

# Measures adopted by the Catalan Government to face the COVID-19 pandemic

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**Generalitat de Catalunya**  
Government  
of Catalonia

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# 00. Introduction

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Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Catalonia has adopted a series of measures trying to reduce the effect of the crisis on health, economy and social aspects. Throughout the government's departments, there has been an effort to allow flexibility and cut red tape for many administrative procedures.

Specific measures can be found online at the following address: [General information for mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 crisis](#).

The website regularly updates all the information concerning the pandemic in Catalonia.

Twice a day, the president, vice-president, and Minister for Health, Home Affairs and Presidency hold meetings to evaluate the situation and propose measures to mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

The measures included in this document are classified according to the different departments of the Government of Catalonia and the moment of the crisis at which they have been adopted: emergency phase (March – April 2020) 🚨 and recovery phase (April – June 2020) 🔄.

# 01. Department of Economy and Finance

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## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Tax measures

- A moratorium on the deadlines for the payment and self-settlement of some taxes (namely the Government of Catalonia's own taxes as well as Spain's taxes "ceded" to regional governments) until the end of the state of alarm.
- The suspension and interruption of deadlines for management, inspection and collection procedures.
- A moratorium on payment until October 2020 of the tax on stays in tourism establishments, which companies were supposed to pay in April 2020.
- The elimination of taxes related to individual waste management and a regulation for reducing the tax on industrial and construction waste by 50% will be put in place.
- The reduction of the water rate for domestic users and economic activities (from 1 April 2020 until 31 May 2020) by 50%. Vulnerable families, or those affected by COVID-19, will be able to apply for social benefits and pay nothing for this concept. [More information.](#)

### Financial assistance for self-employed workers

€7.5m has been allocated to self-employed workers economically affected by COVID-19. The aid can be up to €2,000 for self-employed workers who prove a drastic and involuntary reduction in their turnover. They need to prove that they are registered in activities that health authorities have decreed the closure of and do not have other sources of income. It plans to benefit about 4,500 self-employed workers. [More information.](#)

### Ensure payment of public procurement

To ensure that companies working for the Government of Catalonia maintain their employment even though they cannot provide services effectively due to COVID-19. The Catalan Government will pay the wages and expenses of insurance policies to workers. This includes cleaning contracts, transport to school and school meals, special education centres, surveillance, and work and service contracts awarded by the Government of Catalonia and its public sector.

## **Flexibilisation of administrative procedures**

Procurement boards may meet without face-to-face attendance, while respecting the transparency required by the Law on Public Sector Contracts.

## **Liquidity line for SMEs and self-employed (bank guarantees; €750m)**

The ICF (Catalan Institute of Financing), which is the public financial institution owned by the Government of Catalonia, and Avalis of Catalonia guarantee 80% of the loans given by financial institutions to Catalan SMEs and self-employed workers who have liquidity problems because of COVID-19. Companies who apply for loans under this scheme cannot lay off workers. [More information.](#)

## **Culture liquidity loans (10 MEUR)**

Loans to help cultural companies affected by COVID-19 deal with liquidity constraints. [More information.](#)

## **Moratorium of rents**

A moratorium on the rents of public housing and commercial spaces administered by the Catalan Habitat Agency starting in April 2020. Around 20,000 families will benefit.

## **Notify suspension and reduction of working hours online**

Creation of a dossier for temporary employment regulation by COVID-19, which justifies the closures protected by legal rules as well as the closures that have been determined by other administrations, and also those that have to be closed due to lack of supplies or due to isolation by the health authorities. Both suspension and reduction of working hours can easily be done online.

## **Measures adopted in the recovery phase**



## **Business activity flexibility in the waste management field**

A 50% reduction of the industrial waste tax and the construction waste tax during the months of April 2020 and May 2020. The fees associated with the telematics processing of waste documents and in the register of people producing waste in Catalonia have been 100% discounted. Waste bonds for non-hazardous waste managers have been abolished, a measure that could mean the release of about €40m. [More information.](#)

## **Economic benefit for foster children**

Implementation of an emergency

financial benefit for the foster care of children involuntarily separated from their family due to medical treatments or isolation measures that affect their parents. When emergency circumstances so require, children between the ages of 6 and 12 can receive benefit. The amount of the benefit is €326 for children from 0 to 9 years and €362 for children from 10 to 12 years, although these amounts can be increased due to disabilities of the child, the number of foster children or other circumstances that require special dedication. [More information.](#)

### **Additional deferrals in the payment of the water fee**

The self-assessments of the water tax are carried out by the supply entities, which must pass them on to the bills of their subscribers. These entities, both public and private, are implementing measures to boost the liquidity of the self-employed and SMEs, postponing either billing or payments until the state of alarm finishes. For this reason, an interest-free deferral of the part of the self-assessments of suppliers that corresponds to invoices for self-employed workers and SMEs deferred by the entities themselves, for a maximum period of six months is provided. Hotel establishments and campsites will pay the water tax for the water they consume until 31 December 2020, provided that the consumption is greater than six cubic meters per month. [More information.](#)

### **Search for COVID-19 measures and aid**

The search for measures and aid for COVID-19 is a tool aimed at companies and self-employed people. The tool generates a Q&A session. The result of the questionnaire is a report of the measures, grants or subsidies that may correspond to each one. Information on the requirements and the necessary documents are provided together with direct access to the application process when it becomes available. [More information.](#)

### **Grants for the environmental third sector**

€600,000 has been allocated as direct aid to associations and foundations of the environmental third sector affected by COVID-19, to ensure the continuity of its activity aimed at protecting and improving the environment in Catalonia.

### **Subsidies for the tourism sector**

€3.5m has been allocated as subsidies for professionals and micro-enterprises in the tourism sector affected by the health crisis and who are in any of the following categories:

- Tourist accommodation establishments: hotels, apartments, campsites and rural tourism establishments.
- Tourist mediation companies.
- People or companies that contribute to the dynamism of tourism and

promote stays all over Catalonia.

- Qualified tour guides.

[More information.](#)

### **Credit line for the sports sector**

€10m has been allocated as loans to help sports entities affected by COVID-19 deal with liquidity constraints.

### **Emergency benefit for basic expenses**

€20m has been allocated as emergency aid of €200 per household (a one-off payment). The money must be used to buy food, pharmacy, and other basic supplies. The aim is to help the economic sustainability of families in a situation of economic vulnerability as a result of COVID-19. This emergency aid is for self-employed and employed people with family obligations who have suffered a reduction of more than 30% of their income due to COVID-19. [More information.](#)

### **€70m aid for companies affected by COVID-19**

The Catalan Institute of Finances (ICF) and the European Commission, with the support of the Ministry of Vice Presidency and Economy, have launched 'ICF Eurocrédit COVID-19', a new financing line for SMEs affected by COVID-19. With an initial endowment of €70m, it will be fully supported by the EU.



### **Urgent measures: shock plan for people, companies and territory**

59 MEUR will be allocated to a shock plan. The set of measures focuses on working people who have been financially affected by the health crisis and groups at risk, self-employed and small businesses to resume activity and maintain productive capacity and jobs, cooperatives and companies in the social economy and local administrations to strategically plan economic reactivation based on the analysis of the needs of the territory. The final aim is to palliate the social and work-related consequences of the sanitary crisis in Catalonia. There is also a fund for school parents associations (AMPA) and other businesses that provides dining services to schools, whose activity has been stopped due to the COVID-19. In total, it expects to directly benefit 1,500 companies, as well as 4,300 people working directly and thousands more indirectly. [More information.](#)

### **3.9 MEUR to promote projects in the social and cooperative economy**

The Catalan Government has agreed to allocate 3.9 MEUR to finance unique projects for socio-economic reactivation due to the COVID-19 crisis. This line is aimed at cooperative and social economy companies that generate employment through the creation of new business projects, business lines, companies, markets and at the same time take advantage of strategic opportunities in the sector of activity or territory.

### **A viewer to consult the emergency contracts awarded by the Government of Catalonia during the COVID-19**

The General Directorate of Public Procurement has designed an interactive tool that allows checking data of public contracts in execution awarded by the Government of Catalonia and its Public Sector, through the emergency procedure, on the occasion of the health crisis generated by the COVID-19. This viewer allows obtaining updated information on the object, the contracting authority, the amount and the winner of each of these contracts formalized since 12 March 2020.

### **The Catalan Tax Office (ATC) will help citizens file their personal income tax returns during confinement**

The Tax Agency will contact, through a free telephone, with people who need to receive personalized assistance.

### **Webinars to Catalan SMEs about European funds**

The Catalan Government has created a channel where users can learn about European funds regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. [More information.](#)

### **7.3 MEUR to financial aid for the logistics and transport sector between 2020 and 2021**

The Government of Catalonia provides funding for the promotion of decarbonisation of fleets, aid for investment in computer technology, training and professional associations, the establishment of a working group on sectoral tax plans and toll compensation.

### **Creation of a Commission for the elaboration of the Plan for economic recovery and social protection (CORECO)**

The Commission will be advised by a technical committee. Further, it sets six work groups (local administration, social protection, research, digital development, and green agenda).



## 02. Department of Presidency

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### Measures adopted in the recovery phase



#### Financial support to local administrations

The Secretariat of Local Administrations and Relations with Aran has advanced 61 MEUR (50% of the Catalan Local Cooperation Fund) to strengthen budget liquidity of local administrations in Catalonia. The allocation of these funds has been as follows: 18 MEUR to County Councils, 43 MEUR to Town Halls and €181.000 to Decentralized Municipal Entities. The secretariat has also launched a specific funding stream to cover the costs related to COVID-19. The main goal of these actions is to strengthen local administrations structures and help them establish social and emergency support measures.

#### Creation of a dialogue table with local and provincial authorities

In order to drive the social and economic recovery from COVID-19 and support economic sectors in difficulties, the Government of Catalonia has created a 'bilateral table of dialogue' together with representatives from Catalan municipalities and provinces. This dialogue table, which is part of the recently created Commission for the

economic recovery and social protection, will build on the 'Decalogue for the socioeconomic recovery for the municipalities of Catalonia' (recently presented by municipal entities and available [here](#)). The main objective of this table is to create a space for constant engagement and coordination between all public administrations. [More information.](#)

#### Investment policies for local authorities

In the context of COVID-19, the Catalonia's government will continue executing investment policies for local administrations through the different programmes that can be planned and mainly through the Single Works and Services Plan (PUSOC), which is key for the economic recovery and territorial revitalization. This plan, which was stalled because of the state of emergency, will soon enter the resolution phase. A 5-year multiannual funding agreement with an amount of 250 MEUR has been reached. It is important to highlight a specific funding stream with 90 MEUR for Town Halls, Decentralized Municipal Entities and Local Councils with less than 5,000 inhabitants. Local authorities have submitted 2,575 applications.

## **Involvement of regional authorities in de-confinement measures**

One of the main priorities of the Government of Catalonia has been to guarantee the participation of Local Authorities in the decision-making process related to de-confinement measures, adapting them to the different sectorial and territorial realities.

## **SECRETARIAT OF SPORTS**

### **Measures adopted in the emergency phase**



#### **Flexibilisation of deadlines**

Immediate measures regarding grants and their due justification: suspend deadlines (with no effect whatsoever on contract suspensions or terminations); provision of finance to beneficiaries needing it; any other measure to avoid damage for the beneficiaries derived from any other procedural aspect of grants. Adapt open calls for grants accordingly: to accelerate availability of resources independently from budgetary approval process; suspend deadlines for the submission of accompanying documents for those sports entities having received 80% or more of their operative grants; analyse and prepare new calls to support local councils and sports entities affected by COVID-19.

## **Support Olympic athletes**

Exceptional measures to support the postponement of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games for the 530 competitors included in the high-performance programme, including extra 9 MEUR to guarantee its continuity during 2021.



### **Measures adopted in the recovery phase**



#### **Updated set of prescriptions concerning physical activity and practice by elite, professional, high-performance or federation sports**

Different measures if:

- The sport disciplines or practices at stake are considered of national interest by Spain's Higher Council for Sports, or
- The sports are regulated by federations not covered by point 1 or
- It involves top professional leagues (1st and 2nd division for Football, ACB league for basketball).

Usage of sports facilities will continue

to be practically impossible and measures of prevention and distancing will continue to apply. There will be additional restrictions in sports involving animals (e.g. horses, where previous appointments will be needed, and no other human presence will be allowed during the exercises) and high speeds (skating, cycling, which require a 10-metre distance instead of 2 metres).

## CATALAN WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

### Measures adopted in the emergency phase



#### Campaign against gender violence

Launching of a campaign to facilitate access to a helpline for women unable to call for help or write to services due to being confined with the perpetrator.

- The permanent telephone service for women in situations of gender-based violence has been strengthened and complemented with a WhatsApp chat with the aim of ensuring no woman is neglected during confinement. [More information.](#)
- A new section has been introduced to the website, displaying the services that are available for women experiencing gender-based violence during lockdown, from all the different government

departments and other institutions.

### Measures adopted in the recovery phase



#### Increase in hours of help offered at the helpline for victims

There has been an increase in hours of help offered by helpline professionals for victims of gender-based violence. There has also been an intensification of the helpline's promotion by broadcasting information on it in different media across the region since the 19 March 2020.

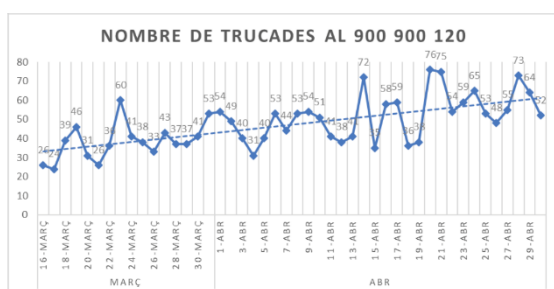
#### Intensification of phone and emails contacts

The Information and Attention Services for Women, which usually attend people on a face-to-face basis, on top of phone calls and emails, have been working hard to maintain all services only through phone calls and emails (and on-site in case of emergency).

#### Calls against sexist violence have increased by 88% during confinement

The number of phone calls regarding gender-based violence during the last two weeks of the confinement has been the highest of the entire period. Between 16 March and 30 April, the

number of services provided has reached the total of 2,173 calls, an increase of 88% compared to the services provided between January and February the same year, and an average of 47 daily calls compared to an average of 25 before the confinement. The following figure outlines the 88% increase. Monday 20 April had 76 calls, the maximum of the period.



### Activation of the Intervention Service for Urgent Crisis

Regarding the Intervention Service for Urgent Crisis, which is activated when there is a femicide, to give comprehensive care to those surrounding the victim; it has been activated successfully since the lockdown period started (only once so far).

### Work group to study how children are being affected by the COVID-19 crisis

The Observatory for the Rights of Children has created this group, which is included in the Plan for Children’s Progressive and Controlled Transition out of Isolation. The Catalan Women’s Institute has presented proposals to try

to make sure that gender mainstreaming is on the agenda, regarding actions for the protection of public health, to secure children’s schooling and towards caring for the most vulnerable and at risk.

### Informative materials with recommendations, services and new measures to help dealing with gender-based violence

A series of informative documents with recommendations, services and new measures to help to deal with gender-based violence during the crisis are available for women in situation of gender-based violence, people from their immediate environment or professionals dealing with gender-based violence:

- Recommendations for identifying a situation of gender-based violence
- Recommendations for women in situations of gender-based violence
- Recommendations for women who suffer gender-based violence and do not live with the aggressor
- Recommendations for women who suffer gender-based violence and live with the aggressor
- Guide to aid for social protection and economic recovery

## **‘#AgafaElGuant’. Children and young people free from sexist violence**

A campaign under the baseline ‘#AgafaElGuant’ has been launched to increase the protection and safety of children, teenagers and young citizens from gender-based violence arising from the COVID-19 crisis. The aim is that children and young people can identify the manifestations of violence they may suffer, showing them resources and promoting a virtual support space and a collective sorority that puts an end to their isolation.



## **Professional training to improve care for women victims of gender-based violence in the context of the social crisis of COVID-19**

A series of three trainings sessions on ‘Aid and resources for women who have suffered gender-based violence’ have been launched, aimed at supporting the work of professionals in gender-based violence care units in the context of the health, social and economic crisis.

In the first edition of the course, 150 care professionals for women in

situations of gender-based violence have participated in an online training on aid and resources within the framework of COVID-19.

## **A pilot project is launched to support practices of local professionals that assist women in situations of gender-based violence**

The project is organized by the Catalan Women’s Institute for the municipalities or counties and the care services for women (SIAD). The objectives of the ‘Workshop to Accompany, Assist and Recover women in situations of gender-based violence in SIAD’ are the following:

- Incorporating strategic perspectives as a tool to tackle gender-based violence.
- Presenting tools to incorporate professional assertiveness in tackling gender-based violence.
- Identifying personal limits in professional practice.
- Reviewing roles and functions within the framework of the territorial area of reference, in tackling gender-based violence.
- Detecting symptoms and effects of Burnout Syndrome and Trauma Syndrome as risk factors in professionals working to address gender-based violence.

# 03. Department of Foreign Affairs, Institutional Relations and Transparency

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## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Identify and share best practices

Through its delegations abroad, the Government of Catalonia has identified best practices abroad to learn and apply those measures, which are proving to be most effective.

### Support of Catalans abroad

The Department has been coordinating and helping Catalans abroad who are attempting to return home by providing up to date information on restrictions, information on administrative obligations in different countries, among many other initiatives. The Department has provided aid to over 2,800 people since COVID-19 started.

### Strengthening of the territorial cooperation instruments and networks

The Working Community of the Pyrenees, under the Presidency of the Government of Catalonia, has created a COVID-19 working group to

strengthen cross-border cooperation through its main programmes. The General Assembly of the Euroregion Pyrenees Mediterranean agreed to modify its 2020 working plan and annual budget to identify lines of action to cope with COVID-19 consequences. The government actively collaborates with several European and Mediterranean networks, such as the Four Motors for Europe, CRPM-CIM and Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance, to exchange good practices and deliver common analysis of the measures to be taken at EU level.

## Measures adopted in the recovery phase



### Cross-border and interregional cooperation

The Working Community of the Pyrenees, under the Presidency of the Government of Catalonia has launched a questionnaire to analyse the consequences of the pandemic. The results of this exercise identify an Action Plan for recovery that includes major initiatives in the four axes of the CTP Strategy: Climate change, Socio-

economic territorial development, Mobility, connectivity and accessibility and territorial Governance. The exercise also identifies priorities addressed to the new EU territorial and cross-border cooperation programmes.

The Euroregion Pyrenees Mediterranean has launched a COVID-19 aid Fund with a total amount of €700,000 available and open to projects and actions within the five sectoral domains of the EPM agenda: innovation, environment, higher education and research, tourism and culture. The aim of the Fund is to reduce the impact of the sanitary crisis and to relaunch the economy of the EPM territories as well as to foster a higher resilience capacity and a stronger cooperation between the Euroregional actors to help them overcome the crisis. The Euroregional aid Fund will last for 18 months and candidates who want to benefit from the COVID-19 aid Fund will have to apply between 8 June and 31 October 2020. [More information](#).

The Four Motors for Europe network has set up a Working Group on COVID-19 in order to exchange good practices and explore possibilities for collaboration in different areas. To this date, there has been a meeting with political representatives from each region to set the ground for this collaboration and a meeting between the Environment ministers to establish common guidelines for future actions.

The Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance, a platform which brings together more than 200 European and Mediterranean territories, launched a statement calling for specific programmes and more funding for territorial cooperation in the Mediterranean, a region where the crisis generated by COVID-19 will make the balance between economic, social and biodiversity development more necessary. Moreover, the CPMR has launched an open letter signed by 20 European regions addressed to European institutions and bodies to adopt a new pact on migration and asylum and demanding more shared responsibility on behalf of the territories.

### **Follow up of expatriated staff and aid workers from Catalan cooperation organisations**

The pandemic health situation in the country where the expatriated staff is placed must be analysed. If repatriation is recommended, according to recommendations of health authorities from this country, staff must return and expenses generated by the expatriated staff during the in-country period will be eligible.

### **Flexibility of ongoing cooperation projects and programmes terms and adjustment of activities**

If an entity is obliged to cancel its activities due to the impossibility of carrying them out because of the health crisis, the entity should report it formally to Catalan Agency for Cooperation Development (ACCD) and, if need be, request a prolongation of the activities' implementation.

### **Collaboration to readapt cooperation**

Collaboration with public administrations and organisations from other countries we work with; and reformulation of collaboration with multilateral organisations to redirect fund for measures against COVID-19. Meetings with cooperation, humanitarian and emergency aid NGOs to detect potential partnerships and actions to be carried out. Nowadays, ACCD is working on the definition of the 2020 call for funding, adapted to the current situation.

### **Training to face new challenges on cooperation**

Organisation of 3-days training (28 - 30 April 2020) about Technology and Cooperation (Digital Organising), concerning the challenges of the connection of social and technological innovation.

### **Additional funds in order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic**

A reserve fund of 1.3 MEUR has been created to subsidize international humanitarian actions to face the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund will cover the areas of health, education, access to water or food security, among others, and will allow responding to the pandemic in countries with greater vulnerability.

### **Support to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund**

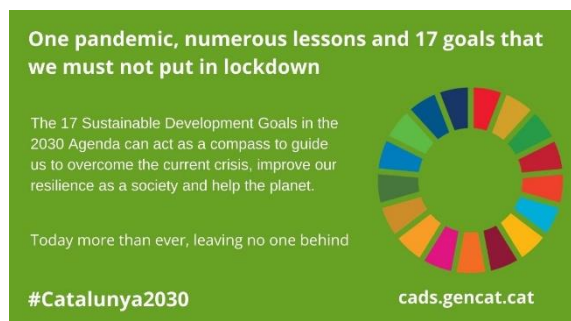
The ACCD continues to support the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). The support started several years ago, and now ACCD has made a contribution of €290,000.

### **The Advisory Council for the Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS) publish the report 'One pandemic, numerous lessons and 17 goals that we must not put in lockdown'**

On 14 April 2020, the council issued a [statement](#) on the management of the new reality after COVID-19 in terms of sustainability. According to the council, the way out of this crisis lies in curtailing degradation of nature; fostering an economy that serves



humanity while respecting the limits of the planet; better funding for public health and social care systems, especially for older people; and committed investment in research.



## The CADS takes part in an Open Letter ‘Responding to COVID-19: Building social, economic and environmental resilience with the European Green Deal’ of the EEAC Network

On 20 April 2020, the chair of the European network of advisory councils on Climate Change, Environment and Sustainable Development (EEAC) issued an [open letter](#). With a call to understand the link between COVID-19 and the ecosystem degradation, to increase resilience to future pandemics, and to use the EU Green Deal and some other EU strategic instruments (such as the MFF and Horizon Europe) to boost a social and economic recovery based on sustainability principles.

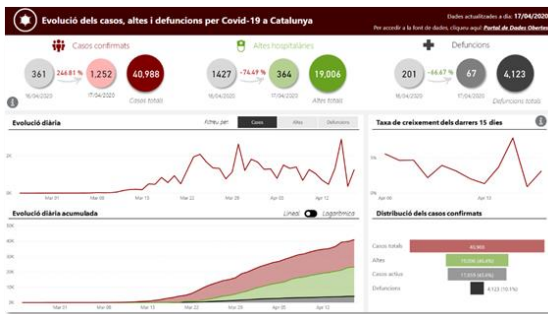


## Reflection on COVID-19 with experts and think tanks

IDEES, the Center for Contemporary Studies’ magazine, is curating an updated section of the most relevant reports by leading think tanks and research institutions worldwide. The section features an analysis of the most relevant ideas and proposals of these reports and offers a link to them. Together with the Ministry of the Economy and the Advisory Council on Sustainable Development, IDEES Magazine has put together a series of online debates to shed some light on the effects of the pandemics in six different areas: the Economy, Global Health, Society, Climate Change, Democracy and Geopolitics.

## Identification and visualisation of pools of data concerning the pandemic

The Secretary of Transparency and Open Government has identified several potential open data datasets concerning the impact and evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, to help the institutions, professionals and citizens understand how this is affecting and how this will affect our lives. These datasets have been published in the Government’s Open Data Portal ([access our COVID-19 data](#)) and it is our goal to have all data visualised to make it easier to understand by the citizens. ([See our open data COVID-19 evolution dashboard.](#))



## COVID-19 Standards, data quality and interoperability improvements

The Secretary of Transparency and Open Government is working with Open Data Charter on the definition of international standards in relation to [COVID-19 open data](#), to apply these standards to our health system open data and make them comparable with the different open data collected and published by each country. We are working to make our data accessible in English as well as having it published and available in the European Open Data Portal ([access our data](#)).

## Communication and transparency

The Secretary of Transparency and Open Government has centralised and integrated, in a [unique website](#), all open data datasets and initiatives that are available concerning the impact and evolution of the COVID-19 crisis, to have an open and transparent communication with the citizens.

Moreover, we have created a catalogue of the different examples of

how our data related to COVID-19 hosted on the Open Data Portal is being reused by citizens, data scientists and other user profiles. [Access to the catalogue.](#)

## ‘Jo Pregunto’: citizen participation initiative with Health Minister Alba Vergés

The Secretariat of Transparency and Open Government (Ministry of Foreign Action, Institutional Relations and Transparency) and the Secretariat of Health Care and Participation (Ministry of Health) have teamed up to launch the first edition of ‘Jo Pregunto’ (I ask), an initiative aimed at deepening governmental accountability and transparency and allowing citizens to directly address doubts and questions to Government Representatives. Out of the 341 questions registered, Health Minister Alba Vergés answered the most voted ones, which organized in three main areas: chronic symptomatology in COVID-19 patients, PCR tests and de-confinement phases. All questions were public, allowing the participants to engage in a fruitful debate around the main issues and prioritize the most important ones, and the exercise helped to bring forward neglected topics that had been kept out of the public agenda by mainstream media, thus helping the Government to better diagnose the issues at stake. In the coming weeks, other government representatives will take part in this

initiative. The digital portal [participa.gencat.cat](http://participa.gencat.cat), the Government's Platform to facilitate citizen participation in Catalonia, hosted this session. [More information.](#)

### **Website information on COVID-19 and European funds**

The website of the European funds in Catalonia has opened a new section to gather the financial resources of the EU at the disposal of Catalan organizations to contain the pandemic and the crisis caused by the COVID-19. In addition to news and calls for proposals, it will highlight the EU-funded projects in Catalonia related to the COVID-19 crisis. [More information.](#)

### **Support to representation in EC committees**

The department has contacted all the representatives of Catalan administration in European Commission committees to analyse all the adjustments needed or introduced on the work of each committee due to COVID-19 crisis. When necessary, the department has provided specific support.

### **Identification of good practices for economic and social recovery**

Through its delegations abroad, the Secretary for Foreign and European Affairs and the Secretary for

Transparency and Open Government, the Government of Catalonia has identified best practices abroad, as well as recommendations launched by international and European institutions and think tanks. These best practices have been delivered to the technical committee in charge of drafting the COVID-19 crisis recovery plan, which will be structured based on the SDGs.

### **Euromediterranean relations and COVID-19**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Barcelona Process (1995-2020), the Catalan Government, in collaboration with the IEMed, is promoting the "Dialogues of the Mediterranean +25" cycle. Within the framework of this initiative, different seminars with participation of actors from both sides of the Mediterranean will take place to analyse the challenges for the region at a complex time of post-COVID-19 recovery, with proposals addressed to the European cooperation in the region. The first one of these Dialogues will address the COVID-19 crisis as an accelerator of the digitalisation path in the region: 'Digitalising Mediterranean small and medium enterprises: a path towards innovation development in a post-COVID era'.

# 04. Department of Home Affairs

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## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Enforcement of confinement measures:

In order to enforce confinement measures and reduce citizens' mobility, Mossos d'Esquadra (Regional Police forces), in coordination with Local Police forces, have set up police-controls all over the territory. Citizens found outside have to justify their mobility based on the exceptions laid down in the Royal Decree on the State of Alarm. As a result, over the last four weeks, the Metropolitan Area of has experienced an important reduction of mobility rates (nearly 65%).



### Self-responsible mobility certificate

In order to help police officers in their patrolling tasks and help citizens make sure that a specific movement outside corresponds or does not correspond to

an authorised activity, the Department of Home Affairs has launched a Self-responsible Mobility Certificate ([available online](#)). Its use is non-mandatory, it allows for the standardisation of procedures and can only be requested by police officers.

### Update and activation of PROCICAT (Civil Protection Plan of Catalonia)

The Action Plan for Emergencies related to Emerging High-Risk Transmissible Diseases (revised on 4 March 2020) is the existing plan to manage emergencies arising from these diseases, give support to the strategy from the Directorate General of Public Health to minimise the spread of the pandemic, maintain basic services and coordinate all the actors involved in the response. ([Available in Catalan.](#))

The plan includes two Emergency Phases, which foresees specific actions depending on the severity of the situation. The first phase of the plan was activated on 12 March 2020 and it implied civil protection measures (beyond sanitary ones) and actions to guarantee the provision of basic services. Some of the decisions taken so far include:

- The restriction of movements in the municipalities of Igualada,

Vilanova del Camí, Santa Margarida de Montbui and Òdena due to the amount of COVID-19 cases there (link to the [decision](#))

- The suspension of activities in schools and universities (link to the [decision](#))
- The coordination, support and information to local authorities, which also play a role in civil protection measures

From an organisational perspective, the Steering Committee of the Plan (Home Affairs and Health Ministers) is the maximum authority responsible for, among others, evaluating the situation, deciding on the measures and communication strategy and prioritising basic services. It receives assistance from the Advisory Council and the Technical Committee (Representatives and experts from Health Services, Police Forces, Civil Protection, Medical Emergency Services and other actors that analyse, evaluate and propose actions). The Information and Communication Office coordinates and channels all the information given to citizens and the Action Group (specialized bodies with their own resources) implements the actions and measures (health services, police forces, civil protection, logistical infrastructures, etc.).

## **Information on activity restrictions**

The Directorate General of Civil Protection has launched an [online site](#) giving citizens all the necessary information about how to proceed in case of a COVID-19 related emergency and what is allowed or not allowed under the current circumstances. It includes a FAQs page that is updated twice a day.

## **Gender-based violence**

Bearing in mind that confinement measures can lead to an increase in the number of gender-based violence cases, Mossos d'Esquadra has doubled efforts and intensified contacts with women who had previously reported their cases to the authorities.

## **Social media**

Official social media accounts from the [Department of Home Affairs, Civil Protection Units](#) and [Mossos d'Esquadra](#) are constantly engaging with citizens to update them on the crisis, answer their questions and explain their actions. As an example, Mossos d'Esquadra recently shared a video in sign language to reach a broader audience.

## **Awareness-raising on the use of 112 emergency number**

Due to the increasing amount of

COVID-19 related calls to the 112 emergency number instead of the 061 CatSalut Respon (Health Answer), the Department has elaborated a video explaining the proper use and purpose of this number so that the service does not collapse. This way, calls requiring an emergency response (ambulance, police or firefighters) can be managed without delay. [More information.](#)



and services available for them (24h free telephone helpline 900 900 120; email [mossos.atenciovictimes@gencat.cat](mailto:mossos.atenciovictimes@gencat.cat) address [mossos.gencat.cat](https://www.mossos.gencat.cat/) and WhatsApp 671 778 540). As Mossos d'Esquadra emphasise, judicial and police forces continue to work to eradicate any kind of violence and, despite the state of emergency, victims are allowed break confinement to ask for help. [More information.](#)



## Measures adopted in the recovery phase



### Guidelines to address gender-based and domestic violence during confinement

Mossos d'Esquadra has published a set of [action guidelines](#) for people who could be victims of gender-based and domestic violence and who, due to confinement measures, are forced to spend more time with their aggressor. This guide includes specific advice and action procedures for each vulnerability group (women, children, teenagers and persons with disabilities) as well as all the resources

### Storytelling to celebrate Sant Jordi

Sant Jordi is a special festivity in Catalonia, when streets are full of people buying and offering books and roses. Since this year's celebration could not take place in normal circumstances, police officers decided to read children stories through their corporate Instagram account. Mossos d'Esquadra wanted to thank children for their behaviour during confinement. [More information.](#)

### **Website with recommendations to better address confinement**

Civil Protection has launched a [website](#) with the main recommendations, advice and good practices to ensure a good confinement while reducing its negative effects. On the one hand, the website offers guidelines to ensure solidarity and support among neighbours and help those in situations of vulnerability. On the other, it also offers care advice for children, people with disabilities and elderly persons and practical recommendations so that citizens adopt healthy and dynamic routines. [More information.](#)

### **Distribution of masks for those using public transport**

Following the decision on 13 April 2020 to put an end to the restriction of labour activity to essential services, Red Cross and Civil Protection volunteers distributed masks in public transport stations and interchanges in municipalities with more than 30,000 inhabitants so that citizens could go to work safely. [More information.](#) In the following days, the remaining masks were distributed among nursing homes throughout Catalonia to offer a better protection to both workers and residents. [More information.](#)

### **Recommendations to ensure the safe return of children onto the street**

Following the decision to allow children onto the street one hour per day from 26 April 2020 onwards, Civil Protection has elaborated a [document](#) with basic information so that families know what they are allowed to do. To ensure the proper implementation of this measure and avoid huge concentrations of people undermining social distancing measures, the Technical Committee of PROCICAT has also approved a [proposal of timeslots](#) according to age, which has been sent to the Central Government. [More information.](#)

### **Corps of Firefighters of Catalonia**

Catalan Firefighters' action during COVID-19 focused on areas such as logistical support to build temporary health infrastructures, distribution of masks, operative support to disinfect buildings and infrastructures in critical situations and operative support in managing multiple-victim scenarios. Furthermore, the Corps has also offered firefighters with nursing knowledge and ventilators to hospitals all over the territory. All these actions are subject to the guidelines of Health Authorities. [More information.](#)

## Exit Strategy

On the 28 April, the Government of Spain adopted the '[Plan for the Transition towards new normality](#)', which sets the main parameters and instruments to return to normal life. This Plan, which started in 4 May, foresees four phases of two-week duration each. [More information](#). When it comes to the Exit Strategy, the final decision on the move from one phase to another must come from the National Ministry of Health based on a process of common governance with the Autonomous Communities. [More information](#).

In Catalonia, the Technical Committee of PROCICAT, which gathers representatives from all the actors involved in the management and application of confinement measures, presents and decides on the proposals, which the Steering Committee has to adopt. The Committee is made up of the Home Affairs and Health Ministers.

From the end of May on, Catalonia's exit strategy proceeds by seven 'sanitary regions': Barcelona, Central Catalonia, Girona, Lleida, Pyrenees and Aran, Tarragona and Ebre. To move from one phase to another, the proposal has to be adopted by the Committee before being handed over to the Central Government for the final decision.

When it comes to the 'de-confinement plans' of the different public services and socioeconomic sectors of activity,

the competent organs within the Government of Catalonia, in close collaboration with representatives from the local level, are in charge of drafting them. Once adopted by the Technical Committee of PROCICAT, they are publicly available [here](#).

To explain the de-confinement process to all the citizens, this [official webpage](#) contains detailed information on the implications, measures in force and evolution of each one of these 'sanitary Regions'. So far, the Ministry has published an updated Q&A in English with the implications of the different phases. Restrictive measures will ease as sanitary regions move from one phase to the other.

To complement this process and raise awareness on the exit strategy and self-protection measures in a more accessible and understandable way, Civil Protection's official twitter is constantly publishing graphic information on, for example, the mandatory use of masks ([link](#)), the recommendation of time slots for outdoors activities ([link](#)) or security measures in cafés and terraces ([link](#)).

## Story telling on the Exit Strategy

On the 21 May, Police Officers from Mossos d'Esquadra went live on their official Instagram and Facebook account to read children a book called 'Ja puc sortir de casa' (I can already leave home). Recently written by Lourdes Campuzano. This book



explains children the measures and recommendations that they should follow when they go out on the street through the story of two siblings. Medical experts from the hospitals 'Sant Joan de Déu' and 'Germans Tries i Pujol' gave their advice for the elaboration of this book. [More information.](#)

# 05. Department of Education

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## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Supporting Online Learning

Launching of an action plan to support distant learning, including the distribution of 22,000 laptops with connection to pupils without access to such equipment. It also created 600+ (mostly Moodle-based, but also using Google classroom and Microsoft Teams) environments so all education providers can deliver virtual education. [More information](#). It distributed more than 100 pedagogical projects for this period of confinement to all institutions needing it, arranged in a searchable manner (by educational level, by subject-matter). [Access to the search engine](#). It also decided to grant unrestricted access to all educational contents of its Open Institute of Catalonia (IOC) platform. [All contents of IOC](#).

### Cancellation of exams

The Department decided to call off tests for: 6<sup>th</sup> graders in primary (7 April 2020), and for joint "batxibac" (*batxillerat-baccalauréat*, recognised both in Spain and France) secondary education completion. Likewise, it shared guidelines on how to evaluate students with learning outcomes acquired before and during the lockdown.

## Helping those in need

Adoption of urgent measures to prevent malnutrition wherever there are children exposed to such risk (depending on public support to get hot meals). Mobilisation of resources to support companies delivering a.o. transport and catering services to schools.

### Supporting families

Publication of a website with guidance and support on home-schooling and distant-learning etology, with subthemes such as: time spent with families; relation between families and schools; Healthy usage of technology; values, support for children; promotion of a healthy life. [More information](#).

## Measures adopted in the recovery phase



### Adaptation of calendars (ongoing)

The Department decided to move up the calendar for registration to the next academic year (2020-21) for all levels (primary, secondary, vocational) and made all necessary arrangements for it to take place online wherever possible, or in a secured manner physically (with all hygienic measures). [More](#)

information. A final decision on whether and how to return to school before the summer break has yet to be made.

### Virtual orientation days during May 2020, sessions, services and support to provide guidance to students while choosing their post-compulsory education path

It has received more than 1.6 million visitors, as per graph below:



Check the dedicated portal [here](#).

Check the general website on educational offer [here](#).

### Re-opening of educational centres located in regions which have been moved to stage 2 out from March 2020 lock-down and State of alarm

As per the limitation and social distancing imposed by PROCICAT plan, plannings will need to be adapted so as to allow for non-coincidence of large numbers of pupils.

As of stage 3, groups of up to 10 pupils will be able to sit in the same classroom.

A specific decision has been made to re-inforce alertness regarding the frequency of cleaning, the manipulation of objects, recommended vaccinations, etc.

### Setup of a specific portal to support the emotional side of going back to school having suffered the collateral consequences of a lockdown

Resources have been compiled in [this](#) website, available to all staff and to the public at large.

# 06. Department of Health

## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Stop COVID-19 application

On 18 March 2020, the Government of Catalonia launched an app intending to control and detect new COVID-19 cases in Catalonia. Every patient registered with symptoms will be monitored daily (or more frequently). Thus, it will benefit both patients, who will get personalised feedback based on their symptoms, as well as the government, obtaining real-time data about the evolution and incidence of the illness in the Catalan territory. If needed, a medical emergency service can also be activated according to the situation of the user. [More information.](#)



### Real-time data centre

The Department of Health and the Agency of Health Quality and Assessment of Catalonia (AQuAS) released [a website](#) gathering all the information about the pandemic situation in Catalonia including a

dashboard and a heat map. This allowed public decision-makers and individuals to access reliable information to track the situation on real time. Furthermore, open data from all COVID-19 tests has been made available to the public.

### Temporal hospitals set up at the 'Fira de Barcelona' and other locations

To take care of stable COVID-19 patients and prevent the collapse of hospitals, the Health Department set up several hospitals that could increase bed capacity if needed.

One of the spaces was the CEM Olímpics Vall d'Hebron, as an extension of the Vall d'Hebron University Hospital that accommodated up to 132 patients.

### Healthcare professionals were reincorporated at hospitals and tested

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, many healthcare professionals have been reincorporated into the health system, especially in Igualada Hospital, situated in La Conca d'Òdena (its primary catchment area), which was the first detected COVID-19 hotspot in Catalonia. From the 25 March, all professionals working at Igualada Hospital had been tested for COVID-

19. In addition, this centre welcomed 42 direct hires of new healthcare professionals to strengthen the care in the region and 180 beds were allocated from the General Hospital of Catalonia specifically for patients in this area. [More information.](#)

### **‘My health’**

An online form was made available in order for citizens to have easier access to their files. This used to be a procedure that had to be done in person but can now be made online in order to ensure that people do not need to go to a health centre in the context of the health emergency caused by COVID-19. This measure was created with the intention to avoid the collapse of health centres. [More information.](#)

### **Hotels hosted mild patients with COVID-19**

Hotel beds were available for hospitals to allocate patients who had symptoms but could not isolate at their homes due to the difficulties of their environment. Healthcare professionals and social health workers assisted the patients, who had primary care support.

### **Fast track validation of 3D printed ventilators**

As ventilators are a critical device to assist some of the patients with COVID-19, initiatives helping to

increase the capacity of use of this device are highly valuable. The Department of Health has provided support to initiatives such as 3D-printed or other novel ventilation systems and devices, in the validation process at the regulatory agencies with the purpose of enabling the mass production and use in the event another peak puts pressure again to the need of such devices. [Report by the Agency of Health and Quality Assessment of Catalonia \(AQuAS\) on newly approved procedures, devices and joint ventures.](#)

### **Clinical trial**

The Department of Health is co-leading a clinical trial study, which started in March 2020 with the aim of evaluating the effectiveness of a preventive strategy to reduce transmission and, therefore, the incidence of COVID-19 in the population during the outbreak by COVID-19 in Catalonia.

### **Measures adopted in the recovery phase**



### **Healthcare professionals will receive a COVID-19 premium as a compensation for their extraordinary efforts**

The premium will range from €350 to €1,350. 800 of these professionals were able to stay at hotels (more than

15,000 overnight stays), opened for this purpose during the peak.

### **170,000 serological tests will be performed to healthcare professionals**

These tests are a priority in the exit strategy. Permanent monitoring is underway to support the differentiated de-confinement (according to the epidemiological situation of each health region).

### **2 out of 4 temporary COVID-19 sites are now being dismantled**

However, preparations are already underway to face a second wave, so the other two sites will remain inactive but open and ready. The actions include anticipated procurement of strategic material, equipment, and chemical and pharmaceutical substances. A still-ongoing campaign, '#JoActuo', was set up to facilitate donations and has managed to gather individual donations, adding up to more than 1 MEUR, a million gloves, millions of masks of all types, more than 10 T of hydro alcoholic gel, rental cars and trucks and volunteer drivers, non-perishable foodstuffs, bottled water, and so on.

### **The e-Health site, 'La Meva Salut', has been made widely available and more flexible**

Increased availability will foster tele-medicine and distance support. This service has experienced a surge, with a 300% rise in new registrations, and with 1,000 doctors working remotely. [More information.](#)

### **Efforts to re-instate basic ordinary activities, such as blood donations, organ transplants, or colorectal testing to target groups.**

ER activity was down by almost 50% during this crisis, but healthcare provision for chronic diseases was maintained.

### **Exit Strategy**

The Health minister is part, along with the Home Affairs Minister, of the Steering Committee that adopts the decisions taken by the Technical Committee of PROCICAT with regard to de-confinement measures. This strategy is described in the department of Home Affairs section.

# 07. Department of Territory and Sustainability

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Measures adopted in the emergency phase



## Free public transport

Public transport operated by the Government of Catalonia has been made free to ensure key workers who are forced to travel can do so easily.



## Waste management

With reference to industrial waste, the Government of Catalonia is mitigating the impact of COVID-19 using digital tools in order to cut red tape involved in complying with the regulations relating to waste and also by forgoing the taxes involved in this process in its entirety. A regulation for reducing the tax on the industrial and construction waste by 50% will be put in place.

# 08. Department of Culture

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## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Increase grants, budget and financial aid

Increase the percentage of all grants by 10% to inject more liquidity into companies and beneficiary entities. Promote, both from the Catalan Institute of Cultural Enterprises and the Office of Support for Cultural Initiatives, subject to budget availability, specific lines of support to compensate for the loss of profits of companies and entities from different cultural sectors, as long as it is a direct consequence of the measures prevention and control of COVID-19 infection adopted by the competent authorities or bodies. Strengthen the line dedicated to the purchase of books by the Library Service of the Government of Catalonia. Create a grant line to finance the interest generated by the lack of first year of the loans supported by the Government of Catalonia.

### Flexibilisation of deadlines and administrative procedures

Extension of deadlines for executing eligible activities (or justification thereof). Grants granted during 2020 shall not be revoked and beneficiaries will not be required a minimum percentage of expenses made and

justified to the total cost of the activity.

### Deliver on financial commitments

In case of cancellation of any of the strategic markets, guarantee the contribution of Department of Culture, with the aim of avoiding additional damage to the contracted companies (with priority to Catalan companies), mitigating the fall in hires and other negative impacts for workers of the event and for external providers.

### Increase digitalisation

Increase the purchase of e-book licenses to meet current demand on eBiblio, which has soared over 500%. Design of a programme of activities to promote cultural consumption on the Net. Support all the cultural initiatives that seek to accompany citizens, who live these days confined in their homes, with recommendations of readings, concerts, performances of all kinds, audio visuals, music, debates, games, etc. through social networks and the internet.

### Support cultural activities

Support the celebration of one of the most important cultural days in Catalonia, Sant Jordi. In agreement with all sectors involved, it will be rescheduled when the pandemic allows.



## Measures adopted in the recovery phase



### Plans to accompany a transition back to normalcy

The Ministry of Culture is working on a permanent basis with the cultural and creative sectors to devise a programme to support re-activation of cultural and creative activities and projects, a programme to foster activities and the re-activation of the sector, and an audience-building and communication plan supporting this re-activation. The monitoring and follow-up of targeted actions (publishing, libraries, museums, Language policy and learning, popular culture, and so on) carried out and the upcoming plans and programmes, as they become available, is possible [here](#).

### Summary of Finance actions (first wave)

ICEC (Catalan Institute of Cultural Enterprise) & ICF(Catalan Institute of Finances) Culture loans for liquidity	€10m
Culture interest abrogations	€0.35 m
OSIC support grants to compensate for damages and losses incurred	€3m
OSIC (Oficina de Suport a la Iniciativa Cultural) support grants to compensate for the reduction of income caused by cancellations	€2m

ICEC Line for compensation of economic impact	€8m
Anticipation of purchase of books and rights for libraries	€4m
Extraordinary transfers for equipment to face up to the crisis	€4m

An ongoing process of budgetary restructuring is underway, which is intended to result in further resources becoming available for a second wave of direct-support lines of credit, for liquidity and compensation.

### 5 MEUR to financial aid for workers in the cultural sector economically affected by the health crisis

A one-off social benefit is granted through a non-competitive call until the 5 MEUR budget is spent. The benefit, which will reach a maximum of €1,024 per beneficiary, aims to alleviate the difficulties of performing arts professionals who, until last 6 May, were left out of access to unemployment benefits from the Spanish Government. The measure can benefit around 6,000 professionals. From February to April, and also compared to April 2019, the loss of Social Security affiliation of workers in artistic and scenic activities has been 3.5 times higher, with a loss of 2,179 jobs in Catalonia. [More information](#).

# 09. Department of Justice

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## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Flexibility

To avoid increasing contagion in facilities, more than half of the inmates qualified as grade 3 (semi-open regime) are currently serving their sentence at home. They are sleeping at home daily while being controlled by telematics. Before COVID-19, there were 325 grade 3 inmates at home, and now, during COVID-19, there are 955.



## Measures adopted in the recovery phase



### Video conference service for detainees to testify from police stations

Launching of a new telematics system so that detainees can testify before judges at a police station of Mossos d'Esquadra and local police, without

having to transfer to the courts.

### Religious plurality guaranteed

City councils are informed about the needs related to religious plurality. Intermediation is also carried out with religious communities and the availability of places in cemeteries is monitored to meet specific demand of religious groups. More information [here](#) and [here](#).

### Coronavirus and religious sphere

The Directorate General of Religious Affairs has launched a webpage that concentrates all the information about coronavirus and religious affairs in:

- [Prevention in places of worship](#)
- [Recommendation for spring's religious festivities](#)
- [Prevention in funerals and burials criteria](#)
- [FAQ](#)

### 'Dialogue and Agreement to deal with COVID-19' mediation programme

A mediation programme has been designed and launched to deal with conflicts that arise during the state of alarm and the following six months. It is free of charge for users and

managed online. The programme focuses on conflicts that affect children and, in particular, the custody of children, teenagers and people with disabilities as well as other disadvantaged groups. This measure is complemented by the '[Mediation and COVID-19](#)' website.

### **Telematic care for victims of crime is guaranteed**

All professionals in the offices for the victims of crime are working electronically; interviews with victims who require support and guidance are executed over a phone call. When a court activates the service, support for victims of gender-based violence is maintained when they have to appear in court.

### **Economic incentives for good behaviour among minors and youngsters are increasing**

The scales of remuneration for minors and young inmates have been modified upwards to encourage good behaviour, sense of responsibility and positive participation in the activities arising from the educational project. [More information](#).

### **Placement / Treatment of infected detainees**

An inmate showing symptoms compatible with COVID-19, or who has been in close contact with another

person testing positive for COVID-19, will be placed in the prison infirmary, in particular the health isolation cells specially created to this end. The inmate will be tested by health care staff and provided with a face mask. The surfaces and rooms of potential or confirmed cases will be properly cleaned and disinfected according to Health Department standards. New contracts have been signed with companies specialising in disinfection. Personal hygiene packs for inmates have been increased.



### **A hospital is set up for inmates with mild COVID-19 symptoms**

The second floor of the nursing facilities of Brians 2 prison, which was equipped but disused, has become a hospital for inmates from all over Catalonia who test positive for COVID-19 and have mild symptoms. A new unit for inmates with mild symptoms for COVID-19 has also been established in Module 4 of the Quatre Camins prison.

## **The conditions of the modules where admission to the penitentiaries are located have been improved**

Upon admission, if the inmate shows symptoms or expresses having been in contact with someone with symptoms or a confirmed case, they will be transferred to a cell to be assessed by health staff who will decide whether they shall be placed in a health isolation cell.

## **The Center for Reintegration Initiatives (CIRE) draws up a contingency plan for its partners**

CIRE has carried out individual evaluations with the collaboration of client companies on the impact of the workshops, in order to guarantee the maximum number of jobs for inmates.

## **Workshops for the production of medical supplies in prison**

Production workshops continue to operate although shifts have been rearranged so that inmates from different units do not meet in the same workshop in order to prevent the spread of infection. In particular, the workshops already working on clothing manufacture are now working intensively to deliver health staff clothing ordered by the Health Department.

## **Prison Administration Social Services**

The Social Services branch of the Catalan Prison Service have mobilised their teams to respond to the suspension of family visits with ways to keep families in frequent touch with detainees, introducing remote visiting, extended telephone access and weekly videocalls. 'Treatment teams', which include social workers, educators, lawyers and psychologists, along with cultural mediators and artistic monitors, are working together to give support and information to prisoners and families. [More information.](#)

## **Communication**

Sessions to inform about the current restrictive measures in place inside the prisons, how to communicate with relatives, the health protocols implemented to prevent infections and treat potential and positive cases. Addressed to groups of no more than 10 inmates of the same residential unit and in sufficiently sized rooms; inmates can ask questions to staff about their concerns. The general restrictions implemented by the government are also explained.

## **Suspension of permits and leaves**

All kinds of prison permits, leaves and scheduled exits granted to inmates

(allowed for various specific activities in the community) have been suspended until health authorities establish that these do no longer pose a risk to inmates' health.

## Representatives

Defence lawyers have been requested to make use of the videoconference call system regularly available in bar associations all over Catalonia (one in every province). Should the visit be indispensable, the lawyer will be allowed to visit their client in a room with a glass partition, provided that the lawyer does not present any symptoms compatible with COVID-19. Regular visits by consulates' representatives have been suspended. If the inmate has a need requiring the consulate intervention, the prison management will channel it via the available means so that consulate support can be provided without posing a risk to the inmate's health.



## Implementation of video conference service with relatives of the inmates

All kinds of family visits have been suspended until health authorities establish that they do not longer pose a risk to the inmates' health. The possibility to bring parcels for inmates into the prison has been suspended too. To compensate for the restriction of communications:

- The number of phone calls the inmates can make to their relatives has increased from 10 to 20 per week (8 minutes/call). The cost of the calls made by those inmates without incomes is covered by every prison budget, also when the relatives live abroad, the possibility to make a collect call is always available.
- In a limited number of prisons, a videoconference system has been set up through specific software via the internet in the computer rooms.
- Smartphones have been purchased and distributed among prisons so that inmates can make video calls through WhatsApp.

[More information.](#)

## Visits from relatives are resumed depending on the health region

Visits from relatives to prisoners have

been resumed, as well as those of an intimate nature (vis a vis) depending on the health region, taking the appropriate protection measures to ensure the safety and health of those involved (such as taking temperature, requiring masks, limiting the visits of two people simultaneously, etc.).

### **Temperature control in prisons**

Prisons activate temperature control at the entrances. More than €175,000 have been invested in cameras and temperature guns to prevent the entry of visitors with fever in prisons and juvenile justice centres. The measure will mitigate the contagion of COVID-19 that could cause the 32,000 people who enter the facilities to go see their relatives and friends with criminal convictions.

### **Families call service and measures for inmates**

Due to the lack of financial solvency of some inmates, and to encourage good behaviour of minors and young people, the Ministry of Justice will assume the cost of family phone calls, whether they are local or abroad, of the inmates who lack financial resources. Economic aid to inmates has also been increased to €20/month, and due to the suppression of cultural, educational and sports activities at the centre, TVs have been provided to those who lack the resources to be able to buy one. A total of 160 TVs have also been

purchased and located in the cells of the incoming inmates who will be quarantined as a precautionary measure. The provision of cleaning and security services in prisons and juvenile justice centres has been increased to ensure compliance with the measures taken to deal with COVID-19.

### **Resume of work and volunteer outings**

Inmates who either worked or volunteered outside prisons, from the 11 May are able to resume their outings to work or collaborate with the entities.

A new plan for hiring interns in auxiliary services has been implemented, as a complementary action to the services already existing in centres, which reinforces cleaning tasks that are currently being carried out.

### **250 screens have been installed in courts and tribunals in order to guarantee care for citizens and professionals**

Prevention equipment (masks and hydroalcoholic solution bottles for hands) has also been provided in compliance with the established sanitary measures. The provision of cleaning and security services has increased, following the recommendations made by the Federation of European Heating,

Ventilation and Air Conditioning Associations (REHVA).

The Ministry of Justice facilitates more than 1,400 court proceedings by video call in two months. Courtrooms are prepared in Catalonia for videoconference trials. €131,000 have been invested in secure communications technology. 2,000 civil servants will be trained to manage the new computer tool.

Portable equipment has been provided to judges, magistrates, lawyers, prosecutors and forensic doctors, in order to guarantee the electronic continuation of their tasks. Likewise, the e-justicia.cat computer system, the technical support of the facilitators and the wide range of equipment with videoconferencing systems facilitate the tasks to be carried out by professionals and civil servants in the field of the Administration of Justice. In this regard, e-mail quotas to provincial prosecutors have been increased.

Translation and interpretation service is monitored on a daily basis and has been reinforced by electronic means, so that both the appointment of experts and the maintenance of the language service are allowed in the judicial sphere.

### **Forensic doctors have been assigned on a voluntary basis to perform tasks in health centres and hospitals.**

The essential minimum services have

been determined to ensure the operation of the following services:

- Protection of minors and women victims of gender violence.
- Civil Registry.
- Actions with detainees.
- Raising corpses.
- Modification of the shared custody regime.

### **Mediation and private law entities**

Exceptional measures have been taken to ensure the functioning of homeowners' associations, foundations and communities, as well as private law mediation processes.

### **Publication of recommendations for separated parents**

Faced with the restriction of movement, recommendations to parents to manage the care and custody of their minor children are disseminated through the website of the Ministry of Justice.

### **Democratic Memorial**

Continuation of the research work and compilation of information from the Report Bank in order to make them available to the public and the academic community and to enable the resumption of work to identify and open mass graves once possible.

# 10. Department of Labour, Social Affairs and Family

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## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Grants for the self-employed

Launch of a grant, in the form of an economic benefit, up to €20,000 for self-employed workers (individuals) who show a drastic and involuntary reduction in their billing as a result of the effects of COVID-19 on its economic activity.

### Protecting children and adolescents

Project to assist children and adolescents whose parents are hospitalised or isolated by COVID-19. For children and adolescents from 3 to 18 years old, XANASCAT will open hostels, where qualified staff will be present all day long. For children under 3 years old, a host family will be provided. [More information.](#)

### Guaranteed meal services for minors who are users of the services of socio-educational intervention with meal service

Cards will be facilitated for the families and for the minors who are users of the socio-educational intervention

services with a meal service, through an agreement with CaixaBank. There will be 140,000 cards for children using the dining service and 20,000 for the minors who are users of the socio-educational intervention services with a meal service. For each family, the card will be debited with the amount of the daily allowance for the total number of days that the closure lasts.

### Protecting the elderly

The Department has activated the inspection of social services to intervene in cases of residencies for the elderly who are at risk. [More information.](#) In addition, it has strengthened coordination to protect the nursing homes for the elderly, disabled, and those living with a mental illness in front of COVID-19 by generating a unique logistics circuit for the distribution of protective equipment based on their own estimated needs. An emergency pool of people registered in the Catalan Public Employment Service (SOC) with a suitable professional profile has been created to join the teams of the nursing homes that need it urgently.

### Protecting the vulnerable

Relocation of 21 disabled people living



in nursing residencies and who have some COVID-19 symptoms in Barcelona to the Casa del Mar in Barcelona where they can receive targeted care. [More information.](#)

### Protecting social workers

- Provision of masks and gloves to workers in residential care services to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes for the elderly, improve care for the affected people, and prevent staff contagion. [More information.](#)
- Extension of free psychological support service for COVID-19 to social services professionals in collaboration with the Professional Association of Psychologists. [More information.](#)

### Multilanguage and audio communication

Mobilisation of volunteers to translate COVID-19 recommendations into 35 languages. We have recorded voice notes to reach groups that do not understand Catalan or Spanish, or have difficulties accessing the internet. Infographics with information and recommendations on COVID-19 have also been translated into 18 languages spoken in Catalonia. [More information.](#)

### Financial aid for people over 65 and victims of gender violence

The Government of Catalonia will advance financial aid to pay rent to people over 65 and victims of gender violence. [More information.](#)

### Ensure human resources are available

Exceptional organisational and human resource measures have been put in place for nursing homes and day care centres for the elderly, disabled and those living with mental illness, as well as at home help services. [More information.](#)



### Recommendations for workers

Published a set of recommendations of personal protection and prevention for those working in the Homeless Services ([more information](#)), volunteering and neighbourhood network groups ([more information](#)), home care professionals ([more information](#)) as well as FAQs relating to work-related questions and answers about COVID-19 (permanently updated – [more information](#)).

## **Establishment of prevention measures for workers**

Measures for the management of nursing home centres and professionals dependent on the General Management for Child and Adolescent Care in order to avoid health risks due to the spread of COVID-19 or mitigate its effects in relation to the minors and young people who reside in these spaces, as well as the professionals who take care of them ([more information](#)). Measures for those in the Orientation and Support Services for families ([more information](#)). Measures and technical recommendations for essential services that are provided within the Home Care Service ([more information](#)).

## **Flexibility of mobility of healthcare professionals**

Agreement between the Department, employer's organisations and trade unions agree to allow flexibility in the mobility of healthcare professionals. [More information](#).

## **Recommendations for companies and workers**

From the beginning of the current crisis, there has been a document of recommendations for companies and workers on actions related to situations that may occur due to COVID-19 created by the Work Relations Council of Catalonia. The document is updated

and can be reviewed depending on the evolution of the situation and according to the available information. Within the framework of the Work Relations Council, it is considered necessary to provide labour information to companies and workers; recommend prevention measures, focusing on the environmental, organisational and individual actions, in order to minimise the risk; propose actions in the labour-relations field that have been agreed, so that Catalonia has a unified proposal of measures and actions; transfer some considerations regarding the determination of the contingency before the exposure of a worker to a biological agent that entails a period of preventive isolation; and, encourage the mobility of staff linked to the sector of care services for people in the context of the health and social emergency.

## **Speeding up unemployment benefits**

The Public Employment Service of Catalonia (SOC) offers its infrastructure to support the Spanish Government Public Employment Service (SEPE) with the aim to process unemployment benefits. People who go to the SOC will be registered without having to wait for the SEPE. [More information](#).

## Flexibilisation of deadlines and streamline of urgent needs

Deadlines for enrolments to different grants and realignment of the channels to process the Guaranteed Minimum Income scheme of Catalonia (RGC) and ensure its availability, especially in urgent cases. [More information](#)

## Measures adopted in the recovery phase



## Two guides with practical tips so young people can manage confinement with emotional balance

The Directorate General for Youth publishes through social media, tools to identify emotions, learn to become positive and rediscover new ways to participate and connect with the environment. [More information](#). UNESCO has included the guide to accompany young people during their confinement "How to find meaning" in a list of the best resources and good practices worldwide. [More information](#).



## Creation of a benefit for the care of children separated from their family due to COVID-19

This is an emergency financial benefit that covers the costs of caring for children temporarily unprotected due to the pandemic. [More information](#).

## Online housing advice to guide young people who cannot afford housing because of having lost income due to COVID-19

Expert staff will resolve legal doubts about who can and how to opt in for a 50% discount on rent, a deferral of the fee or obtain a bank microcredit of up to 10 years and without interest. [More information](#).

## Train staff in nursing homes on the COVID-19

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Families, the Consortium for Continuing Education of Catalonia (CFCC) and Doctors Without Borders (MSF) have started a collaboration to provide online training on COVID-19 to health professionals and of the care sector working in nursing homes. The training materials and sessions aim to expand staff knowledge about COVID-19 and provide advice and instructions for implementing hygiene and disease prevention measures to minimise the risk of infection. [More information](#).



### **#HeyBrain campaign for a conscious use of mobile phones and social networks, placing young people at the centre of decisions**

The Secretariat for Children, Adolescents and Youth is launching the campaign to encourage healthy and responsible habits in the use of mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) and social media. With the motto, “I act for a conscious internet. Create, enjoy and share”, the government's social networks, radio and audio-visual wedges will be aimed at teenagers aged between 12 and 16 and their parents and guardians in particular, with a close, emotional graphic campaign. [More information.](#)

### **Care services for women in situations of gender-based violence**

There have been 3,457 care interventions provided to women since confinement began. [More information.](#)

### **Updated Instruction 8/2020 for the application of labour measures for workers who have signed discontinuous fixed-term employment contract**

Because of COVID-19 and for the application of the regulatory provisions issued in labour matters. [More information.](#)

### **Instruction 1/2020, of 8 April 2020, of the General Directorate for Social Economy, the Third Sector and Cooperatives**

It is agreed to continue the instruction and resolution of the procedures relating to the provision of the Catalan guaranteed income. [More information](#)

### **Resolution for the accomplishment of the integral services of orientation and support to the labour integration of people with disability or mental health disorders, for the year 2019**

Resolution TSF/1301/2019, of 9 May, while Royal Decree 463/2020, of 14 March, declaring the state of alarm, is in force for the management of the health crisis situation caused by COVID-19. [More information.](#)

## **COVID-19 recommendations for companies that have resumed activity**

Government, unions and employers have agreed on a wide range of measures to prevent COVID-19 expansion. Among others: to promote telework; respect the 1.5m distance in collective areas; wear a mask to prevent the virus from spreading, and other PPE when appropriate; risk prevention services should assess workers' symptoms and temperature; companies must review Contingency Plans or Occupational Health and Safety Protocols, agreed with workers' representatives. There are specific measures for workers in health, social sectors and nursing homes. [More information.](#)



## **Virtual platform to train workers that will be incorporated into nursing homes**

The Public Employment Service of Catalonia and the Consortium for Continuing Education organise courses, of between 10 and 15 hours, to guarantee that the people registered carry out their work with the greatest

rigor and professionalism. *Médecins Sans Frontières* has made several specific modules available to the staff of the nursing homes.

## **Adapt training actions and occupational programmes to the situation caused by the health alarm**

Introduction of online training whenever possible and extension of the terms of certain programmes and related contracts suspended due to the crisis. [More information.](#)

## **To support the consolidation, strengthening and reinvention of self-employment in Catalonia, for the year 2019.**

### **Extend the execution period of the Consolida't program**

Resolution / 1525/2019, of 7 May, with extraordinary measures to deal with the impact of COVID-19 in relation to the "Consolida't program", to support the consolidation, strengthening and reinvention of self-employment in Catalonia on 2019. [More information.](#)

### **Extraordinary measures to address the impact of COVID-19 in relation to the financing of training plans in the field of social dialogue and collective bargaining, for the year 2019**

Granting of subsidies for the financing

of training plans related to social dialogue and collective bargaining. The beneficiary organisations will be able to adapt the methodology, the aim and effect, to allow the foreseen formative activities. [More information.](#)

### **Emergency benefit for workers and the self-employed to cover expenses for basic needs and basic supplies**

Implementation of an extraordinary grant of €200, until the exhaustion of €20m budget, for employees and self-employed workers with family responsibilities who have suffered a reduction of more than 30% of their income due to COVID-19. Specifically, people affected by a temporary regulation file, those with an expired temporary contract or self-employed workers who have had to suspend or reduce their activity, may request it. To facilitate the acquisition of food, pharmacy products and other basic supplies, to each affected family unit. [More information.](#)

### **Creation of a working group to agree on measures for the social crisis of the COVID-19**

The Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Families, Chakir el Homrani, has proposed to the Board of Entities of the Third Social Sector of Catalonia, its participation in a task force within the Technical Committee for the elaboration of the Plan for the

economic reactivation and social protection as a result of the crisis of the COVID-19 (CORECO), and to agree on measures to deal with the social consequences of the crisis. It wants to discuss issues such as a new model of personal autonomy, the reactivation of negotiations on energy poverty, child poverty, educational leisure activities this summer and immigrants in an irregular administrative situation.

### **1.5 MEUR to combat child poverty and malnutrition**

The government and the Red Cross will allocate this money to the purchase and distribution of food, emergency kits and wallet cards for families with vulnerable children and teenagers, and will reach families in aid for premium products. The aid provided within the Red Cross Response Plan to the social effects of COVID-19, is coordinated with Social Services, in order not to duplicate efforts and ensure that it reaches those who need it most. In fact, since the beginning of the crisis in mid-March, a team of 6,382 Red Cross volunteers and technicians have distributed 504,000 kg of food and have made 46,500 deliveries of necessities and medicines to more than 90,752 people at risk of social exclusion in over 150 Catalan municipalities.

### **10.5 MEUR for municipal projects related to the COVID-19 health crisis**

The Ministry will support local bodies with 10.5 MEUR to finance homelessness services (€1m), COVID-19 volunteering (€1,5m) and home care service (€8m) through the program contract with municipalities and county councils. It has been decided to strengthen municipal and social services with this economic increase for actions aimed at vulnerable groups, in anticipation of an aggravation of the economic and social situation.

### **8.7 MEUR to annual projects of social entities**

In addition to the ordinary call for grants for the period 2019-2022 endowed with 432 MEUR, this will fund initiatives carried out in 2020, addressed, among others, to people and families in a situation of vulnerability, the elderly, children and teenagers, young people and people with dependency or disability. The aim is to guarantee the viability of the projects of non-profit organizations for the care of people to deal with the social consequences arising from the health crisis.

### **7.3 MEUR grants for the year 2020 for non-profit organizations**

These grants have been declared of

general interest, with the aim of helping to mitigate the social and economic impact that the health crisis has had. With the aim of increasing employability, the budget sums up to €7,300,000 (€5,840,000 for 2020 and €1,460,000 for 2021).

### **Financing of social economy companies for the year 2020-2022**

Aid in the form of a guarantee to social economy companies for investments in tangible or intangible fixed assets, capitalization, working capital and advances for contracts with the public sector for 2020-2022. The maximum amount to formalize operations under the Agreement signed on 11 May 2020 between the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Families and the ICF to finance projects of companies in the social and cooperative economy.

### **Access criteria for the new public vacancies on residential centres**

Ministries of Labour, Social Affairs and Families and Health, have approved the extension of priority access criteria for new income to residential centres, incorporating situations arising from the impact of COVID-19. This resolution also updates and collects the different situations of social emergency in which people who require care in the services of residential centres for the elderly can be found, which entail the right to

receive urgent or priority care, given that they cannot wait for the ordinary turn.

### **11 MEUR support to the educational leisure sector**

The Ministry has presented the 2020 Educational Leisure Plan, and has announced that this year it will allocate a total of 11 MEUR to the sector, which means doubling the investment initially planned before the COVID-19 health crisis. It quadruples the budget for scholarships and will allocate 4.65 MEUR so up to 40,000 children and adolescents from families in a vulnerable situation or financially affected by the COVID-19 can participate in leisure activities, such as summer camps and work camps. These scholarships would range between €80 and €100.

The Government had already expressed its commitment to making leisure activities possible this summer, ensuring that they can be developed with safety and protection measures, as it considers leisure education an essential tool for the integral development of children and teenagers. The Ministry also considers it important that this year there is summer leisure to help entities and associations, as well as the promotion of zero-kilometer activities.

### **6.1 MEUR to the self-employment of young people enrolled in the Youth Guarantee Program**

This measure to promote self-employment takes implies a subsidy of €10m for each young person who is uninterruptedly registered in the Social Security scheme for the self-employed, or in the mutual society of the corresponding professional association, during a maximum period of 12 months. The aim is to guarantee a minimum income for the self-employed at the beginning of their economic activity.

### **More than 9 MEUR to employment projects for people with disabilities and mental health disorders**

The Ministry will allocate €9,375,000 this year to employment support services for people with disabilities or mental health disorders, to increase the degree of employability and employment and facilitate social adaptation and employment of workers with disabilities who have special difficulties in finding employment in companies. These groups suffer from a high degree of risk of exclusion, which the current health crisis situation has aggravated, given the strong social and economic impact it has had on the labour market.



## **74.6 MEUR to the labour integration of people with disabilities or mental illness**

A total budget of 74.6 MEUR has been set up for the employment integration of people with physical, intellectual or mental illness, both through special work centres and the ordinary market. These lines will affect approximately 12,300 people with disabilities and more than 1,200 support professionals, technicians and monitors.

## **Enabling suitable spaces for confinement for the fruit campaign workers**

Three Ministries (Health, Labour and Agriculture) are promoting a specific action plan for the newly arrived population of the fruit picking campaign. Ministry of Labour increases support for town councils and county councils with 10.5 MEUR for actions on homelessness, volunteering and home care services linked to COVID-19.

## **More than 2.5 MEUR to this year's Agricultural Campaign to intensify support for the agricultural sector**

€625,000 are awarded for hiring and training 52 technical people for mediation tasks and assistance to temporary workers in the agricultural campaign in the province of Lleida. The job bank created by the SOC to

work in the summer fruit campaign has received more than 9,100 applications, three times more than last year.

## **Temporary employment regulation files procedure derived from force majeure**

It establishes the criteria and the procedure on certain formalities linked to the temporary files of regulation of employment like suspension of contracts or reduction of days. Approving the revised text of the Workers' Statute Act, based on extraordinary urgent measures to deal with the economic and social impact of COVID-19, which are directly related to the health crisis

## **Data on Temporary Regulation Files presented in Catalonia**

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Families reports that 97,544 temporary employment regulation (ERTO) files have been submitted in Catalonia so far, affecting a total of 718,865 working people. ERTOs by force majeure represent 93.5% of those submitted, and affect 84.6% of working people.

Two interactive maps on the website of the Labour and Productive Model Observatory show the figures for ERTOs by localities. The information by municipality is monthly and is added the daily-updated information by demarcation and county. Specific

measures for health, social and health groups, residences and home care are also included. [More information](#).

### **Instruction 10/2020 on the processing of work-life balance suspended due to the declaration of the state of alarm**

The instruction aims to take measures to absorb the outstanding pending conciliations, a total of 8,037, as well as those already planned between 11/05/2020 and 31/05/2020, a total of 743, which could not be notified by interruption of the postal service.

### **Recommendation paper on the use of microbiological tests in the face of the staggered return to the work environment**

This paper has been approved in the light of the current context, which does not yet have, in the short term, a comprehensive immunization or a fully effective vaccine. However, the return must be guaranteed with maximum health security and by taking the necessary preventive and organizational measures to prevent the risk of coronavirus infection in the workplace.

### **Update of recommendations for companies and workers in relation to the Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2**

# 11. Department of Enterprise (Business) and Knowledge

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**Measures adopted in the emergency phase**



## **Flexibility of temporary employment regulation records**

Temporary Employment Regulation Records (ERTES) caused by COVID-19 have been considered force majeure and workers have the right to the contributory unemployment benefit, even if the unemployed person does not complete the required prior contribution requirement. [More information.](#)

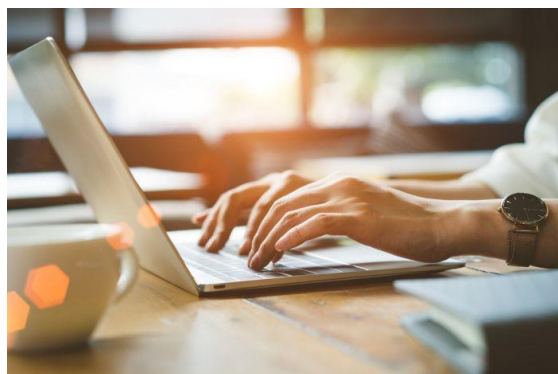
## **Extraordinary benefit for the cessation of activity for self-employed workers**

Self-employed workers with activities suspended by the current state of alarm, or whose invoicing in the month preceding the request for the benefit, is reduced by at least 75% compared to the average billing for the previous semester, have been entitled to the extraordinary benefit for the cessation of activity. [More information.](#)

## **Creation of 'Business Marketplace COVID-19'**

Online service to connect technological and health solutions to

face the COVID-19. A supply and demand service to address the emergency within the citizenship. Users need to fill in a form to offer or request any business solution that can help deal with the situation. The government publishes the offers and demands and request with the maximum agility. It already counts on almost 1,700 registered companies to collaborate and orientate their capacities towards facing COVID-19. [More information.](#)



## **Virtual desk of 'ACCIO competitiveness for Catalonia'**

A measure to strengthen the channel with electronic business advice and help the creation of new services during the COVID-19 crisis.

- Zero minute: aimed to reinforce the business attention system via chat to answer any business-related doubt with specialists in innovation, internationalisation and financing.

- Opportunities: videoconference service to attend any business ideas or enquiries.
- On-going support by an account manager in case of on-going personalised projects.
- Updated useful information on COVID-19 for the business sector. [More information.](#)

### Flexibilisation of deadlines

Interruption of the administrative deadlines of the acts and procedures related the management of the calls for research grants and research grants of the Agency for Management of University and Research Grants (AGAUR). [More information.](#)

### Measures adopted in the recovery phase



### Package of trade aid measures

Activation of a package of subsidy lines in the field of retail, services, crafts, and fashion, in order to support the economic reactivation of these sectors. The grants, endowed with up to €9m, will be articulated through the Consortium of Commerce, Crafts and Fashion of Catalonia (CCAM). [More information.](#)

### €2m to support micro-enterprises and professionals in the tourism sector

An aid of €2,500 in a single advance payment is designed for companies and professionals both affected by COVID-19 and with limited access to other existing aid lines due to its smaller structure and lower turnover. Beneficiaries may be accommodation establishments, tourist guides, mediation companies, establishments and activities of tourist interest, with a maximum of five employees and up to a maximum of €500,000 in annual turnover. [More information.](#)

### ‘Now it’s your turn’ campaign

Launching of the ‘Now it’s your turn’ marketing campaign with the aim of reactivating local commercial activity as the reopening of establishments is planned for the coming weeks.



### FAQ for business and professionals

At ‘Business Channel’, all frequently asked questions of companies and professionals related to the COVID-19

emergency are answered. [More information.](#)

### **Support to Catalan companies with international branches and importing sanitary materials**

The international network of Trade and Investment Offices of Catalonia have set up new services to strengthen their support to Catalan companies based abroad. They are validating international suppliers and assist in the process of importing sanitary materials to Catalonia. [More information.](#)

### **Creation of the Orfeu Programme**

Designed to address the massive screening of the population to detect COVID-19.

The first phase, funded by the Catalan Government with €1.4m, involves three CERCA research centres in Catalonia: the Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG), the Institute of Bioengineering of Catalonia (IBEC) and the Institute of Biomedical Research (IRB Barcelona). The CRG leads this effort to carry out 170,000 tests to detect COVID-19 both during the lockdown and as measures are progressively relaxed. The centres are working seven days a week to conduct 100,000 tests during a six-week period in its labs thanks to their regular PCR capabilities, in addition to the next-generation sequencing robot with a

capacity to run 8,000 samples per day at CRG. The programme is based on the use of real-time PCR to look for the presence of COVID-19 genetic material in samples.

The second, funded with €1.2m, adds the specialised facilities of the University of Barcelona, Pompeu Fabra University, the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Rovira i Virgili University and EURECAT (through the Centre for Omic Sciences, COS). This extension adds capacity for 139,000 tests to be carried out at the Catalan universities and which join the 170,000 from the first phase. 309,000 tests are expected for six weeks.

The tests have been compared and verified to meet the national standard set by Spanish hospitals, as well as those in Europe, the United States, Israel and further afield.



### **New website on research activity linked to COVID-19**

It compiles projects, funding and solidarity initiatives led or participated by research centres, large infrastructures, universities and hospitals in Catalonia that investigate on therapies, vaccines and new

diagnostic tests for COVID-19. The repository research activity in Catalonia linked to the COVID-19 reflects the scientific effort of the knowledge system of Catalonia. The site also provides information on the European Commission response to the COVID-19 and the opportunities for researchers and SMEs. A FAQs section on the site addresses questions regarding research activities during lockdown. [More information.](#)



### **Emergency call to speed new solutions for preventing and treating COVID-19**

Promoted by the Catalan Ministry of Health, it has funded 19 projects on new therapies, drug repurposing, vaccine development and diagnostics, with €4m. [More information.](#) Two more calls are under preparation by the Ministry of Business and Knowledge, targeting different TRLs to fund research and innovation projects against COVID-19 in all knowledge fields. The total amount of both calls will exceed €10m.

### **The Catalan Energy Institute (ICAEN) promotes energy saving and efficiency during confinement**

The Catalan Energy Institute (ICAEN) has launched various initiatives to encourage energy saving and efficiency at home during the confinement period established to deal with COVID-19.

### **‘Taulellcomerç.cat’, a platform of innovative initiatives to reactivate local trade**

The Ministry of Business and Knowledge, through the Consortium of Commerce, Crafts and Fashion (CCAM), has launched ‘Taulellcomerç.cat’, a platform of innovative initiatives to reactivate local trade. The aim is to make this platform an online reference for entities, companies and consumers.

### **‘Artesania Catalunya’ (Catalan Handicrafts) launches the informative campaign ‘Crafts enter your home’, to promote the work of the Catalan artisan sector**

The Catalan Handicrafts initiative of the Consortium of Commerce, Crafts and Fashion (CCAM) has launched the information campaign ‘Crafts enter your home’ to promote and value the work of the Catalan artisan sector.

### **150 SMEs receive a grant of €14,000 to promote digital transformation projects**

150 Catalan SMEs have received a grant of up to €14,000 in the form of a grant to start or accelerate digital transformation projects. It is the result of the first line of aid of the ProACCIÓ 4.0 program of the Ministry of Business and Knowledge, executed through ACCIÓ - the agency for the competitiveness of companies -, an initiative that aims to promote the transformation of the Catalan business industry towards an industry 4.0, acting as the one-stop shop in Catalonia in this field.

### **Personalised service on financing for SME**

ACCIO Competitiveness for Catalonia has launched a personalised service to provide financing advice to companies within the COVID-19 framework. Not only does it evaluate the impact of COVID-19 in each company finance health, but also supports it to find suitable funding.

### **COVID-19 Portal at the Secretariat for Universities and Research website**

With updated information on the affectation of the different tests of access to the university, the academic activities in the 12 Catalan universities, as well as in the announcements of

recruitment, scholarships and grants. It also includes access to teaching activities and online resources from universities, and research activity on COVID-19 in Catalonia.

The Catalan knowledge system members are leading or participating in studies and clinical trials to identify diverse and complementary treatments against SARS-CoV2. The lines of research include the application of existing drugs to block the effects of the virus; the identification and administration of specific antibodies against SARS-CoV2; enhancing the patient's immune system response to detect and attack the virus; the design and testing of functional coronavirus vaccines; the use of high-performance computing to enhance intelligent drug design; the application of selected SARSCoV-2 antigens using plant-derived technologies; or blocking a key viral protein in the infection, among others. [More information.](#)

An specific mention for a dozen women-led researches that are investigating the coronavirus in different fields such as biomedical, nanotechnology or mathematics, among others. [More information.](#)

### **Survey to universities and research centres regarding COVID-19 and funds**

A survey has been conducted to 12 universities and 39 research centers

by the Inter-University Council of Catalonia, the CERCA Institution and the Agency for Management of University and Research Grants.

Answers were received from 50% of universities and 51% of research centers consulted (7 biomedicine and healthcare, 3 earth sciences and agrofood, 7 STEMS, 1 economics, 2 social sciences and humanities; around 6000 researchers).

Main conclusions and key requests:

- Period extension and flexibility of budget allocation, with simplified and consistent procedures.
- Overcome effects of temporary lay-off in ongoing contracts and new hirings, considering extension of HR schemes and budget rules flexibilisation.
- Reorientation of EU research strategy to preparedness to future outbreaks.
- Regarding ERDF, effective adaptation of the program to R&I activities, both for personnel and project outcomes

### **Measures taken to facilitate the adaptation of the university higher education system**

The Ministry of Universities and Research has promoted various measures to facilitate the adaptation of the university higher education system in the face of the exceptional situation caused by the COVID-19.

As for the University Admission Test (PAU), the date for its completion has been delayed and criteria of flexibility have been adopted to allow students to

take the whole test regardless of the circumstances in the last term of the school year. With regard to the evaluations and the end of the academic year, an online emergency teaching scenario has made possible to establish non-face-to-face assessment formats and a series of guidelines to universities. In terms of internships, universities have made an effort to make the academic calendar more flexible for final degree and master's theses or external internships that have not been able to adapt to the online format.

In the field of internationalization, recommendations have been made to foreign students who are part of mobility programs to facilitate their return and it has also been recommended to postpone or cancel all scheduled Erasmus stays for the duration of the exceptional situation.

Finally, a permanently updated website that reports on the effects of COVID-19 in the field of knowledge has been created; it includes all the contributions that are being made from research centers and universities in Catalonia supporting the health system in the fight against the pandemic. [More information.](#)



## CATALAN AGENCY FOR CONSUMERS

### Measures adopted in the emergency phase



#### Information for consumers

Up to date information on what kind of commercial and leisure activities will remain closed and what kind of commercial activities and services will remain open, including the reduction of activities such as road transports, train transports, flights and inland water transport. [More information.](#)

#### General advice

The Agency encourages consumers towards responsible and solidarity consumption, to plan shopping and strictly buy the necessary goods. The Agency also advises not to stockpile products.

### Measures adopted in the recovery phase



#### New online channel to attend to inquiries due to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis

Through its [YouTube Live platform](#), the Catalan Consumer Agency is adding a new space and making this new

channel available to the public. From Monday to Friday from 12pm to 1pm, citizens can send all their queries related to the effects in the field of consumption.

Monographic programs ('Càpsules Informatives #Cuidem el consum') on the following topics: scam and hoax products to fight against COVID-19, short circuit consumption and support to local producers, home food services, advices for buying at supermarkets, periodic payments, flights and cancellations, public transport and seasonal tickets, concerts and event's cancellations, priority purchase for vulnerable groups in establishments, deadlines to claim the package travels, agencies, vouchers, return the money back.

These programs have been published throughout social media (facebook, Instagram, twitter, Spotify) as well as digital newspapers.

Moreover, the Catalan Consumer Agency has updated the information on other areas in the site web concerning flights and package travels; shows and other events; services you pay throughout monthly quotes; purchases and token payment; gas and electricity services; phone and internet services; loans and credits; mortuary services; location; masks and hygienic gel.

# 12. Department of Digital Policy and Public Administration

## Measures adopted in the emergency phase



### Digital infrastructure

The Department and operators have agreed to extend, at no cost, data plans in order not to leave subscribers without internet in view of the increasing demand generated by COVID-19. Furthermore, the Department has also extended the capacity of optic fibre public networks so that local operators, which in some cases have experienced a 300% increase of the demand in certain areas, can guarantee the service to citizens.

### AI-based application ‘Confinapp’

Confinapp.cat is a digital tool that integrates all the services and information that the government offers to citizens and companies during the COVID-19 crisis. To improve its functioning and effectiveness, this app includes an AI-based virtual assistant that manages and solves citizens’ needs and doubts during confinement (hygiene and health measures, allowed movements, measures to support workers and companies’, schooling information, etc.). Moreover, this app also encourages citizens to identify social needs in current

circumstances so that companies and start-ups can develop a solution and include them in the app. This will be carried out through a so-called “Hackatlon”, launched with the support of Mobile World Capital Barcelona, Digital Future Society and i2Cat Foundation. [More information.](#)



### Cybersecurity

In the light of the cyber-frauds and cyber-crimes related to the expansion of COVID-19, the Cybersecurity Agency of Catalonia has published a report ([available in Catalan](#)) alerting of the main threats and listing the key recommendations to follow. Some of them include the need to distrust non-requested mails and to search for COVID-19 information on official sites such as the Catalan Department of Health or the World Health Organisation (WHO). [More information.](#)

### Teleworking

In order to preserve the health of public

workers and guarantee the provision of basic and strategic public services, the Department has enabled the possibility to continue working from home (teleworking). Besides, those public workers at risk, in charge of children or sick people and not performing basic and strategic services will be given “permission” to stay home and receive 100% of the wage. Apart from that, the Department has also launched a [webpage](#) with all the necessary information regarding teleworking (#JoTeletreball: Q&A, cybersecurity advices, user guides for ICT devices, specific training, etc.). [More information.](#)



### **Survey on the effects of COVID-19 among Catalan ICT companies**

CTecno and the Government of Catalonia launched a survey to explore how the current crisis was affecting the Catalan ICT sector ([check out the survey results](#)). With the participation of more than 300 companies, the survey showed that, thanks to the existence of the necessary tools and procedures, this sector could quickly implement teleworking measures. Although the whole sector has

experienced a decrease in the total turnover and number of clients, those companies offering digital services, online training and research have been less affected. To face this situation, the surveyed companies highlight the need to postpone tax payments, provide financing with special conditions and the leadership of public administrations to boost digitalisation and to act as client for projects. [More information.](#)

### **Pool of volunteers to develop administrative tasks**

Public servants not dedicated to strategic tasks in the current situation, can volunteer to develop administrative tasks for the Department of Health and Department of Homeland –which are two of the departments most affected by the COVID-19 crisis. The idea is to reinforce these departments. [More information.](#)

### **Measures adopted in the recovery phase**



### **Deployment of optic fibre network**

Since most people in Catalonia are working and studying from home, it has become essential to guarantee proper levels of connectivity. In this context, in April the Government of Catalonia has

declared, as “emergency works”, 10 projects aimed at deploying public optic fibre network in 51 municipalities and county capitals where the existing levels of network coverage are insufficient. These projects will cover Falset, Vielha, Puigcerdà, Moià, Montblanc, Valls, Gandesa, Solsona, Borges Blanques and Sort. Based on this decision, deployment works started on the May 11 with the electric conduit for the section Bagà – Puigcerdà. By the end of this year, connectivity will reach 6.4 million inhabitants, 84% of the population in Catalonia. [More information.](#)



### **Cybersecurity campaign for companies**

The use of digital tools, especially teleworking, has increased due to confinement measures. Bearing in mind the current increase in cyber-attacks (nearly 150%) and their economic and social impact, the Cybersecurity Agency of Catalonia has launched a campaign to raise awareness on the risks, threats and vulnerabilities that companies, and specially SMEs, face. By providing recommendations, advice and tools,

this campaign wants to promote a cybersecurity culture within the business sector. [More information.](#)

### **Hackovid**

The Department of Digital Policies and Public Administration, Mobile World Capital Barcelona, Digital Future Society and i2Cat Foundation, organized Hackovid; a virtual, open and participatory Hackathon to respond to the social needs related to the confinement situation as well as those that will arise later as activity starts to normalise. In order to identify these needs, Hackovid launched a participatory process so that citizens could propose their needs and assess the most relevant ones (such as the provision of food for families at risk of social exclusion or digital resources for teachers and students). Afterwards, programmers and developers had to come up with an innovative digital solution to address them. More than 100 teams of programmers and developers participated in this event. The winning solutions will be included in the ‘Confinapp’ mobile application. [More information.](#)

### **The Office from Home**

The Department has created a repository of digital tools called ‘[The Office from Home](#)’ so citizens, especially self-employed and SMEs, can continue their activities and productivity during the COVID-19

crisis. These resources, software, services and tools were offered by different ITC companies and are classified by categories (collaborative work, security, connectivity, etc.) and cost (free of charge or with, at least, a 25% discount). The repository will grow as more companies offer new resources and teleworking tools. [More information.](#)

### Sit & TIC Talks

The Directorate General of Digital Society is organising a series of online debates called 'Sit & Tic Talks, discussions on e-confinement' to address the challenges posed by COVID-19 and the technological solutions that allow us to continue with our daily activities. These sessions will be moderated by journalist Karma Peiró and will have the participation of experts in technological issues. Some of the discussion topics will be AI solutions in times of crises, e-learning and teleworking. [More information.](#)



### Guide to collaborative working for public administration

The Open Administration of Catalonia Consortium (AOC) has launched a [guide to help small and medium public administrations](#) that do not have their own teleworking model. This guide includes general recommendations and orientation.

### Alliance with Nextdoor platform to boost on-line neighbourhood collaboration

The Ministry of Digital Policies has joined forces with Nextdoor to connect neighbours in Catalonia. Through this digital application, the Government of Catalonia has opened a new communication channel to make available all the information and services offered to citizens during and after confinement as well as recommendations, news and other relevant information on maximizing the use of IT tools. Nextdoor is an app created in the US back in 2010 to facilitate and improve local relations. This app is present in more than 800 neighbourhoods and 180 municipalities in Catalonia. [More information.](#)

### Prevention and security measures for Public Administration workers returning to their places of work

Due to the current easing of restrictive

measures and the implementation of the first steps towards the new normality, the Ministry has published two instructions ([4/2020](#) and [5/2020](#)) on the prevention and security measures to guarantee the protection of public workers in all Government Ministries and Independent bodies. The first instruction lays down the actions to be taken beforehand to prepare the workspace: it establishes teleworking as the most preferred modality of work and lists measures such as security distances in working places, hygiene measures, provision of masks, etc. The second instruction, which deals with the progressive reincorporation of public workers to on-site activities, establishes a return based on four phases and foresees measures to make working schedules more flexible and allow family reconciliation for those with children and dependent people. Public personnel at a situation of risk will continue working from home until the new “normal situation” is reached. More information [here](#) and [here](#).

### **Digitalisation of SMEs and self-employed**

The Ministry of Digital Policies, together with the [Council of Chambers of Commerce](#) and the employers organisations [PIMEC](#) and [Foment del Treball](#), has launched an initiative called ‘[Dona la volta al teu negoci](#)’ (Turn your business upside down).

This initiative will offer free advice, training, technological and commercial support to businesses and self-employed people to help them start their on-line business. Some specific services will include the creation of a webpage or an on-line store free of cost, strategies to promote business in social media, provision of digital tools such as Google Meet and Drive and information on subsidies and funds available to digitalize business. [More information](#).

Through the [SmartCatalonia Laboratory](#), the Ministry has also presented a [catalogue](#) of innovative solutions to help public authorities and business in the reactivation of local sectors such as tourism and commerce, which have been severely affected by COVID-19, by facilitating their digitalization and helping promote their activities. The catalogue includes, among others, digital tools such as data intelligence-based software, market places and mobile apps. [More information](#).

# 13. Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food

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Measures adopted in the emergency phase



## Information for workers

Direct contact with fishermen of the boats, people working in the fishermen's associations and people working in the fish markets to inform about the protection measures to avoid being contaminated by COVID-19. The Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries has provided a telephone number and an email address to address any concerns.



## Direct contact with the sector

Permanent contact with the fishery sector and aquaculture through their federations and associations to inform them about the economic support, labour law measures (Record of temporary employment regulation, in acronym in Spanish ERTOS) to the fishermen and ship-owners.

## Prioritise essential funds

Prioritise all the invitations for tender of the European Fisheries and Maritime Fund (EFFM) putting in place alternative communication mechanisms like a specific email address, a special online form. Prioritise the administrative procedure concerning the regional regulation (for those who have suffered damages caused by Storm Gloria in January 2020). Exceptional procedure to handle the authorisation procedures for fishery management and making available two different email addresses to exchange information with public administration.

## Boost digitalisation procedures

The Fishery and Nautical school has established new procedures to renovate or dispatch titles, or licences, via online means. The Fishery and Nautical school has postponed their trainings. A website has been made available to reach the school.

## Guarantee food production and supply

Ensure minimum essential services keep working to guarantee production and supply (including farmers and stockbreeders, farm workers and

farms, food suppliers, suppliers of handling materials, containers and packaging of products, slaughterhouses, carriers, and distribution chain wholesalers and retailers.) Allow transport of animals.

### **Extension of administrative deadlines**

The term for presentation of the Single Farm Financial Statement (Declaració Única Agrària, DUN) 2020, by means of which applications can be made for Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) grants for 2020 and other Ministry of Agriculture procedures undertaken, began on 1 February 2020 and was scheduled to end on 30 April 2020. However, given the state of alarm caused by COVID-19, the Department is processing the extension of the term for DUN subsidies and procedures until 15 June 2020 (direct subsidies, sustainability grants, competitiveness grants, and other DUN procedures). Concerning grants for the restructuring and reconversion of vineyards, the term will be extended up to 15 calendar days after suspension of the state of alarm.

### **Reinforce continuous distance learning**

From its Agricultural Training Service, the Department has strengthened the Continuous Distance Learning activity, having had to suspend face-to-face and blended coordinated by the Mas

Bové Agricultural School. Special webinars have been opened to improve business practices to fight COVID-19.



### **Donation of material**

Donations have been made by the Department's agricultural schools to help prevent COVID-19 (gloves, facemasks, cleaning and disinfecting equipment) available at schools and the agri-food laboratory, at nearby health centres.

### **Measures adopted in the recovery phase**



### **Recommendations to ensure safety in the fruit campaign under COVID-19**

Protocols to guarantee the safety of people who intervene in the food production, manipulation, and transport of the raw material have been approved, as well as those who intervene in the transformation from the farm to the agrifood industry. A main goal of the above-mentioned



measures is to guarantee the quantity and quality of the production and supplies to ensure food security and food safety to the population. This regulation provides for monitoring of activities through different territorial commissions where all main actors are involved (farmers, unions, industries, municipalities, government). These commissions monitor the agricultural campaign and agree the implementation of recommendations: inform all workers about the disease, regulate external visits to workplaces, hygiene rules and work organisation, transfer of workers, criteria for accommodation and measures at the municipal level, among others. [More information](#).

### **Purchase €4m of fresh products from small producers to donate them to the 'Food Bank'**

The Ministry of Agriculture will buy fresh products from small producers with difficulties accessing the food supply chain and commercialisation. These perishable products will be donated to the 'Food Bank' to guarantee the nourishment of deprived families, as the demand has risen due to the socioeconomic COVID-19 crisis.

### **Delivery EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme products to the 'Food Bank'**

After suspending educational activity in Catalonia due to the COVID-19

outbreak, the Ministry of Agriculture will deliver, to the 'Food Bank' foundation, the fruits, vegetables and milk belonging to the EU school fruit, vegetables and milk schemes which cannot be distributed during the scholar term 2019 - 2020. It concerns 174,000 milk litters and around 16,000 Kg of apples. All these products will be aimed at vulnerable people in the entire network of social initiative entities provided by the 'Food Bank'.



### **Subsidies/aide to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in fishery and aquaculture sector**

The Ministry is preparing subsidies to furnish the sector with individual protection equipment to be able to face the public health crisis due the COVID-19 outbreak in the fisheries and aquaculture sector and in the commercialisation of fishery products. This support will be co-financed at 75% by the European Fund of Fisheries and Maritime Fund.

## Questions and answers about COVID-19

The Ministry has published a space to answer the frequent questions about COVID-19, divided among different thematic sections (agriculture, forestry, hunting, rural development and CAP, livestock and nautical) on its website.

### 4 MEUR to purchase the fresh products from the small farmers who have marketing difficulties due the COVID 19

Due to the COVID-19 sanitary crisis and the state of alarm, many fresh and perishable products producers and others, like olive oil and honey producers have lost their marketing circuits, which are linked to the horeca and the tourism.

On the other hand, the economic crises has caused a social crisis where the most weak sectors of the society and in particular y groups which are socially excluded are suffering for the lack of resources due to the stop of the economic activity.

The ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food has set an aide of 4 MEUR to support economically the producers who are suffering from the COVID-19 crisis throughout purchasing their products. At the same time, it helps to the social sectors, which have been more touched by the social and economic crisis, who are

receiving this food. The above decision is taken in line with the European Commission decision framework to support the economy during the COVID-19 crisis.

The aid will amount at most € 4,000 to € 10,000 per producer depending on the type of product, or € 75,000 per producer group covering 85% of the value of the unsold product. The products will be delivered to the Food Bank Foundation, who will distribute it among social organizations in need. [More information.](#)



### 1 MEUR to provide the fishing sector with personal protective equipment against the health crisis of the COVID19

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Generalitat de Catalunya, through the Directorate General of Fisheries, has called for extraordinary aid to subsidize the actions taken from the 1 February 2020, aimed at increasing protection and security measures in the fisheries sector.

These grants, co-financed by 75% by the European Maritime and Fisheries

Fund (EMFF), aim to facilitate to these operators the purchase of equipment and materials for protection and disinfection of individuals and investments in workplaces that ensure adequate distancing of the working people. This in order to contribute to the exercise of these economic activities in conditions of security and to reduce the possibilities of contagion and propagation of the COVID-19.

### **Marketplace of solidarity initiatives that fights to respond to the food emergency**

Various social initiatives are working hard to ensure that no vulnerable person is left without food and to help health professionals and other indispensable groups who are working to combat this pandemic. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food has created 'MarketPlace', an online marketplace, to support the work being done by social initiatives and the agri-food sector throughout the year, and especially during this crisis of food emergency, to contribute to the good use of food. The initiatives included in the online market are working to supply food to vulnerable groups with the aim of facilitating their contact with the agri-food sector and helping to alleviate the food emergency and prevent food waste.

[More information.](#)

# 14. Independent Regulatory Authority: the Catalan Audio-Visual Council

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The [Catalan Audio-Visual Council](#) (CAC) is the Independent Regulatory Authority for audio-visual communication in Catalonia. Its objective is to make sure that suppliers of audio-visual services, both public and private, comply with regulations applicable to them. The council's principles of action are defending freedom of speech and information, pluralism, neutrality and honesty of news as well as free competition in the sector.

In accordance with the provisions of [Law 2/2000](#) of its creation, the Catalan Audio-Visual Council acts with full independence of the Government of Catalonia and public administrations in the exercise of its functions. [More information](#).

**Measures adopted in the emergency phase**



## **Combating misinformation in social media**

The [Catalan Audio-visual Council](#) (CAC) has published a report called '[Content on YouTube and social networks promoting claims to cure](#)

[COVID-19](#)'. Scientifically validated by the Barcelona College of Physicians, the CAC report reveals claims from people posing as researchers or experts in the field of medicine and claiming to have found a cure for the pandemic. Following these findings, the CAC called on video-sharing platform YouTube to remove 16 these videos (with 340,000 views) promoting non-scientific treatments to cure COVID-19. YouTube deleted them on 26 March. The CAC has also published some recommendations to spot fake news from trustworthy information ([available in Catalan in this link](#)). Some of the key recommendations include following official information only, using recognised media outlets, crosschecking news and refraining from sharing unverified text or audio messages.

## **Awareness-raising campaign broadcasted on TV, radio and social media**

The Catalan Audio-visual Council (CAC) launched a campaign to address some of the challenges and risks related to COVID-19. This campaign consisted of several

animated videos and radio announcements that were broadcasted three times a day on public media, social media platforms as well as private and local media. The first part of the campaign took place between 8 and 26 April 2020 and dealt with misinformation and reasonable screen use. [More information](#). The second part of the campaign started on 29 April 2020 and dealt with good screen use during online learning activities and security in social media. [More information](#). All the videos of the campaign are available with English subtitles ([Fake News 1](#), [Fake News 2](#), [Good Screen use 1](#), [Good Screen use 2](#), [Online Learning](#), and [Social networks](#)). In this context, the CAC has also published some recommendations to ensure a proper use of screens ([available in Catalan in this link](#)). Among others, the council advises families to agree on a schedule for their use and to allow common spaces for connections to avoid situations of isolation.

### **Analysis of TV trends during COVID-19**

The second CAC Special newsletter (available in Catalan) was released in May. Some of its findings include the 33% increase of TV consumption among children (the highest), the moderation in the consumption of TV news (although remains higher than before the state of alarm), the ever-increasing consumption of internet and

the fact that 80% of people consider having received COVID-19 related fake-news (especially through social networks and Whatsapp). This newsletter also confirms that the consumption of media service providers such as Netflix, HBO and Amazon Prime has increased by 52% and that citizens consider public media to be the most trustworthy during this crisis. [More information](#).

### **Recommendations for a proper use of video-calls in educative environments**

The CAC, in the context of the programme 'eduCAC', together with the Ministry of Education, have elaborated a set of recommendations for a responsible use of video-calls in educative environments. Some of these recommendations (which include actions to follow before, during and after the video-call) include keeping the same clothing and hygienic habits as on-site classes, turning the microphone off when not in use and not manipulating nor recording images of teachers and students to expose them in social networks. This information is available to everyone. [More information](#).

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