



ESC - SI response to the crisis relating to covid-19 in the socio-economic and labor sectors through social dialogue

SURVEY

This questionnaire is structured in 5 sections (for national institutions), with examples of the points to be taken into account in their responses, if relevant.

A) Measures with regard to workers in the formal and informal economy

Have specific measures been discussed and taken, inside or outside your institution, to protect workers' health (new regulations, preventive guides, control and surveillance procedures, etc.)? Have practical problems arisen for their application (lack of adequate technical advice, difficulties in providing protective equipment, etc.)? Have measures been taken to strengthen the reconciliation of work and family life, such as the care of minors or dependents? What is / was the specific role and responsibilities of your CES / SI?

Government measures to safeguard workers' health / safety and to tackle practical supply problems for medical devices and safety

The DPCM (Prime Ministerial Decree) of 11 March 2020 introduced: a) restrictive measures in the national territory for the suspension of non-essential activities / services; b) measures aimed at limiting the mobility and presence of workers in the workplace (incentives for agile work, holidays, paid leave and all the tools provided for workers dependent on collective bargaining); c) measures to contain contagion in the workplace (implementation of anti-contagion safety protocols, respect for the interpersonal distance of one meter; where this is not possible, adoption of individual protection tools; sanitization operations in the workplace; maximum limitation of movement within the sites and contingent access to common areas).

The DPCM, in order to apply any useful measure to contain the contagion, favors agreements between employers' organizations and trade unions. With subsequent decree-laws the following have been inserted: a) rules that favor the adoption of prevention measures in the workplace; b) rules to deal with difficulties in the procurement of individual safety devices and medical devices.

With reference to the measures referred to in lett. a), 50 million euros are allocated to companies for the purchase of gloves and masks and a 50% tax credit is provided for the costs incurred by companies for the sanitation of environments and work tools and for the purchase of protection and safety devices, up to a maximum of 20,000 euros.

With reference to the measures referred to in lett. b), 50 million euros have been set aside for incentives to companies that manufacture and supply medical devices and safety devices. The Head of Civil Protection, also at the request of the extraordinary Commissioner specially appointed for the implementation and coordination of the Covid-19 emergency measures, can requisition in use or in property, by public or private subjects, health and medical devices-surgical, as well as movable property of any kind to face the health emergency.

Measures to strengthen the reconciliation of life and work times, also in favor of caring for minors and disabled people

The decree-laws have extended the permits for the care of minor children up to 12 years, also as a consequence of the suspension of teaching activities, and the permits for workers with minor children who present serious handicaps without age limits. Permits are paid in the amount of 50% of the remuneration.

For employees of the accredited public and private health sector there is a 600 euro *bonus* for the purchase of baby-sitting services. The *bonus* rises to 1,000 euros for families in which one of the spouses is a doctor, nurse, health technician or researcher.

The measures aimed at guaranteeing school continuity through the IT platforms and the continuity of training activities, universities and institutions of high artistic, musical and choreutic training are strictly connected to these interventions. MIUR (Ministry of Education and Ministry of University and Research) has been assigned resources to allow state educational institutions to equip themselves with digital platforms and tools useful for e-learning, also by making individual digital devices available to students, in an attempt to ensure access to e-learning also to children from families without means.

In order to limit the inconvenience for families with elderly or disabled people, individual home services are provided to replace educational and school services, as well as daytime or semi-residential social assistance services. Those who assist disabled people will also be able to ask for up to 24 more days of leave in the next two months.

Role of the CNEL

The CNEL, called to express its opinion on the schemes of the decree-law, has produced a consistent memory also containing proposals for improvement of the provisions and suggestions for coordinating the rules issued in response to the emergency with the measures to be taken to the medium-term phase following the emergency itself:

Link to the document in English: [here](#) / in French: [here](#) / in Italian: [here](#)

B) Measures with regard to companies, in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as the engine of employment

Has aid been discussed and developed within or outside your institution, to compensate for losses, and / or to improve financing, corporate taxation (credit lines, etc.) or reduce their costs (postponement or exemption from social or tax charges...)? Have specific measures been taken for SMEs, self-employed people or the social economy? What is / was the specific role and responsibilities of your ESC-SI?

Measures in favor of companies

In favor of companies that have suffered a reduction in turnover due to the Covid-19 emergency, the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (Deposit and Consignment Office) is authorized to grant liquidity through banks and other entities authorized to exercise credit. The guarantee is issued by the State in favor of Cassa Depositi e Prestiti up to 80% of the bank exposure.

The Made in Italy Fund for Integrated Promotion was also set up at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to enhance the tools for promoting and supporting the internationalization of the various components of the country system, including the extraordinary support plan for Made in Italy made through the ICE (Institute of Foreign Trade).

Payments of VAT and withholding taxes on salaries have been suspended and postponed, according to different timelines for the product sectors. The expiry terms relating to social security, welfare and insurance benefits provided by INPS (National Institute of Social Security) and INAIL (National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work) have also been suspended until 1 June 2020.

For workshops and shops, a tax credit of 60% of the amount of the rent for the month of March 2020 is recognized.

Based on the European regulatory framework introduced by the Commission with Communication C (2020) 1863 of 19 March 2020 *Temporary Framework for State aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak*, the Government has taken further measures to facilitate access to credit, support for liquidity, export, internationalization and business investment.

In particular, the measures adopted provide for guarantees by the State for a total of approximately € 200 billion granted through the company SACE Simest, of the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti Group, in favor of banks that provide financing to companies in any form. Furthermore, measures have been introduced to ensure business continuity in the emergency phase, with particular regard to those which before the crisis were in balance and had a regular prospect of business continuity. This intervention takes place through measures aimed at promoting the preparation of the current financial statements and by deactivating the causes of company dissolution due to the reduction or loss of the share capital.

There are also measures regarding the regulation of insolvency procedures in order to remove companies from the opening of bankruptcy and other procedures based on the state of insolvency, until the emergency lasts and to sterilize the emergency period for the purpose of calculation of actions to protect creditors (therefore only when the emergency period has passed, creditors will be able to propose revocation actions if necessary).

Small and medium-sized enterprises

In favor of SMEs, the decree-laws provide for specific state financial support measures up to 33% of credit facilities, loans, mortgages and funding. In addition, through the Central Guarantee Fund, the State can provide a guarantee for loans of up to € 5 million for investments and debt restructuring for 9 months from March 20. With specific reference to the measure of the guarantee through the SACE Simest company, SMEs, even individual or VAT numbers, are reserved 30 billion and access to the guarantee will be free.

Self-employed workers

Freelancers with VAT registration numbers, workers with active coordinated and ongoing collaboration contracts, fixed-term agricultural workers and show business workers are granted a one-time indemnity of 600 euros. For a period of 9 months from 20 March, the admission to the benefit of the suspension of the mortgage installments with charges borne by the First Home Fund is extended to self-employed workers and freelancers who self-certify that they have registered, in a quarter following the February 21, 2020 or in the shorter period of time between the date of the application and the aforementioned date, a decrease in their turnover, exceeding 33% of the turnover in the last quarter of 2019, as a consequence of the closure or restriction of their business operated in implementation of the provisions adopted by the competent authority for the Coronavirus emergency. For access to the Fund, the presentation of the equivalent economic situation indicator (ISEE) is not required.

With particular reference to self-employed workers, the CNEL has strongly emphasized the need to provide for specific income support protections, which are fully operational and not limited to the current emergency phase.

C) Measures with regard to the economy to mitigate the bad impacts on employment

Have measures been discussed and taken to protect employment inside or outside your institution (incentives to use measures to suspend contracts instead of dismissals, limitations on the possibility of dismissing?) Has teleworking been extended? Did any difficulties arise in its implementation? Have specific measures been taken for particularly disadvantaged groups in areas such as housing, health care, social benefits...? Have debates been opened in the political or scientific field on measures to revive the economy? What is / was the specific role and responsibilities of your ESC-SI?

Occupational safeguard measures

Social safety nets have been strengthened to support workers' income in constant employment, in order to avoid layoffs. In particular, depending on the specific company framework, each company that has undergone the suspension or reduction of its production and work activities - including those with only one employee - can benefit alternatively from the Ordinary Earnings Redundancy Fund (CIGO), the ordinary allowance paid by the Bilateral Solidarity Funds or by the Wage Integration Fund, or the Extraordinary Redundancy Fund (CIGD *in deroga*). The intervention of the social safety nets has a maximum duration of 3 months for the companies that produce in the so-called "Red Areas", in the Municipalities and Provinces identified in the Prime Ministerial Decree of March 1, 2020; the duration is 9 weeks in the rest of the national territory.

Other social measures

Fund of last resort income

A "fund of last resort income" is set up, financed with 200 million. It consists of a form of income support for employees and self-employed workers who have ceased, reduced or suspended their activity and who in 2019 had not earned more than 10,000 euros. The Ministry of Labour will define its criteria.

Income of citizenship – suspension of related obligations

For 2 months the citizenship income will be recognized regardless of the conditions provided for by current legislation. Therefore, immediate availability for work and commitment in service to the community is suspended for two months.

Suspension of mortgages and loans installments

Mortgage payments on the first house are suspended for those in difficulty. To this end, € 500 million has been allocated to the First Home Fund.

Bonus for workers in the workplace

A *bonus* of 100 euros for the month of March 2020 will be paid to employees, public and private, who have continued to work in the workplace. The incentive, tax-free, is for those who do not earn more than 40,000 euros per year and it is compared to the days of work at the headquarters. It will be given automatically by the employer, if possible, already in the April "pay slip". For workers who are forced to go to work, support is also provided through the reduction of contributions.

Increased remuneration for NHS employees

National Health Service employees engaged in the anti-virus emergency will have an higher salary for overtime hours. To this end, € 15 million has been allocated.

Quarantine hotels

The Prefect may requisition hotel structures, or other suitable properties, to accommodate people under medical surveillance or permanently at home.

Private clinics must make their healthcare personnel, premises and equipment available. The services will be remunerated by the Regions.

(The source of information is, among others, the IMF special site: <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19>)

D) Advocacy for the optimal use of social dialogue in response to the Covid-19 crisis: transparency, share information and data, inclusion, consultation, mutual trust

Is your ESC-SI working on the formulation of responses to the Covid-19 crisis? (analyzes, reports, declarations, dissemination of information on the measures being adopted, etc.)? What is / was the specific role and responsibilities of your ESC-SI?

Do the social partners participate in the procedures for developing the measures adopted with regard to Covid-19? How do they do it (social agreements, joint declarations, consultation of governments, dissemination of information to their members ...)? Does the role that social dialogue should play appear in the proposals for alternatives to economic recovery?

Is there particular attention paid to vulnerable and / or poorly organized groups, such as informal workers, precarious workers, self-employed workers, migrants, workers in gig economy...

What are the bipartite or tripartite collective agreements (company, sector, regional, etc.) concluded specifically to respond to the crisis relating to covid-19?

Activities in the emergency phase

In relation to the socio-economic consequences of the spread of Covid-19, the CNEL has spoken since the beginning of the crisis in Italy.

It has first stressed that the measures imposed to contain the spread of the Coronavirus have increased the critical issues that had already been highlighted in the legislative proposals for the regulatory simplification of the Italian logistics system, which represents 10% of Italian GDP. Subsequently, on 2/3/2020, to deal with the emergency, identify the actions to be put in place and avoid the blockage of the system, it set up a “Working Group on Logistics” composed of some members of the CNEL and associations of the sector mainly representative. In fact, Italian logistics (port terminals, freight villages, distribution centers, road hauliers, freight forwarders, rail freighters and air freighters have had to face operational blocks and huge administrative obstacles) has 1.5 million employees and produces a turnover of 85 billion euros, and was one of the sectors most penalized by the measures to contain the spread of Coronavirus imposed at national and international level.

On 10/3/2020 the CNEL also presented a document of Observations and Proposals on the draft law converting decree-law 2/3/2020, no. 9, “Urgent support measures for families, workers and businesses related to the epidemiological emergency from Covid-19”. In the document, the Council suggested addressing the problem taking into account a long-term horizon and not only through the introduction of urgent measures. Regarding the shortage of doctors and health workers, one of the major current problems, the CNEL suggested it useful to resort to hiring freelancers or temporary workers, rather than to recall the retired staff.

The CNEL also stressed that the emergency highlighted the dramatic effects of a process that has reduced funding for the national health system over the course of many years.

Finally, it highlighted how the epidemiological emergency intervened in a context of “production block” and stagnation of productivity that for years continues to characterize entire sectors of the Italian economy. The economic impact of the emergency will therefore be significant and lasting in the industrial, agricultural and services sectors. This necessitates interventions on the banking front (with the suspension of the loan installments and credit facilitation), on the labour (with the extension of social safety nets to micro-enterprises and self-employed workers) and tax-related. The emergency requires reviewing the general constraints (including fiscal compact) with timely decisions, in a general perspective that goes beyond the ongoing emergency.

(Link to the Italian document: [here](#))

Currently, the CNEL has three other important projects under construction:

1. CNEL is establishing a “Working Group on Tourism” on the model of its analogous on logistics.
2. CNEL intends to take an initiative to study and monitor the various production sectors with a *stress test* approach in order to identify concrete cases of intervention. It will then

proceed to identify production sectors to which the stress test approach can be applied, also through consultations (of Organizations and public).

3. Some high-level Italian personalities encouraged the CNEL to arouse a reflection on the future of the Italian productive system. In this regard, it intends to set up a *Committee of Wise Men* that is a “place for reflection” and to collect assessments on the future of the Italian system in the belief that it is necessary to go beyond the tools that aim to contain the crisis in the emergency phase and to think immediately on the future to ensure an effective recovery of the Country.

Role of the social partners

On 14/03/2020 the three major Italian Trade Union Organizations (CGIL, CISL and UIL) signed with the Government and employers a “*Regulatory protocol for measures to combat and contain the spread of the Covid-19 virus in the workplace*”.

The document provides operational guidance for implementing the various contagion containment measures: information of workers on the risks of the virus, on precautionary measures and on the obligations of staying at home in the presence of symptoms of Covid-19; regulation of the methods of access for workers and external suppliers to the workplace; cleaning and sanitizing in the workplace; obligation to adopt the recommended personal hygiene measures and adoption of personal protective equipment provided by the employer; remodeling of the organization of work and production levels to facilitate the shift of workers in the company, smart working where possible, the use of contractual terms that cover the absences of workers and social safety nets for work suspension; the management of workers who have flu symptoms in the company, the strengthening of health surveillance, the activity of the competent doctor also for specific workers' visit requests.

On March 24, the parties signed an *addendum* to the Protocol of March 14, aimed specifically at *the prevention and safety of health workers, health services and social assistance*.

E) Ensure the continuity of the work of the ESC-SIs: planning and implementation of internal activities (health, safety at work, working conditions, IT services, teleworking, job protection, etc.) to covid-19 and its consequences.

Have measures been taken to continue the activity of the Council, in particular those on risk prevention but also in the field of formulating responses to the crisis, networking of different key players, and / or studies / the survey, the research?

Measures taken by the CNEL to ensure the continuity of its activity

All the contagion containment activities envisaged by the decree-laws adopted by the Government in the emergency phase were implemented within the CNEL.

In particular:

- safety of working environments by sanitizing them;
- equipping staff with personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, hand sanitizers);
- smart working for all employees involved in activities that can be carried out at home and an incentive to use holidays and permits for other employees, who necessarily carry out activities on site, with shift presence. The smart working also involved the executives, who guaranteed their presence on site in rotation;
- implementation of the IT technologies that allowed all meetings to be held remotely.

F) Initiatives at regional level (only for the attention of regional associations)

Please share regional initiatives such as information sharing, data collection, case study analysis, formulation of joint statements and / or recommendations, etc.

ANNEX

Explicative note

The questionnaire is structured in 5 sections (for national institutions). Below are examples of points to consider in your response, if relevant to your institution's situation. This note aims to facilitate your answers, by developing as an example, some elements to take into account in your answers.

In each section, please also take into account the following cross-cutting topics in your response:

- **Inclusion and commitments of social partners:** workers and employers organizations in debates and formulation of opinions / recommendations on social, economic and labor market policies
- **Inclusion and commitments of vulnerable groups** (women, young people, precarious workers, informal workers or those with an atypical contract, free-lancers, self-employed, etc.) in the debates, the formulation of opinions / recommendations and political responses
- **Key economic sectors:** health, transport, catering, tourism, agriculture, retail, function and public service, textiles, cars, etc.
- **Studies, research, surveys, evaluations** on the impacts of covid-19 on social economic and labor levels launched by the competent authorities, social partners, etc. (by whom, on what and when?)

Please share all documents already written / published in areas A, B, C, D E and F (for regional groupings)

Finally, as much as possible, please give concrete examples of the roles and responsibilities that your institution plays or have played. Share challenges but also successes.

A) Measures with regard to workers in the formal and informal economy

- Are there regulations on the prevention of occupational risks by biological agents? Do these standards have an international origin (conventions, directives...)?
- Have new regulations on the health protection of workers been introduced in this specific hypothesis?
- Have specific preventive instructions or guidelines been prepared to apply the regulations?
- Have specific mechanisms for monitoring and controlling preventive measures been put in place?
- Were there any practical problems to apply these preventive measures, for example linked to factors such as the size of the companies, the lack of adequate technical advice or difficulties in obtaining the appropriate safety equipment? What kind of difficulties?
- What is the situation of workers on sick leave due to infection or under observation due to the risk of contagion in terms of sickness benefits? Is there a specific advantage or regulation?
- Do measures of activities closure, such as educational activities, and those of social isolation generate new needs for the care of minors or dependent persons? Have new formulas to reconcile work and family responsibilities been introduced (permits, agenda

adaptations, etc.)? If these formulas lead to a reduction in hours and wages, are there compensations for workers?

- For those working in firms that cannot continue their activity due to this health crisis, have specific social protection benefits been established or have the conditions of access to existing benefits been modified to facilitate their perception?
- To what level do the above-mentioned protective measures apply to the self-employed?
- Has the situation of workers such as migrants or frontier workers been taken into account in these measures?
- With regard to health care, have rules been established to facilitate access for workers who did not have their coverage?

B) Measures with regard to companies, in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as the engine of employment

- Have specific formulas been established to promote liquidity and access to credit for businesses? What role does public credit play in these measures and in international organizations and institutions?
- Have formulas been established to reduce or facilitate the payment of taxes and social contributions (deferrals, exemptions or reductions, deferrals of tax debts, etc.)?
- Have formulas been established to reduce or facilitate the payment of basic supplies for businesses (energy, etc.)?
- Have specific measures been established for the sectors most affected by the cessation of activities?
- Have specific measures to reduce business costs (for example, social security contributions) been established for companies which do not reduce employment (for example, because they use measures to suspend contracts instead layoffs)?
- Are there special regulations for areas such as SMEs, the self-employed or the social economy?

C) Measures with regard to the economy to mitigate the bad impacts on employment

- When defining the restricted business activities to assist in containment, were specific measures taken to maintain essential activity to resume normal activity or to encourage such resumption?
- Have measures been taken to prevent the economic turbulence resulting from the health crisis from being used to destabilize the position of companies by speculative maneuvers (for example in the financial markets)?
- Does your government act within the framework of international or regional institutions to encourage the adoption of measures to protect and revive economic activity and employment? What is the response of these institutions?
- Are proposals made in the political field (parliament, political parties, etc.) for the revival of activity after the health crisis? What about scientific proposals?

- Have measures been taken to promote continuity of employment during the crisis, both in terms of control (limiting the possibilities of dismissal) and promotion (financial aid to companies which resort to contract suspensions rather than layoffs)?
- Is teleworking used more widely than before as a form of maintaining business and employment? Did technical or organizational problems emerge during implementation?

D) Advocacy for the optimal use of social dialogue in response to the Covid-19 crisis: transparency, share information and data, inclusion, consultation, mutual trust

- Is your ESC-SI working to formulate responses to the covid19 crisis? (analyzes, reports, declarations, dissemination of information on the measures being adopted, etc.)?
- Do the social partners participate in the procedures for developing the measures adopted with regard to Covid-19? In what way (social agreements, joint declarations, consultation of governments, dissemination of information to their members ...)? Does the role that social dialogue should play appear in the proposals for alternatives to economic recovery?
- Is there particular attention given to vulnerable and / or under-represented / organized workers groups, such as informal, precarious, self-employed, migrant workers, in gig economy, etc.
- What are the bipartite / tripartite collective agreements (at firm, sector, provincial, etc.) concluded specifically to respond to the crisis relating to covid-19?
- Have specific measures for vulnerable and / underorganized / represented groups been taken for these social groups which may be particularly affected by the health crisis due to their socio-economic situation or their work status, their access difficulty with social benefits? For example:
 - o Inclusion and engagement of these groups in the debates and the formulation of responses to the crisis
 - o Measures to preserve housing (postponement of evictions, extension of rents, moratorium on the payment of rents ...).
 - o Measures to ensure basic supplies, such as water or electricity (deferral of payments, etc.).
 - o Postponement of payment of credits (mortgages)
 - o Facilitate access to health services, specific social services for people particularly affected by travel restrictions (home care, food, etc.).
 - o Specific social benefits for people who cannot meet the general requirements of the system (basic income, etc.).

E) Ensure the continuity of the work of the ESC-SIs: planning and implementation of internal activities (health, safety at work, working conditions, IT services, teleworking, job protection, etc.) to covid-19 and its consequences.

- Have measures been taken to continue the activity of the Council, in particular those on risk prevention, health, safety at work, working conditions, IT system (teleworking), job protection, etc.) in the face of covid-19 and its consequences.
- Globally speaking, what is the degree of involvement of your institution in the field of formulating responses to the crisis, networking of different key players, and / or studies / surveys, research,
- Has your Institution produced reports on the effects of the health crisis (analysis of the situation, of measures adopted by the public authorities, institutional declarations, recommendations for the protection of health, etc.)?

- What is the operating situation of the Council? Do you do teleworking, virtual meetings...? Have you adopted measures to protect the health of those who work at the Council?
- Do social workers and representatives of civil society participate in the process of developing measures adopted by the public authorities?
- Have the social partners adopted measures linked to this crisis in the area of social dialogue and collective bargaining?
- Have the social partners, individually or jointly, made proposals for measures to the public authorities?
- Have social workers prepared documents such as preventive guidelines, reports to facilitate the application of the new measures ...?
- Do the social partners in your country participate in initiatives developed internationally?

F) Initiatives at regional level (only for the attention of regional associations)

Please share regional initiatives such as information sharing, data collection, case study analysis, formulation of joint statements and / or recommendations, etc.

Of course, your concerns, suggestions on other points that have not been covered are also very welcome.