

G7 Leaders' Statement on COVID-19

We, the Leaders of the Group of Seven, acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic is a human tragedy and a global health crisis, which also poses major risks for the world economy. We are committed to doing whatever is necessary to ensure a strong global response through closer cooperation and enhanced coordination of our efforts. While current challenges may require national emergency measures, we remain committed to the stability of the global economy. We express our conviction that current challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic need a strongly coordinated international approach, based on science and evidence, consistent with our democratic values, and utilizing the strengths of private enterprise.

We are committed to marshalling the full power of our governments to:

- Coordinate on necessary public health measures to protect people at risk from COVID-19;
- Restore confidence, growth, and protect jobs;
- Support global trade and investment;
- Encourage science, research, and technology cooperation.

By acting together, we will work to resolve the health and economic risks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and set the stage for a strong recovery of strong, sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

Accelerate Our Response to COVID-19

We will work hard to protect the health and safety of everyone in our countries. Stepping up the response to the outbreak remains our foremost priority. We will coordinate our efforts to delay the spread of the virus, including through appropriate border management measures.

We will enhance our efforts to strengthen health systems in our countries and globally. We fully support the World Health Organization in its global mandate to lead on disease outbreaks and emergencies with health consequences, leaving no geographical vacuum, and encourage all countries, international organizations, and the private sector to assist global efforts such as the Global Preparedness and Response Plan.

We stress the value of real-time information sharing to ensure access to the best and latest intelligence, improving prevention strategies and mitigation measures.

We will pool epidemiologic and other data to better understand and fight the virus.

We will increase coordinated research efforts, including through voluntary support for the global alliance Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation. We will support the launch of joint research projects funded by both public and private resources, and the sharing of facilities, towards rapid development, manufacture and distribution of treatments and a vaccine,

adhering to the principles of efficacy, safety, and accessibility.

We will make efforts to increase the availability of medical equipment where it is most needed.

We will coordinate with online platforms to maximize public access to the latest correct and relevant official information, in recognition that millions of citizens receive information and news via social media.

To implement these objectives, and adapt measures if necessary, will require efforts across all parts of our governments, and we ask our health ministers to continue to coordinate on a weekly basis.

Forcefully Address the Economic Impact of the Outbreak

We resolve to coordinate measures and do whatever it takes, using all policy tools, to achieve strong growth in the G7 economies, and to safeguard against downside risks.

To this end, we are mobilizing the full range of instruments, including monetary and fiscal measures, as well as targeted actions, to support immediately and as much as necessary the workers, companies, and sectors most affected. This is particularly important for small and medium businesses and working families.

We also ask our central banks to continue to coordinate to provide the necessary monetary measures in order to support economic and financial stability, and to promote recovery and growth.

We ask our finance ministers to coordinate on a weekly basis on the implementation of those measures and to develop further timely and effective actions.

We reinforce the importance of coordination among international organizations even in the face of challenges to business continuity. We call on the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group and other International Organizations to further support countries worldwide as part of a coordinated global response, focused on this specific challenge. We also ask our finance ministers to work closely with International Organizations to design and implement swiftly the international financial assistance that is appropriate to help countries, including emerging and developing economies, face the health and economic shock of COVID-19.

We will address disturbances to international supply chains and continue our work to facilitate international trade.

Restore and Expand Growth

We will continue to work together with resolve to implement these measures to respond to this global emergency. In facing the economic challenge, we are determined not only to restore the level of growth anticipated before the COVID-19 pandemic but also to build the foundation for stronger future growth. We will continue to coordinate through the G7 Presidency including at the G7 Leaders' Summit and call upon the G20 to support and amplify these

efforts.

[Visit the meeting page](#)

Eurofound operations during the COVID-19 outbreak



In light of the escalating impact of the Coronavirus, Eurofound continues to take all appropriate action to protect its staff and continue to deliver on the Agency's mission. Staff have been requested to work from home as of Monday 16 March.

Contact with the Agency continues via the central number 01-2043100 or via the staff member's direct number or [email](#).

Press release – Closure of borders: Civil Liberties Chair demands proportionality and coordination within the EU



“In the last days, several EU member states have reintroduced border controls at their internal borders within the Schengen area or even closed them for certain categories of travellers while some further member states are considering such measures.

As Chair of Parliament’s Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs committee, while I fully share the need for public policy measures restricting social interaction to slow down the spread of the Coronavirus, I urge member states to take their measures in full respect of the principles of proportionality and, above all, solidarity among EU Member States, non-discrimination and the applicable Schengen rules. It is key that when taking measures no discrimination is made between EU citizens.

It is only through a coordinated approach, rather than actions taken by individual Member States, that we will be successful in addressing the challenge we are all facing.

The Civil Liberties committee is closely monitoring the situation and expects the Commission, the Council Presidency and the member states to protect all benefits of the Schengen area.”

Background:

[Regulation \(EU\) 2016/399 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders](#) (Schengen Borders Code) explicitly provides for risk of public health as a ground to refuse entry at the external Schengen border (Title II), but it does not provide for the possibility to temporarily reintroduce border control at internal borders on public health grounds (Title III thereof).

COVID-19: EASO implements further measures to ensure well-being of staff and stakeholders

In light of the rapidly evolving spread of the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) over the past few days, as of Monday, 16 March 2020, **all non-critical European Asylum Support Office (EASO) staff members have begun teleworking**. The measures were implemented through a fifth Executive Director Decision (EDD) to be adopted by EASO’s Executive Director, Ms. **Nina Gregori**, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.

The teleworking measures are provisionally to last until 27 March 2020, but could be extended depending on how the situation evolves. In line with EASO’s

contingency planning, staff performing critical tasks remain present in EASO's Malta headquarters, as well as in EASO's operations in Cyprus, Greece and Malta, in order to assure business continuity. In Italy, all staff, including management, are teleworking.

To date, the measures adopted by the Executive Director include:

- Establishment of COVID-19 Response Team;
- Increased frequency and thoroughness of the cleaning of EASO premises and working environments;
- Cancellation of all missions, scheduled meetings, training sessions and other activities being organised by EASO;
- Flexible utilisation of teleworking (prior to latest teleworking measure) in order to ensure that vulnerable staff, or staff who have travelled to high-risk countries, are not present in the office;
- All non-critical staff teleworking;
- Daily updates to all staff in order to ensure full transparency on developments, including dedicated space on EASO's intranet.

The latest EDD, combined with the above-mentioned measures, mean that while the Agency is making **every effort to minimise the disruption to its business**, several activities may be delayed. With regard to EASO's operational support to the asylum authorities in Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta, in light of the measures being taken by the respective national authorities, together with EASO's duty-of-care obligations, activities have also been restricted.

There have been no reported cases of EASO staff members who have tested positive for the virus.

The Executive Director, together with the EASO COVID-19 Response Team, are closely monitoring developments throughout Europe, including following the guidance of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the national authorities where EASO is present, as well as the European Commission.

EASO will take any further actions as necessary in order to minimise disruption to its core business while ensuring the well-being of its staff. In this regard, the Executive Director has expressed her gratitude for the dedication and flexibility being shown by colleagues in this challenging period.

[Article – European Parliament ready to play its part in mitigating Covid-19](#)

impact



Support for regions

Part of the EU response will be to amend funding rules, which must be approved by both the Parliament and the Council. Parliament's [regional development committee aims to conclude its examination of the proposal as quickly as possible](#). The measure would mean it would be easier to channel funding to affected areas and sectors.

Additional resources

Parliament's [budget committee](#) also [committed to deal with all initiatives to mitigate the impact of the outbreak as quickly as possible](#).

Measures to ease impact on aviation industry

The Commission has proposed suspending EU rules obliging airlines to operate most of their take-off and landing slots. Companies need to do so to avoid losing them, but in the current situation, the rules has led to so-called ghost flights with few passengers.

Parliament's [transport committee](#) welcomed the plans and [pledged to work on the legislation as quickly as possible](#).