationship, the travel period is extended up to 16 September 2020; validity of work permit is also extended.</p> |
| Estonia | <p>Foreign nationals who are not submitted to exceptions when entering Estonia, are not allowed to cross the border (From 1 June Estonia will admit people with no symptoms arriving from the European Union, the members of the Schengen area or the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. If a person arrives from a country where more than 15 people per 100 000 people have been infected by COVID-19 then additional measures to restrict movement of the person for 14 days from the date of entry to the country will be employed. There are also some exceptions in place. With regard to people who do not fall under the exceptions referred to in the order of the Government of the Republic, it is still possible to authorize a border crossing on the basis of an application for permission, which must be sent to Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB).)</p> <p>PBGB continues with residence permit and short-term employment procedures as usual (with the exception that as third country nationals are mostly not allowed to enter the country, then they also cannot submit their application; the procedures continue for those already residing within the country). The PBGB service offices are open but applying for documents using the online self-service portal is recommended.</p> |
| | <p>The emergency situation declared due to COVID-19 on March 12 ended on May 17.</p> <p>Multiple changes came into force on May 7 due to COVID-19. Legislative amendments were approved which's aim is to ensure that foreigners from third countries who have been staying in Estonia on temporary basis (short term employment) and have lost their jobs leave Estonia at the earliest possibility (taking into account the person's possibility to leave the country). For example, additional possibilities (reasons) were added to the list when one's visa could be cancelled and dismissed (e.g. if the foreigner's main reason to stay in Estonia is employment-related and their employment contract ends). Additionally, amendments were approved to Aliens Act whereby in an emergency or an emergency situation the minister responsible for the area or the Director General of the PBGB authorised by the minister may grant a foreigner who is staying in Estonia, whose return to the country of origin is impeded, a</p> |

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| | <p>legal basis for the stay in Estonia. Additional amendments constituted that in an emergency or an emergency situation the government could prolong the time for working for short-term employment if it is justified, when taking into account the needs of the economy and labour market, whereby exceptions were made to employees working in the agricultural sector. Yet, the time prolonged for working cannot exceed 730 days during 913 consecutive days. Those foreigners have the right to work in Estonia until July 31 and will have time until August 31 to organise their departure.</p> <p>In addition, multiple legislative changes came into force on July 1 due to COVID-19. For example. rules for applying for a visa were updated (e.g. applications for visas can be now submitted electronically).</p> |
| Greece | <p>Extension of residence permits and long-stay (national) visa-Validity of national entry visas expiring between 11 March and 31 August 2020 is extended until 30 September 2020.-Validity of residence permits (long term or short term) which expired after 1 December 2019 or shall expire until 30 June 2020 is extended until 31 December 2020.</p> <p>Validity of "certificates of application for residence permit" (i.e. certificates granted upon submission of the application for a residence permit, provided that all supporting documents are complete and certifying temporary legal residence in Greece, 1 year max, until issuance of the permit) which shall expire until 30 June 2020, is extended until 31 December 2020.</p> <p>Special provisions for foreign agricultural workers: Automatic 6-month extension of work permits granted on an exceptional basis to undocumented TCNs for their exclusive employment in agriculture to cover urgent needs. Validity of national entry visas, including visas of seasonal workers, is extended until 30 September 2020.</p> <p>Extension of initial visa-free stay (expiry of the 90-day deadline). Initial visa free stay may be extended for up to 90 days upon application to the police before the expiry of the three-month period. In case of overstay, if the person can provide evidence of force majeure at the BCP no entry ban and no fine is issued (for a period up to 30 days after the end of the emergency situation).</p> <p>Extension of stay under a short stay visa (including stays exceeding 90 days).</p> <p>Stay with a visa may be extended for up to 90 days upon application to the police before the expiry of the three-month period. In case of overstay, if the person can provide evidence of force majeure at the BCP no entry ban and no fine is issued (for a period up to 30 days after the end of the emergency situation).</p> |
| Spain | <p>All measures taken to protect citizens from the COVID-19 crisis also applied to third-country nationals.</p> <p>The granting of residence permits for the healthcare professionals and agriculture workers was sped up.</p> <p>All residence permits to be extended 6 months after emergency state was lifted (June 21), whereas long-term visas to be extended three months. TCNs with a Spanish residence permit can re-enter the country, including those with expired residence permits.</p> <p>Residence permits were not to be withdrawn due to unemployment or business difficulties associated with the Covid-19 crisis, during renewal proceedings. All renewals to be more flexible, also of temporary residence permits for self-employed and highly qualified professionals. Same applies to family reunification.</p> <p>Residence permits for social integration to be more flexible too, specially relating the work contract and/or social integration accreditations (deadlines extended for 45 days).</p> |

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| | <p>A residence and work permit shall be granted to regular migrants aged 18-21 employed in the agricultural sector. This permit shall be valid for 2 years throughout the national territory, without limitation by occupation or sector of activity nor the application of the job market test, in recognition of their work in an essential sector during the COVID crisis, as long as they work continuously in it until September 30.</p> |
| Finland | <p><u>Asylum seekers' right to work will be temporarily extended to improve availability of seasonal labour</u> Asylum seekers' right to work will be extended by a temporary amendment to the Aliens Act. The amendment will concern the start and end of the asylum seekers' right to work. This will help alleviate the situation where a shortage of seasonal employees from abroad is likely this year in Finland. https://intermin.fi/en/-/asylum-seekers-right-to-work-will-be-temporarily-extended-to-improve-availability-of-seasonal-labour</p> |
| | <p><u>Lower residence permit fees for people staying in Finland due to coronavirus crisis</u> The Decree on Fees Charged for Services Provided by the Finnish Immigration Service will be temporarily amended. Because of the travel restrictions imposed due to the prevailing coronavirus pandemic, there are people in Finland whose right of residence is about to end or has already ended and who are unable to leave the country. https://intermin.fi/en/-/koronatilanteen-takia-maahan-jaavien-oleskelulupamaksuihin-helpotuksia</p> |
| | <p><u>The Finnish Immigration Service cancels all asylum interviews as of the 16th of March due to the coronavirus.</u> Asylum seekers will be informed of a new appointment for an asylum interview as soon as it is possible to conduct them again.</p> |
| | <p><u>Changes in the submission of residence permit applications and in the operation of service points of the Finnish Immigration Service due to the coronavirus</u> https://migri.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/oletko-suomessa-katso-ajankohtaiset-ohjeet-hakemiseen</p> |
| | <p><u>Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Finland suspends the reception and processing of ordinary visa and residence permit applications in the missions</u> https://um.fi/current-affairs/-/asset_publisher/gc654PySnjTX/content/suomi-keskeytt-c3-a4-c3-a4-tavanomaisen-viisumi-ja-oleskelulupahakemusten-vastaanoton-ja-k-c3-a4sittelyn</p> |
| | <p><u>The government issues a proposition to temporarily change the Alien's Act and the Seasonal Workers Act.</u> If adopted, the temporary legislative change would allow legally staying third-country nationals to work in important sectors (e.g. seasonal work in agriculture and other natural produce) in order to secure emergency supply and the functioning of the labour market by alleviating labour shortages in these sectors.</p> |
| France | <p>The emergency law to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak dated 23 March 2020 and its related ordinance dated 22 April 2020 provide a 180 days extension of the validity for long-term visas, residence permits, temporary stay authorisations and receipts of residence permits which expire between 16 March and 15 June 2020 since all prefectures and related migration offices were closed. See the details below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The issuance of visas was stopped and has resumed progressively as from 29 June. ■ From the beginning of the health emergency, several measures were implemented to secure the right of residence for short-term holders who could not return in their country because of the closed borders and the lack of air flights (issuance of a three-month temporary residence authorizations for the urgent files) ; for TCN holders of residence permits which expired and who could not file a renewal application because the prefectures were closed (extension of the validity period for six months for permits which expired between 16 March and 15 June) ; reopening of the migration offices |

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| | <p>in the prefectures as from 15 June with a priority given to the holders of expired residence permits who could not benefit from the extension measure.</p> <p>In order to limit the number of visits to the prefectures, implementation as from 15 June of electronic applications for simple procedures such as renewal of receipts of residence permits, duplicate applications, change of domicile and application for travel document for children.</p> |
| Croatia | <p>Measures reported in the previous period (January–March 2020) are still in force.</p> <p>In order for third-country nationals to continue to use issued biometric residence permits during the epidemic and to continue to reside and work in the Republic of Croatia, the Act on amending the Foreigners Act was adopted in April (Official Gazette, No. 53/20).</p> <p>The proposed act stipulates that third-country nationals who have a regulated temporary or long-term residence and have issued (biometric) residence permits, during the epidemic of COVID-19 do not have to apply for a new residence permit, no later than 30 days from the cessation of the epidemic. After the expiry of that period, third-country national is required to apply for a new residence permit without delay.</p> <p>Furthermore, the amendments to the Foreigners Act stipulate that actions in administrative proceedings that third-country nationals are obliged to take within the deadlines prescribed by the Foreigners Act, and the deadline for which began to run on 11 March 2020 or will be during the COVID-19 epidemic, third-country nationals may take no later than 30 days from the cessation of the epidemic.</p> |
| Ireland | <p>The Department of Justice and Equality FAQ on COVID-19 continues to affirm that immigration concerns of undocumented foreign nationals should not be construed as a barrier or “firewall” to seeking essential healthcare.</p> <p>A change to immigration permission of current “Stamp 3” holders who respond to and qualify under the HSE’s “Be on Call for Ireland” campaign continued to be considered (update on Q1 material, unchanged).</p> <p>As of 15 April, EU Treaty Rights and Domestic applications can be submitted by email together with scanned copies of supporting documentation, as a temporary measure up to 20 July 2020.</p> <p>On 17 April Immigration Service Delivery announced the introduction of temporary online arrangements for all non-EEA nationals who currently hold Stamp 2 permission and who wish to avail of the Third Level Graduate Programme, including students who have returned to their home countries due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>On 27 April, the Department of Justice and Equality announced temporary arrangements for change of permission applications until 20 July 2020.</p> <p>On 13 May, the Department of Justice and Equality announced that immigration permissions due to expire between 20 May and 20 July 2020 will be automatically extended for two months. This includes people in Ireland on short stay visas and those whose permissions have already been extended by the previous notice issued on 20 March 2020.</p> <p>On 21 May, Immigration Service Delivery announced that, as a temporary measure, anyone in the State awaiting their first registration, and who has a current, valid permission to remain, but does not have a current permission letter, can apply to the Registration Office to request a letter confirming their permission to remain in the State and the conditions attached. For international English Language Students, the extension means that they may continue to work if they wish but must be enrolled in a course of study to adhere to the conditions of their permission.</p> |

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| | <p>On 26 May, the Department of Justice announced further measures to assist international students studying English in Ireland who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> |
| | <p>From 22 June, limited processing of visa applications resumed. During this initial resumption phase, only Long Stay “D” visa applications, including Study, will be accepted, as well as those identified under the current criteria as Emergency/Priority visas. Short stay visas for non-essential travel are not being issued.</p> |
| | <p>The Department of Justice and Equality announced on 22 June a new online registration renewal system for non-EEA students based in Dublin who are eligible for renewal of their permission to reside.</p> |
| Italy | <p>Article 103 of Decree-Law n. 18 of 17 March 2020 covers the suspension of the time limits for administrative procedures, including those aimed at issuing or renewing residence permits, from 23 February to 15 April 2020.</p> <p>On 24 April 2020, the law converting Decree-Law n.18 of 17 March 2020 has extended again the validity of all certificates, attestations, permits, concession, authorizations and enabling acts, for the application of citizenship, expiring between 31 January and 31 July 2020, for 90 days following the declaration of cessation of the state of emergency (Article 103.2).</p> <p>On 8 April 2020, Decree-Law n. 23 of 8 April 2020 has further extended the period of suspension for administrative proceedings, including those aimed at issuing or renewing residence permits, until 15 May 2020.</p> <p>On 24 April 2020, the law converting Decree-Law n.18 of 17 March 2020 has introduced several changes to the terms above-mentioned. It has extended again the validity of all certificates, attestations, permits, concession, authorizations and enabling acts, expiring between 31 January and 31 July 2020, for 90 days following the declaration of cessation of the state of emergency (Article 103.2).</p> <p>As for the residence permits for third-country citizens, they remain valid until 31 August 2020. This include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The deadlines for the conversion of residence permits from study to employment and from seasonal to non-seasonal employment; ■ Permits to stay (entry visas, etc.); ■ Travel documents; ■ The validity of permits issued for seasonal work, family reunification, work - special cases, including research, blue cards, intercompany transfers, etc.; ■ Residence permits for subordinate work, waiting for employment, self-employment, family, internship, job search or student entrepreneurship; ■ Requests for conversion. <p>Similarly, residence permits for seasonal work, expiring between 23 February and 31 May 2020, are instead extended to 31 December 2020.</p> <p>Moreover, in line with the provisions of the new Decree of The President of The Council of Ministers of 10 April 2020, all Immigration Offices remained close to the public until 3 May 2020.</p> <p>On 4 May 2020, the Immigration Offices reopened once again with most of the personnel in smart working. However, the Ministry of the Interior has circulated several guidelines to prevent congestion/crowding. Indeed, for the purpose of finalising the procedures for the issue of the authorisation for the entry of foreign citizens (family reunification and work for special cases), the documentation that the applicant must produce can be obtained electronically. In the family reunification procedure applicants can attach the scanned documentation to the application; in other procedures, the documentation can be produced and acquired by e-mail. The purpose is to reduce as much as possible the movement of people and the number of groups.</p> |
| | <p>On 19 May 2020, the Italian Government adopted Decree-Law n. 34, titled "Urgent measures in the area of health, support to work and the economy, as well as social policies related to the epidemiological emergency from COVID-19".</p> <p>It contains several novelties with respect to regularisation of residence and employment.</p> |

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| | <p>From 1 June to 15 August 2020 it will be possible to apply for a residence permit so as to promote the regularisation of undeclared work contracts in the following sectors of the labour market:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ agriculture, husbandry, fishing and related activities; ■ personal assistance services; ■ domestic work. <p>Who can apply for the regularisation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Employers can apply to hire foreign nationals already in the country or can declare the existence of an irregular employment relationship. Photodactyloscopic surveys must have been made before 8 March 2020 on all foreign citizens who access the regularization. This means that they must have entered the territory before that date, and they must not have left Italy after the 8 March 2020. ■ Foreign nationals with an expired residence permit as of 31 October 2019, - not renewed or converted into another type of residence permit – can apply for a six month residence permit valid within the entire country. The applicants must have been in Italy as of 8 March and engaged in the above listed activities <p>The requests can be applied in accordance with the procedures set by the Ministry of the Interior at a:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unified Immigration Desk, The Questura Immigration Office <p>Before applying, the employer must have paid a lump-sum non-refundable contribution of € 500 to cover the expenses related to regularisation of each worker’s contract. In case a foreign national makes the request, the non-refundable contribution is € 160.</p> <p>The requests will not be considered if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the last 5 years, the employer has been guilty of illegal migration or labour exploitation, crimes directly related to the recruitment of persons for the purpose of prostitution or of minors to employ in illegal activities. ■ If the employer does not sign the residence permit at the Unified Immigration Desk or refuses to hire the foreign national. ■ Foreign nationals who have received an expulsion order, who are the subject of alerts for denying them to enter the country, who have been guilty of sexual and drug offences, illegal migration support or other offences related to the recruitment of persons for prostitution or minors to be employed in illegal activities, do not qualify. ■ Foreign nationals who are considered a threat to the public order. <p>During the length of the procedure, it is not possible to expel the foreign national except for very serious reasons.</p> <p>On 15 June, the applications received were about 32 thousand. 23 950 of them have already been completed and 7 762 are being processed (data of the Ministry of the Interior).</p> |
| Lithuania | <p>During the period of quarantine, the Migration Department provided services only to customers registered in advance on the website www.migracija.lt. Clients were able to collect already produced documents only by prior visit bookings. Documents of foreigners aged 60 and above could have been</p> |

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| | <p>collected by their relatives (children, brothers, sisters, spouses, grandchildren and great-grandchildren). Upon the end of the period of quarantine (17 June 2020), customer service exceptions applicable during the quarantine time expired and pre-quarantine order has been re-established.</p> <p>From 19 March to 17 June 2020 the procedure of issuing temporary residence permits (TRP) has been simplified to foreigners working in Lithuanian companies engaged in international commercial/freight transport. In accordance to the procedure, foreigners who completed and submitted the request online, did not have to appear in person at the Migration Department. Additionally, employer was able to collect TRP instead of the foreigner.</p> |
| Malta | <p>Until further notice, the Expatriates Unit will not be accepting new single permit applications from third-country nationals, except for highly skilled workers (Key Employee Initiative) and healthcare professionals. New single permit applications for highly skilled workers and healthcare professionals, renewals and change in jobs should be submitted online. As for healthcare professionals, whose single permit is about to expire, they should apply online to extend their permit for a further year. This also applies for healthcare professionals whose single permit was automatically extended by three months in the wake of COVID-19. It is now possible for live-in carers who are submitting a new or renewal single permit application to set an appointment in order to submit their application in person. As of 1 July, the Central Visa Unit resumed full operations. In this regard, the public is still being requested to set an appointment beforehand. Furthermore, interviews in relation to applications for Maltese citizenship based on marriage by a foreign spouse of a Maltese citizen have also resumed. Identity Malta's Mater Dei office has reopened and couples postponing their marriage due to COVID-19 will not have to pay the administrative fee when registering their new marriage date. Furthermore, Maltese citizens whose identity card was automatically renewed till end of June should now apply to renew their identification document. Finally, the Passport Office, Public Registry Office and eID Card Unit have resumed with normal operations.</p> |
| Luxembourg | <p>The initial Grand Ducal Regulation of 18 March 2020 introducing a series of measures to combat Covid-19 is no longer in force. From the date when it was published provisions concerning migration have been amended four times:</p> <p>The Grand Ducal Regulation of April 17, 2020 fixes the period of entry prohibition for third-country nationals until 15 May 2020 inclusive. It extends the list of third-country nationals for whom the entry ban does not apply by adding three new categories: researchers and experts who provide advice in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic; seasonal workers as well as third-country nationals repatriated within the framework of repatriation operations falling under the European Union civil protection mechanism with the aim of returning to their place of residence located outside the territory of the Member States and associated countries in the Schengen area, the United Kingdom, San Marino, Andorra, Monaco and the Vatican / Holy See. This grand ducal regulation is no longer in force as well.</p> <p>The immigration provisions of the modified Grand Ducal Regulation of 18 March 2020 were then modified by the Grand Ducal Regulation of 15 May 2020, which fixes the period of inadmissibility for third-country nationals until 15 June 2020 inclusive. Then it was modified by the Grand Ducal Regulation of 29 May 2020 and by the Grand Ducal Regulation of 10 June 2020 which sets the inadmissibility period of third-country nationals until the end of the state of crisis.</p> <p>With the end of the state of emergency, the law of 20 June 2020 on the introduction of certain temporary measures and amending the Immigration Law came into force on 25 June 2020. It extends over time certain measures provided for in articles 13 and 14 of the amended Grand Ducal Regulation of 18 March 2020 introducing a series of measures in the context of the fight against Covid- 19. The law extends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ from three to six months the deadline to request the issuance of a residence permit to those third-country nationals (not only for students) who have the right to reside in Luxembourg for more than three months and who arrived in Luxembourg between 1 January and 31 July 2020. ■ until 31 August 2020 the validity of the residence permits which expired after 1 March 2020. <p>The law foresees the regularisation of stay until 31 July 2020 for third-country nationals, short-term visa holders and those who are not obliged to have a visa to enter the country and have overstayed more than 90 days after 1 March 2020.</p> |

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| | <p>The law is accompanied by the Grand Ducal Regulation of 20 June 2020 relating to the duration of the prohibition and the scope of the exceptions provided for in Article 2 of the above mentioned law. It maintains the restriction on third-country nationals entering Luxembourgish territory until 1 July 2020. The initial Grand Ducal Regulation was modified on 1 July 2020. It extends the ‘entry ban’ until 15 September and it modifies the list of categories of migrants that are exempted from the ban (by adding, among others, students and highly-qualified migrants), as well as provides a list of third countries that do not fall under the ban.</p> <p>The Passport, Visa and Legalisation Office (BPVL) fully resumed its work on Tuesday 30 June 2020.</p> |
| | <p>According to the Communication of 24 June 2020 by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in order to facilitate the exit from the Schengen area of third-country nationals whose stay has been temporary regularised (until the 31 July 2020), all those concerned should make an appointment with the Passports, Visas and Legalisations Office of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs for the purpose of the issuance of a “return visa”.</p> |
| <p>Latvia</p> | <p>In order to protect customers and employees, as from 10 June, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (hereinafter – the Office) will continue preparing and issuing identity documents by pre-appointment only, keeping the physical distancing. This order is supposed to be maintained at least as long as the Law on the Management of the Spread of COVID-19 Infection is in force.</p> <p>Law on the Management of the Spread of COVID-19 Infection entered force in 10 June 2020, states,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that third-country nationals who’s, residence documents during the period of the emergency situation announced in the State, have expired are entitled to continue their stay in the Republic of Latvia until two months after the removal of the emergency situation without the receipt of a new residence permit or visa, while retaining the right to employment, if such were specified; • that, when examining the submission of a third-country national for the issuing or registration of a residence permit or the matter of annulling the foreigner’s residence permit, the requirement of the Immigration Law regarding the existence of sufficient financial means for the person to stay in the Republic of Latvia and also the requirement to perform active economic activity in 2020 (including payment of a specific tax amount) shall not be applicable. This provision does not apply to foreigners who have submitted documents for requesting the first temporary residence permit after revocation of the emergency situation in Latvia; • The foreigner whose document which grants the right to enter and stay in the Republic of Latvia has expired may enter into and exit from the Republic of Latvia in transit within two months after revocation of the emergency situation in order to return to his or her country of residence. |
| <p>Netherlands</p> | <p>Netherlands extends travel restrictions</p> <p>The Dutch Cabinet has decided to adopt the EU proposal and extend the entry ban for non-essential travel until 1 July 2020. It concerns a restriction for all non-essential travel of persons from third countries to the Netherlands (all EU member states, all Schengen members and the UK) with the aim to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.</p> <p>Residence permit and loss of income</p> <p>Migrants still need to meet the monthly wage criteria to maintain their residence permit, however if their employer has made use of the temporary short-time working scheme (wtv), which has now been withdrawn, the IND will handle this situation flexibly. Their residence permit will not be revoked if they temporarily receive less salary for that reason.</p> <p>Normally, migrants are not allowed to receive social benefits if they have a residence permit as an independent entrepreneur. However, If they apply for support under the Temporary bridging measure for self-employed professionals (Tozo), they will not lose their residence permit for this reason. This also applies to their partner or family member’s residence permit if they are their sponsor.</p> |

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| Poland | <p>Automatic extension of deadlines for submitting an application for a temporary residence permit, permanent residence permit, long-term resident's EU residence permit and extension of a Schengen visa or national visa falls from 14 March until the appeal of emergency epidemic or epidemic status, it shall be extended to the 30th day following the day on which the current status was cancelled. A foreigner's stay on Polish territory during the period described above will be considered as legal provided that the foreigner submits an application for legalization of stay within this extended period.</p> |
| | <p>On 16 May 2020 the new act aimed at counteracting the negative effects of the SARS-COV-2 virus epidemic entered into force. It provides for, among others, the introduction to the current anti-crisis law of the possibility of changing the conditions of work for foreigners without the need to apply for a new work permit or residence permit. The new provision allows foreigners to work under conditions other than those specified in earlier obtained documents without the need to obtain new permits, change them or enter new declarations in the register.</p> <p>The introduction of such changes will be possible as a result of the use by entities entrusting the performance of work to foreigners of solutions of the anti-crisis act allowing for the modification of such conditions, in particular by reducing the working time and reducing remuneration (Thanks to this solution, employers will be able to take full advantage of these workplace protection instruments also when employing foreigners. There is no need to initiate any administrative proceedings.</p> |
| Portugal | <p>The Portuguese response to COVID 19 was directed to all residents, regardless of their nationality. The first measure, implemented in 13 March 2020, was to consider legal all documents that were/would be expired from 24 February onwards, specifying, besides national documents, «documents and visas related to the stay in national territory». Later on, in 27 March, all stays in the Portuguese territory of all foreign citizens with pending applications in the Immigration and Borders Service (SEF), from 18 March, when the State of National Emergency was declared, were officially considered regular stays.</p> <p>Complying with that order, SEF has also put in place, since 30 March, a management plan for pre-arranged appointments and schedules.</p> <p>On 26 May, SEF adopted a simplified procedure for examining applications for residence permit for a one year period starting from 27 May, namely by exempting the applicants for work related residency of providing the until now mandatory residence visa. Additionally, in order to provide foreign citizens residing in Portugal with a means of electronic identification to access digital public services, joining the Digital Mobile Key will soon be available at SEF on-site posts.</p> <p>Government established that documents - including permanence visas and documents and visas related to the permanence in national territory - that expire from February 24 of 2020 remain valid until June 30 of 2020 (the deadline was extended to 30 October for documents that have expired since May 2).</p> |
| Sweden | <p>In view of the recommendations by the Public Health Agency, the Swedish Migration Agency has decided that persons contact the Swedish Migration Agency primarily by email, telephone or through e-services. The opening hours for telephone contact with the agency's contact centre have changed. Meanwhile the agency is adding more resources to staff telephones and email. Some of the Swedish Migration Agency's offices have changed their opening hours.</p> <p>The Swedish Migration Agency has decided that visa applications should, as a rule, be rejected as a result of the Government's ordinance to introduce a temporary entry ban to Sweden. The decision applies to third-country nationals. The decision will remain in effect as long as the Government's decision on a temporary entry ban remains in effect or until further notice. In some exceptional cases, people may still be granted a visa.</p> |

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| | <p>Concerning studies in Sweden; based on the current circumstances, the Swedish Migration Agency will be able to grant residence permits if most of the studies will be conducted on campus, even if some parts or components are conducted as distance learning.</p> <p>However, if a higher education institution decides that all of the autumn semester's teaching will be conducted completely remotely, then according to the applicable regulations, the Swedish Migration Agency will not be able to grant a residence permit.</p> |
| Slovenia | <p>Special measures were introduced to specifically address the shortage of seasonal workers, particularly in the agricultural sector. Slovenia extended authorization to stay and removed obligation to leave the territory, due to travel restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 situation. The stay of third-country nationals was allowed only until SARS-COV-2 (Covid-19) containment measures objectively preventing third-country nationals from leaving the territory of the Republic of Slovenia were lifted (on 31 May) or until the third-country nationals have obtained other relevant legal title for a lawful stay.</p> |
| The Slovak Republic | <p>As of 14 June 2020, the Slovak government ended the emergency situation in the Slovak Republic which was introduced due to the spread of COVID-19. However, the extraordinary situation is still in place (introduced on 16 March 2020) which means that the validity of residences and work permits which would expire in this period is extended until two months after the revocation of the situation.</p> <p>As of 1 June 2020, the departments of foreign police restarted to receive all applications for residence in the SR.</p> |
| SCHENGEN, BORDERS & MANAGEMENT OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS | |
| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |
| Austria | <p>The border controls that were temporarily reintroduced in March 2020 are no longer in place. However, entry restrictions for certain groups of third-country nationals from outside the EU or Schengen apply until the end of June. The entry restrictions do not apply to individuals who enter Austria from certain countries, including all neighbouring countries, and who have their legal residence in Austria or one of these states.</p> |
| Bulgaria | <p>In the second quarter of 2020, the levels of migration pressure depended directly on the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ability of migrants to move both inside the country and towards the state borders.</p> <p>The migration pressure sharply decreased after the end of March due to the measures taken regarding the spread of COVID-19. The low levels of migration continued in April and May. The number of third-country nationals detained for crossing illegally the state border was lower, compared to the considerably greater number of prevented attempts by third-country nationals to cross the border illegally while they were still in the territory of a neighbouring country and close to the Bulgarian border. The prevention of illegal migration directly depended on the restrictions imposed in neighbouring countries and the border control limitations.</p> <p>The number of migrants moving along the Bulgarian-Turkish and Bulgarian-Greek borders was between 82% and 94% of the total migration pressure for each of the months in the period January-April 2020. This is a clear indication that the migration pressure levels should not be underestimated. Given the imposed measures for strict border control which replaced the previous restrictions, at this stage the Bulgarian border authorities do not expect massive migration pressure that would have a serious impact on the state borders. However, a gradual increase in migration pressure is envisaged. After removing some of the restrictions related to border control, a large number of migrants in Greece and Turkey, located near the border, would probably attempt to continue their way to Western European countries, using the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria for transit.</p> |
| Cyprus | <p>As of 09.06.2020, Cyprus' airports have resumed their operation. Flights are divided in three categories. From countries in Category A, no coronavirus test is needed (as of 20.06.2020). From countries in Category B, a recent (72 hours) negative coronavirus test is needed, but there is no self-isolation of the passengers. From countries in Category C, there are allowed only Cypriot citizens and their family members, persons legally living in Cyprus, persons</p> |

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| | <p>allowed to enter under the Vienna Convention and persons, regardless of nationality, having special permission by the Republic of Cyprus, with a recent (72 hours) negative coronavirus test and with the obligation to remain in self-isolation for 14 days. All details can be found in https://cyprusflightpass.gov.cy/en/home</p> |
| Czech Republic | <p>In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, all international travel to and from the Czech Republic had been prohibited from 16 March 2020. Foreign nationals without a Czech residence were thus banned from entering the territory. In line with the European Commission's guidelines, the border measures had been systematically eased with a priority given to medical staff, critical infrastructure professionals and cross-border commuters. As the epidemiological situation has stabilized in recent weeks, the Czech Government has adopted several key decisions which aim to gradually restore free movement across our internal borders.</p> <p>As of 15 June, the EU+ countries are divided into three groups according to a level of risk of COVID- 19 - low (green), medium (orange) and high (red) risk. While travellers from low-risk countries may enter the Czech Republic without limitations, travellers from countries with medium and high risk must fulfil the conditions for entry defined by the Ministry of Health (e.g. submission of a medical certificate) when entering the Czech territory.</p> <p>The Czech Republic is fully implementing the temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU in line with the European Commission's Communication of 16 March. At this point, an effect of the restored intra-EU mobility on development of the epidemiological situation is being closely monitored. Subsequently, re-opening of the external border should be then based on a thorough assessment of the epidemiological situation outside of the EU and a risk analysis of a possible second wave of the pandemic. We need to be extremely cautious while reopening the EU external borders and ensure strong coordination on the EU level.</p> |
| Estonia | <p>The emergency situation in Estonia ended on 17 May. From 1 June Estonia will admit people with no symptoms arriving from the European Union, the members of the Schengen area or the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. If a person arrives from a country where more than 15 people per 100 000 people have been infected by COVID-19 then additional measures to restrict movement of the person for 14 days from the date of entry to the country will be employed. There are also some exceptions in place. With regard to people who do not fall under the exemptions referred to in the order of the Government of the Republic, it is still possible to authorize a border crossing on the basis of an application for permission, which must be sent to PBGB.</p> <p>Foreign nationals who are not submitted to exceptions when entering Estonia, are not allowed to cross the border.</p> <p>The Defence League is not used for defending the external borders any more as the emergency situation has ended.</p> <p>As of 14 May the government authorised the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs to decide on airline traffic operations based on the state of public health and the prevalence of COVID-19 in Estonia and other countries.</p> |
| Greece | <p>May 2020</p> <p>Meeting of the parliamentary sub-Committee on Combating Trafficking and Human Exploitation (14/5/2020) on issues of THB during the pandemic crisis. https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/ToKtirio/Fotografiko-Archeio/?fbclid=IwAR2bUkvn2CD6KTF_k2JAilSx4m5g7ysBdDDg7mFCpw09rZqBclsAo0z0v3l#63e1717b-d6f9-4824-b166-abb012f57cb</p> |
| Spain | <p>Spain did not made any formal decision to suspend visa processing, although it faced many difficulties due to lockdowns.</p> |
| Finland | <p><u>Government decided on restrictions on border traffic starting from 15 June</u></p> |

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| | <p>On 12 June, the Government decided that border control will continue partially at internal borders and external border traffic will continue to be restricted until 14 July 2020. The restrictions will continue to the extent that they are considered mandatory due to a serious threat posed by the epidemiological situation.</p> <p>https://intermin.fi/en/-/valtioneuvoston-paatos-rajaliikenteen-rajoituksista-15-6-alkaen</p> |
| | <p>Restrictions to border traffic from 14 May to 14 June 2020</p> <p>The COVID-19 infectious disease epidemic continues, which is why the Government decided in its plenary session of 7 May 2020 to extend several measures including the temporarily restored internal border controls, which are sent to continue from 14 May to 14 June 2020.</p> <p>https://www.raja.fi/current_issues/facts/news_from_the_border_guard/1/0/restrictions_to_border_traffic_from_14_may_to_14_june_2020_79641</p> <p>Finland will restrict cross-border traffic - retired border guards and police officers may be called back to work</p> <p>https://intermin.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/suomen-rajaliikennetta-aletaan-rajoittaa-elakkeella-olevia-rajavartijoita-ja-poliiseja-voidaan-kutsua-toihin</p> <p>Security authorities are prepared for the spread of coronavirus</p> <p>https://intermin.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/turvallisuusviranomaiset-ovat-varautuneet-koronaviruksen-leviamiseen</p> |
| France | <p>Through an order dated 17 March 2020, France decided to limit all (international) trips and establish controls at its external and internal borders. Thus, all non-EU and non-Schengen nationals cannot enter France and the EU, except some categories: if the persons have a compelling reason to enter or legally reside in France and hold a valid French residence permit as well as EU nationals and their family members, persons in charge of international transportation of goods, health workers who come to prevent the spread of the Covid 19, diplomatic and consular staff and cross-border workers.</p> <p>As from 11 May, specific rules allow EU seasonal workers and seconded workers to enter France provided they hold a derogatory international travel statement and respect a quarantine once in France. All these measures were stopped on 15 June and France will progressively reopen its EU external borders as from 1 July.</p> |
| Croatia | <p>Measures reported in the previous period (January-March 2020) have changed.</p> <p>No organized escorts for lorries transiting through HR, drivers of cars and lorries are obliged to use the motorways. In the case of using the border crossing points that are not at the highway, they are obliged to reach the highway as soon as possible and continue their further transit journey. During the stop, they are obliged to adhere to strict measures of social distancing, which require the avoidance of close contact at a distance of at least 1.5 m indoors and outdoors. In addition, they are obliged to follow all instructions of the representatives of the Civil Protection Authorities or police officers.</p> <p>The transit of lorries is enabled through the all border crossing points for international traffic through which this was possible even before the COVID-19 crisis.</p> <p>The Decision on the temporary ban on crossing the border crossing points of Republic of Croatia, and the Decision on amendments to the same decision of 9 May 2020 enable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HR citizens entering to HR and going abroad. |

2. Return to the countries of origin of nationals of Member States of the European Union or Schengen Member States and Schengen countries as well as members of their families, and third-country nationals who are long-term residents pursuant to Council Directive 2003/109 / EC of 25 November 2003 on the status of third-country nationals with long-term residence and persons entitled to reside under other EU directives or national law or who have long-term national visas, and entry into the HR under special conditions.

3. The same decision prescribes exceptions from the application of the above provisions, and they are the same for:

- health professionals, health researchers and associates, care professionals for the elderly and persons requiring emergency medical treatment,
- cross-border workers,
- carriers of goods and other transport staff to the extent necessary,
- diplomats, police officers in the performance of their duties, civil protection services and teams, personnel of international organizations and international military personnel in the performance of their functions,
- passengers in transit,
- and for:
- persons who have a business reason or in whom there is some other economic or touristic interest,
- persons who travel for urgent personal reasons (eg they own real estate in Republic of Croatia or have some other urgent personal reason).

Entry into HR for HR citizens

For Croatian citizens are no longer implemented self-isolation measure for 14 days. This also applies to foreign citizens who are allowed to enter HR under special conditions.

Entry into HR for foreign citizens:

If a foreign national intends to cross the state border, he/she must meet one of the following conditions:

1. possesses documentation proving the ownership of real estate located in HR or vessels (possibly also the lessee) or comes to the funeral in HR (possesses appropriate documentation proving this). After meeting the conditions, these foreign citizens can cross the state border.
2. They have documentation proving the invitation of the economic entity to enter HR, the interest of the economic entity for their arrival in HR, or the invitation to a business meeting, or hotel reservation/payment for touristic purpose.
3. All other foreign citizens who have a business reason, which cannot be foreseen at this time, and do not have the appropriate documentation, should be instructed to announce their intention to cross the state border (entry into HR) at e-mail address: uzg.covid@mup.hr and they will be answered to that request as soon as possible.

In order to speed up the border check process of foreigners who have the conditions of entry into HR, the WEB application ENTERCROATIA has been created, through which passengers can register themselves in advance.

In the Decision amending the Decision on temporary prohibition of crossing the border crossing points of Republic of Croatia, dated 24 June 2020 (entry into force 25 June 2020, lasted until 30 June 2020) was prescribed that a special regime of entry into HR was established for persons coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, Republic of Serbia and Northern Macedonia, or who have stayed in those countries for a period of 14 days from the day of desired entry into HR.

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| | <p>These persons were obliged to stay in self-isolation in their own home in HR or other appropriate premises (self-isolation) for a period of 14 days from the date of entry into HR. The obligation of self-isolation did not apply to passengers who transit through the said countries upon entering HR.</p> |
| Italy | <p>Published on 7 April 2020 the interministerial decree (Transport, Foreign, Interior, Health) that proclaims the closure of Italian ports to NGOs. For the entire period of the national sanitary emergency from Covid-19, the Italian ports do not assure the necessary requisites for the classification and definition of "Place of safety", for the cases of rescue outside the Italian area.</p> |
| Lithuania | <p>The Government took a decision to lift the three-month long quarantine as of 17 June 2020. Temporary internal border control and checks for persons entering and leaving the Republic of Lithuania at the internal border of the European Union have been extended from 17 June 2020 to 16 July 2020. Passport checks are carried out at the international airports and in Klaipėda State Seaport. Passports of persons arriving by land are not being checked, meaning that all state border crossing points with Latvia and Poland are not restricted.</p> <p>As of 29 July 2020 the Ministry of Health has updated the weekly list of countries that are most affected by COVID-19. Travelers returning or arriving from listed countries must register within 24 hours by submitting their details to the National Public Health Centre. These arrivals will fall subject to 14 days' isolation, even in that case where the affected country was passed through in transit.</p> |
| Luxembourg | <p>On 20 March 2020, the Customs and Excise Agency (<i>Administration des douanes et accises</i>) were posted to the border crossings in Vianden and Dasbourg, they stayed until 15 May 2020. The ADA agents were allowed to carry out controls at the border under the same authority as the general police, they were therefore able to refuse the entry of people who did not meet the requirements of the German authorities. It should be noted that this cooperation between the Luxembourg and German authorities was identified and presented as a "best practice" by European experts during their discussions on the issue of border controls in the context of the fight against Covid-19.</p> |
| Latvia | <p>As from 10 June 2020, the movement of persons and vehicles through the crossing points of the external border of the European Union from/to the countries published on the website of the Latvian Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, where the prevalence of Covid-19 infection is recorded, which may pose a serious public health risk (with the exception of freight transport) is prohibited. The movement of persons and vehicles through the external border crossing points of the European Union shall be prohibited to or from these countries: State borders of Latvia - Russia and Latvia - Belarus.</p> |
| Poland | <p>From Saturday, June 13 Poland opened the EU's internal borders, Poles and European Union citizens do not have to undergo mandatory quarantine. The services present at the border carry out random checks (exactly as it was before the coronavirus pandemic and the introduction of border restrictions in Poland). However, the EU's external borders remain closed. The deadline for opening borders is as recommended by the European Commission.</p> |
| Portugal | <p>Portuguese Borders were closed from 16 March to 30 June. All persons who tried to cross were controlled, and only cross-border workers and goods transportation vehicles could pass. Exemptions of entry ban for long-term permanent residents, immediate family members of nationals or other nationals (EEA, UK and associated Schengen countries) and all valid permits holders.</p> <p>Brief and Webinars on the possible (in) direct impacts of COVID-19 on Trafficking in Human Beings of the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings results from a daily open source (national and international) monitoring. Up until now it has more than 500 pages with more than 120 entrances. The webinars result from a collaboration between the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings and the five Regional Specialized Multidisciplinary Teams for the Assistance of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings. Each one as a specific theme under the crosscut issue of the possible impacts of COVID-19 on human trafficking.</p> <p>3 Webinars were organised:</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Webinar #1 "(New) Challenges (21 May) ■ Webinar #2 "THB in the migration context: the protection of vulnerable groups" (4 June) ■ Webinar #3 "THB in agriculture: which risks and responses?" (18 June) |
| Slovenia | From 14 May on borders were gradually reopened. A discretion to refuse entry to EU citizens who do not have temporary or permanent residence in Slovenia and show clear signs of infection or disease was introduced. |
| Slovak Republic | <p>Throughout the month of June, the Slovak Republic started to loosen regime at its borders as well as the travel restrictions. The international airports are open and international buses and rails are operating again. However, there are still number of limitations regarding the travel, depending mainly on the country from which the traveller is coming. The list of so called safe countries (from the point of view of the epidemiologic situation) is regularly updated and is available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website.</p> <p>If a traveller is entering Slovakia through an internal border and is coming from a country that is considered safe s/he does not have to prove negative on COVID-19, nor to stay isolated at home. If in the last 14 days prior to arriving in Slovakia, the traveller visited a country that is not considered safe, s/he must submit a negative RT-PCR test result for COVID-19 not older than 96 hours to a member of the Police Force of the Slovak Republic or to the relevant regional public health authority in case there is no border control carried out. The result must be in English, German, Czech or Slovak or translated into one of these languages. Subsequently, the traveller has to be isolated at home until a negative RT-PCR test for COVID-19 is obtained. The traveller needs to undergo a laboratory diagnosis of COVID-19 at the earliest on the fifth day of his/her home isolation. During the period of home insolation, isolation is also ordered for persons living in the same household.</p> <p>As for the external border (with Ukraine) the following persons can enter Slovakia: persons related to a Slovak citizen, i.e. spouse, minor child, parent of a minor child who is a citizen of the Slovak Republic, persons with a valid residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic, who can prove a valid residence permit, residence registration certificate or are holders of a national visa issued by the embassy of the Slovak Republic, persons exempted from quarantine measures set by the Slovak Public Health Authority.</p> |
| Sweden | To mitigate the effects of the spread of Covid 19 and to reduce the outbreak, a temporary ban on entry to Sweden is in force. It began to apply on the 19 March and has since then been extended until 31 August. The ban does not apply to healthcare professionals, persons travelling for urgent personal reasons or persons having other humanitarian purposes. Third-country nationals who are going to work within the production of food items or with other forms of food supply in the agricultural industry can under certain circumstances be covered by the exemption for essential functions and be allowed to enter Sweden if they can present proper documentation supporting this. The Swedish Police Authority decides who is to be exempted from the entry ban on arrival at the border control. A number of decisions were taken by the government in June to amend and to clarify the ban in line with the European Commission's practical guidance to allow seasonal agricultural workers, and to reduce the risk of families being separated. |
| IRREGULAR MIGRATION & RETURN | |
| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |
| Belgium | Because of the COVID-19 crisis, the federal reception agency Fedasil, who is also competent for voluntary return, had to close its five return desks in Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Charleroi and Liège. The return desks were reopened on 22 June but work only by appointment and in compliance with security measures against Covid-19. For now, voluntary returns are only possible to a very limited number of countries. |
| Germany | Due to the continuing effects of the coronavirus COVID-19 and the associated restrictions in international air traffic, voluntary departures via the REAG / GARP program cannot be implemented as usual until further notice. The federal government, the states and the IOM have agreed to carry out temporary bridging measures until normal operations can be resumed. Until then, REAG / GARP applications can still be sent to the IOM through the return counseling centers. |
| Estonia | The execution of return decisions is done on a case by case basis. |

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| | Multiple changes came into force on 7 May due to COVID-19. Namely, if an exceptionally large number of applications for detention of a foreigner have been submitted, the decision to detain foreigners could be made without the descriptive and reasoning part. The foreigner shall have the opportunity to contest the decision to detain without the beforementioned parts and the court shall submit such parts at the first opportunity. Additional amendments were introduced for detention of foreigners in emergency situations on 26 June. |
| Spain | The new call for voluntary return 2020, was published on 18 June: http://extranjeros.mitramiss.gob.es/es/Subvenciones/AreaIntegracion/retorno_voluntario/index.html The Programs continued to operate but with many difficulties, because many countries did not allow international flights from Spain, or restrictions were imposed (blood tests or preventive isolation). Only 62 returned voluntarily in Q2. |
| France | Information was provided in six foreign languages (English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese and Arabic) in order to inform all migrants in detention centres about the health emergency and the implementation of protective health measures. Eight detention centers remained open during the lockdown while eleven were closed. The return operations slowed down but did not stop. |
| Croatia | Measures reported in the previous period (January-March 2020) are still partly in force. Regular flights still do not run at the same intensity as before the epidemic, so it is still not possible to organize return to some countries. In June readmission returns to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia began (to a limited extent). |
| Ireland | Voluntary return applications continue to not be processed. Individuals can also apply to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for assisted voluntary return and IOM will handle applications as best they can in the current circumstances, an FAQ document released by the Department of Justice and Equality explains. |
| Italy | With the progressive relaxation of the measures for the epidemiological emergency from Covid-19, the control services along the border in Trieste have been changed. On 26 May started the control activity at the Italian-Slovenian border with the employment of 60 soldiers, assigned as part of the "Safe Streets" operation. The intervention was planned on the Provincial Committee for Order and Public Safety. The military work with the Border Police to strengthen the fight against illegal immigration, carrying out a dynamic surveillance of border crossing points and an activity of control of means of transport that can be used to facilitate the illegal entry of foreigners into the national territory. On 26 June 2020, 6 576 migrants landed on the Italian coast, all preventive health measures are still in force. |
| Lithuania | The period of toleration of 2 months after the end of quarantine has been established for foreigners, whose period of legal residence has expired during the declared quarantine and who were unable to depart from Lithuania in due time through no fault of their own. Accordingly, foreigners to whom the decision regarding return has been adopted but the period of legal departure expired during the quarantine, must depart from Lithuania before the 17 August 2020. |
| Luxembourg | The Grand Ducal Regulation of 25 March 2020 , suspending time limits in jurisdictional matters before the judicial, administrative, military and constitutional courts until 24 June 2020, was amended three times. The Grand Ducal Regulation of 1 April 2020 amended Article 1 by providing that the deadlines expiring during the state of crisis are postponed by two months from the date of the end of the state of crisis, and the deadlines expiring in the month following the end of the state of crisis are postponed by one month from their due date. The latest amendment during the state of crisis was made by the Grand Ducal Regulation of 29 April 2020 that extends the provisions of the Regulation to the time limits for the introduction of the appeals. With the end of the state of crisis the law of 20 June 2020 lays down extension of measures concerning the suspension of the time limits in jurisdictional matters and other procedural modalities by providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the deadlines expiring during the state of crisis are postponed by two months from the date of the end of the state of crisis; ■ the deadlines expiring in the month following the entry into force of this law, are postponed by one month from their due date. |

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| | <p>■ The Minister of Health had indicated at a press conference that people with symptoms of COVID-19 infection would be taken care of at one of the advanced health care centers, regardless of their social security coverage. This also applies to foreign nationals at the end of their rights of residence and those who are illegally residing in the country and who do not have social security coverage. In order to counter the psychological barrier, that some people may face and who may hesitate to go to one of the advanced health care centers, the Ministry of Health passed an official communication to all healthcare professionals in advanced care centers to raise their awareness that all people can benefit from care provided in advanced care centers regardless of their social security cover or residence status. In the response to the Parliamentary Question N° 2181 of 11 May 2020 the Minister of Health and the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs ensured that no administrative sanctions would be imposed on those who would present themselves for medical care during the health crisis and that, in this regard, no return decision or a placement decision in the Detention Centre will be taken.</p> <p>The effective reception capacity of the Detention Center has been reduced to 2 units and a maximum of 29 detainees. Since 21 March, any visit for the benefit of detainees is prohibited.</p> |
| Malta | <p>■ Since travel to Malta was suspended from 21 March, returns were automatically affected. Forced returns could only take place if the receiving country accepted flights during the pandemic. A small number of TCNs were in fact returned. The situation is being continuously monitored by the pertinent Maltese authorities and appropriate measures will be taken in line with the developing circumstances.</p> |
| Poland | <p>Due to the announcement of the pandemic in the period April-June 2020, the implementation of all transfers under the Dublin III Regulation was suspended.</p> <p>Additionally, due to the suspension of international scheduled flights, forced returns and readmission transfers were carried out mainly by land (mainly voluntary returns by air using aircraft chartered by the governments of the countries of origin), with all security measures, including compliance with the pre-transfer quarantine, if it was required by the host country.</p> |
| Portugal | <p>Forced returns did not suspend but were very limited.</p> <p>During this period COVID-19, all Multidisciplinary Specialized Teams (EME) are operating normally, providing also personal care with the necessary sanitary precautions.</p> <p>In relation to shelters, protective measures were taken in accordance to the instructions of the General Health Directorate (DGS). Thus, there is a flowchart for suspicious cases which will have to undergo a COVID-19 test.</p> <p>In the shelters, specific rooms were implemented for quarantine situations.</p> <p>It is also important to mention that internal operating rules for the staff at the shelters were implemented in accordance with the guidelines that were provided by the General Health Directorate (DGS).</p> <p>In the beginning of April and facing suspicions of presumed victims of trafficking in human beings with COVID-19, the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings/Portuguese Ministry of Home Affairs was with the aim of supporting Health Professionals with digital materials (sanitarian restrictions) on THB specially focusing on the referral mechanism - indicators and procedures.</p> <p>The Observatory prepared a kit with several products, namely with information regarding the App “Acting against Trafficking in Human Beings”, with the Flagging cards, and leaflets in several languages.</p> |

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| | <p>Main results (at the time):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <u>North Regional Health Administration</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dissemination to 150 teams from the Children and Youth at Risk Center and the Adult Violence Prevention Teams. It was also disseminate in all Local Health Administrations as well as in Health Groups (21), 5 Hospitals, 8 hospital centers, in all Intervention Divisions in addictive and addictive behaviors, in Private Hospitals in the North and social sector entities. 2) <u>Algarve Regional Health Administration</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dissemination to 2 200 professionals (via e-mail) and on the official website (see at: http://www.arsalgarve.min-saude.pt/noticias/atividade-de-sensibilizacao-sobre-traffic-de-seres-humanos/); 3) <u>Alentejo Regional Health Administration</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dissemination to the 45 centers and 42 Adult Violence Prevention Teams and insertion in the official website (at: http://www.arsalentejo.min-saude.pt/ARSAletejo/Novidades/Paginas/Preven%C3%A7%C3%A3o-de-Tr%C3%A1fico-de-Seres-Humanos.aspx); 4) <u>Centre Regional Health Administration</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dissemination to 1 000 professionals. Awaiting sending via e-mail (list: 5,000 professionals); 5) <u>Lisbon and Vale do Tejo Regional Health Administration</u> <p>In course.</p> |
| Slovak Republic | <p>Implementation of the assisted voluntary returns is provided on case by case basis depending on individual situation of each returnee, on the availability of the transport connections (e.g. lack or scarcity of certain flights) and actual situation in Slovakia as well as in countries of transit and destination in terms of Covid-19.</p> <p>As for the forced returns those are currently realised however, only in cases when the circumstances allow it. External factors such as cooperation with third countries in return procedures, availability of the flights and measures taken by the Slovak Republic as well as third countries in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 has to be taken into account.</p> |
| Sweden | <p>Returns from Sweden have been reduced to a large extent, even though responsible Swedish authorities continue to carry out returns when possible. Assessments are made on case by case basis for possible returns, while considering the risk of spreading Covid 19. Alternative return procedures are considered by the Swedish Police Authority for example an increased use of chartered flights. The Swedish Migration Agency decided to reduce the number of visitors in the Service Centres and to primarily maintain contacts via telephone or e-mail in order to apply the rules by the Public Health Agency. Video conferences are in some cases used in separate rooms to ensure physical distance during visits.</p> <p>The number of places in detention centres decreased from 520 to 300 to apply the rules set up by the Public Health Agency.</p> <p>The Swedish Migration Agency set up a working group in April to prepare for a more complete resumption of returns.</p> |
| EXTERNAL DIMENSION | |
| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |
| Czech Republic | <p>During the period affected by the spread of COVID-19 virus, the MEDEVAC Programme adjusted its activities to the current situation. In April 2020, on a request of the Greek government, the MEDEVAC Programme provided a material donation in the amount of approximately 4,5 mil. CZK, which was intended to help the refugees and asylum seekers in Greek refugee camps. The humanitarian convoy carried mainly the basic hygienic supplies and other necessities, such as blankets, towels and sleeping bags.</p> <p>In June 2020, the MEDEVAC Programme has launched a pilot training session conducted via video conference. As a response to the pandemic situation in Ukraine where approximately 20% out of all COVID-19 tested positively are medical staff, this training session was primarily focused on COVID-19 related</p> |

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| | hospital epidemiology. Approximately 60 Ukrainian medical personnel from 2 hospitals joined the training session. Following training sessions are currently planned for Morocco and offered to other countries, where the Programme operates. |
| Estonia | To this end, Estonia has proposed the creation of a common digital platform of the European Union that would help match innovative solutions to the needs of partner countries when dealing with the crisis. |
| Hungary | <p>In line with the Team Europe response, Hungary is actively reorienting some of its project-based development assistance. Thus far, we have mobilised approximately 16 million euros – either through fresh funds or through the reorientation of existing commitments – towards supporting economic, as well as hygiene and healthcare-related projects, thereby addressing some of the most acute challenges faced by developing countries in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>In this vein, Hungary is committed to the consolidation of the situation in Libya, a country that plays a vital role in terms of stemming migration to the European Union. Together with our V4 partners, we have recently agreed to revisit the structure of our joint 35-million-euro development programme to be implemented in Libya within the framework of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.</p> |

| USEFUL WEBSITES | |
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| (Member) State | Response to COVID-19 |
| Austria | General information and current figures in relation to COVID-19 are available at the website of the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection. The website also provides an overview (in DE) of the legislation passed in order to contain the spread of the virus. Multilingual information has been made available at provincial and local levels, for example by the City of Vienna |
| Cyprus | All information about COVID-19 can be found in the dedicated website of Press and Information Office https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/ |
| Czech Republic | All information regarding the COVID-19 and related issues is available through the following websites of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Interior: https://koronavirus.mzcr.cz/en/ https://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/coronavirus-information-of-moi.aspx |
| Germany | The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees has set up a special webpage informing about Covid-19 consequences on its activities (https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Meldungen/DE/2020/20200316-am-covid-19.html). The Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration provides information on its website (www.integrationsbeauftragte.de/corona-virus), via Twitter (www.twitter.com/IntegrationBund), via Instagram (instagram.de/integrationsbeauftragte/) and published a flyer. The information is available in 21 languages. It includes the following aspects: rules, code of conduct, employment law, travel restrictions etc. The Commissioner merges the official information offer of the Federal Government. |
| Estonia | All information about the COVID-19 situation can be found from the following websites https://www.kriis.ee/en , https://www.settleinestonia.ee/en/emergency-situation-and-coronavirus-in-estonia/ and https://eebot.ee/en/ . |
| Spain | All the migration-related measures taken during the COVID crisis can be checked here: http://extranjeros.mitramiss.gob.es/ |

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| Finland | Coronavirus information page for customers of the Finnish Immigration Service: https://migri.fi/en/coronavirus |
| France | The Ministry of the Interior provides updated information regarding the COVID-19: https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/ https://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Immigration/Informations-Coronavirus-a-destination-des-etrangers-Questions-Reponses The Interministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees (DiAir) provides several information to support refugees and vulnerable persons during the COVID-19 crisis : https://accueil-integration-refugies.fr/ The dedicated website for attracting talents to France 'Welcome to France' provides several information regarding entry and stay of foreign talents in France and government measures to assist companies and workers impacted by Covid 19: https://www.welcometofrance.com/en/covid-19-%3A-entry-and-stay-of-foreign-talents-in-france |
| Croatia | https://mup.gov.hr/uzg-covid/english/286212 FAQ for travellers |
| Ireland | For more information, see the Department of Justice and Equality's COVID-19 plans , information regarding Immigration Service Delivery and the regularly updated FAQ document. |
| Italy | The Ministry of Health with UNHCR and ARCI has opened a portal in 14 languages to inform refugees, asylum seekers and migrants living in Italy about the epidemiological emergency Covid-19. The material is available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Smartish, Bengali, Chinese, Farsi, Russian, Somali, Urdu, Albanian, Tiger, as well as in Italian. See https://coronavirus.jumamap.com/en/home/ |
| Latvia | See the official webpage of Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs , where latest information on work during pandemic can be found, as well as State Border Guard's webpage - www.rs.gov.lv . |
| Lithuania | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Key information on COVID-19 on a dedicated portal of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania: https://koronastop.lrv.lt/en/ ■ For travel information, the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: https://urm.lt/default/en/important-covid19 ■ Information on passports, temporary residence permits and national visas can be found at: https://www.migracija.lt/en/news ■ Frequently asked questions on COVID-19 via IOM Migration Information Centre: https://www.renkuosilietuva.lt/en/news/-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions/63 |
| Luxembourg | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All information on Coronavirus relating to citizens and residents can be found on: https://guichet.public.lu/fr/support/coronavirus/coronavirus.html. ■ All information relating to the infection rate and frequently asked questions can be found here: https://guichet.public.lu/fr/support/coronavirus/corona-virus.html |
| Netherlands | Information about COVID-19 regarding effects on application or stay can be found on the website of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND): https://ind.nl/en/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx Information about what the Dutch government – together with other organisations – is doing to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus can be found on this website: https://www.government.nl/topics/coronavirus-covid-19 |
| Poland | Official governmental website providing information on special measures adopted in connection to the spread of COVID-19 on https://www.gov.pl/web/koronawirus |

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| | Office for Foreigners provides regularly updated information regarding entry and stay of foreigners on https://udsc.gov.pl/en/aktualnosci/ ; updated information on border management regarding the COVID-19 can be found on Border Guard website: https://www.strazgraniczna.pl/ . Additionally, all important information connected to Covid-19 and instructions as well as contact data may be found at Chief Sanitary Inspectorate website https://gis.gov.pl/tag/covid-19/ . |
| Portugal | <p>The Portuguese Government created a special space in its website dedicated to COVID-19 with all information namely on the support structures to THB victims. At: https://covid19estamoson.gov.pt/</p> <p>SEF made publicly available, since March 30th, its management plan for appointments which acknowledges that, from the date of the declaration of the State of National Emergency (March 18th), all foreign citizens with pending applications in the Service are in a situation of regular residence in national territory. At https://imigrante.sef.pt/en/covid-19/</p> <p>The High Commission for Migration collected and displayed information from a range of national and international official and reliable sources, including a Doctors of the World – Portugal’s Guide on COVID-19, in 25 languages, at https://www.acm.gov.pt/-/covid-19-medidas-orientacoes-e-recomendacoes?</p> |
| Sweden | <p>All information concerning the Swedish Migration Agency and the COVID-19 can be found on a dedicated webpage accessible from the webpage of the Swedish Migration Agency. Please see: https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Coronavirus.html Key information on Covid 19 is provided by the Public Health Agency. See https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/communicable-disease-control/covid-19/ By calling +46 8 123 680 00 you can get general information about the corona virus in Arabic, Somali, Persian/Dari, Tigrinese/Amharic and Russian via the national telephone line of the healthcare regions (web page in Swedish) https://www.transkulturelltcentrum.se/kunskapsstod/telefonlinje-om-corona-for-personer-med-migrationsbakgrund/ The Government’s English website has information on Sweden’s strategy and measures in relation to Covid-19 https://www.government.se/government-policy/the-governments-work-in-response-to-the-virus-responsible-for-covid-19/</p> |
| Slovenia | <p>Display of applicable regulations adopted to prevent the spread of covid-19 disease: http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/aktualno Actual border crossing information: https://www.policija.si/nase-naloge/nadzor-drzavne-meje/prehajanje-drzavne-meje-med-epidemijo-zaradi-koronavirusa National Institute of Public Health, actual information on corona cases: https://www.nijz.si/en Government page on covid-19: https://www.gov.si/en/topics/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/ Covid-19 information for third-country nationals: https://infotujci.si/</p> |
| The Slovak Republic | <p>The Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic has launched a website dedicated to all issues related to Covid-19 with information available in Slovak and basic information available also in English, German, Ruthenian, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Roma language accessible at https://korona.gov.sk/en/. The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic has also devoted section in English where they inform about the Covid-19 related information https://www.mzv.sk/web/en/covid-19.</p> |

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| | <p>As regards information related to the social benefits during Covid-19 crisis, the information has been available in English at the website of the Social Insurance Agency https://www.socpoist.sk/?lang=en.</p> <p>An overarching section related to the Covid-19 crisis and entitlements and services available during the pandemic specifically dedicated to migrants has also been available at the website of the IOM 's Migration Information Centre (MIC) at https://www.mic.iom.sk/en/news/637-covid-19-measures.html. It covers areas such as restrictions on cross-border movement, quarantine measures, social insurance, residence permit, employment, and business issues. The information is always being updated, available in English and Russian with all useful links.</p> <p>Some NGOs active in the field of migrant integration also provided information through their websites and social media, e.g. the Human Rights League prepared compact information about all issues related to Covid-19 for migrants including a "Covid-19 information package to download" and a list of contacts in crisis situation https://www.hrl.sk/en/migration-info/covid-19.</p> |
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