

[EUIPO's top 25 e-users: Q4 2019](#)

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The ranking of our top online users in the European Union is now available online for the fourth quarter of 2019.

The top 25 ranking includes users registered as representatives, or groups of representatives, comprising of associations, lawyers, EUIPO professionals and employee representatives and is linked to SP 2020 Line of Action 5 (LoA n.5): Enhance customer-driven quality services.

Their use of our online applications for EUTM/RCD, designs and oppositions has to be 99% or higher compared to their total volume of filings.

In addition, they have to be active eCommunication users.

The full table of rankings can be found by following the link below and more information about EUIPO's statistics can be found [here](#)

[Top 25 e-users Q4 2019](#)

[COVID-19: EASO takes precautionary](#)

measures, but core business delivery unaffected

In light of the continued spread of the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Europe, and in line with duty of care measures being adopted by EU Agencies and Institutions, as well as to ensure business continuity, the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Ms. **Nina Gregori**, has adopted several precautionary measures through three **Executive Director Decisions (EDDs)**.

Amongst these, non-essential travel by EASO staff has been suspended, as is also the case for the hosting of meetings and group visits.

EASO would like to highlight that while certain activities may be delayed as a result, its **core business delivery remains unaffected**. Contingency planning is also in place.

The Agency, which has operational deployments in four Member States (Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta), as well as staff in Belgium, Poland and Turkey, is closely monitoring developments in these countries. Personnel in Italy continue to deliver through teleworking arrangements.

Furthermore, EASO has been closely monitoring developments throughout Europe, including following 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.

Staff are being continuously informed of developments and any relevant instructions through **daily updates**, while a COVID-19 Response Team, chaired by the Executive Director, has been established to coordinate and ensure business continuity.

EU Committee of Regions postpones March plenary session to contribute to preventing and controlling the Coronavirus pandemic



□□ *Press statement by the President of the European Committee of the Regions, Apostolos Tzitzikostas.*

“After careful deliberation, I have decided to postpone the European Committee of the Regions’ [plenary session](#) planned on 25-26 March, as a contribution to the efforts to prevent and control the further spread of the Coronavirus pandemic. This course of action reflects measures already put in place by many local, regional, national and EU authorities. This decision has already been communicated to all of our Committee’s Members, to the staff and to the other EU institutions and partners, with whom we are in close contact.

In taking this decision, I have considered the many requests coming from our Members who expressed their health concerns about participating at the plenary, as well as those whom would have been unable to attend due to restrictions placed in their home countries. I have also carefully assessed the relevant health, political, organisational, financial, legal and inter-institutional aspects. All analyses converge towards the adoption of a strict precautionary measure. Our citizens’, Members’ and staff’s health comes first. We must act calmly and responsibly to protect them.

It is also important that our Members can stay where they are most needed during these critical times. As locally and regionally elected politicians, we are at the forefront of the fight against the Coronavirus pandemic in our regions, cities, towns and villages. We are leading this battle resolutely, firmly and bravely and I am sure that, thanks to our efforts, the Coronavirus pandemic will be contained and overcome.

Democracy is stronger than a virus, and I will reconvene our Committee’s Plenary session at the earliest possible moment, once the necessary health, political and organisational conditions will be met”.

President’s Spokesperson:

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[ESMA recommends action by financial market participants for COVID-19 impact](#)

Following a Board of Supervisors discussion examining the market situation and contingency measures taken by supervised entities, ESMA is making the following recommendations to financial market participants:

- Business Continuity Planning – All financial market participants,

including infrastructures should be ready to apply their contingency plans, including deployment of business continuity measures, to ensure operational continuity in line with regulatory obligations;

- Market disclosure – issuers should disclose as soon as possible any relevant significant information concerning the impacts of COVID-19 on their fundamentals, prospects or financial situation in accordance with their transparency obligations under the Market Abuse Regulation;

- Financial Reporting – issuers should provide transparency on the actual and potential impacts of COVID-19, to the extent possible based on both a qualitative and quantitative assessment on their business activities, financial situation and economic performance in their 2019 year-end financial report if these have not yet been finalised or otherwise in their interim financial reporting disclosures; and

- Fund Management – asset managers should continue to apply the requirements on risk management, and react accordingly.

ESMA, in coordination with NCAs, continues to monitor developments in financial markets as a result of the COVID-19 situation and is prepared to use its powers to ensure the orderly functioning of markets, financial stability and investor protection.

Article – Long-term budget: EU needs proper funding to tackle crises, say MEPs



[The discussion in Parliament](#) on 10 March focused on the proposal of European Council President Charles Michel for the size and structure of the EU's [long-term budget](#) that failed to gain approval by EU heads of state and government at their summit on 20-21 February.

Michel said he would continue consultations with member states "to assess when it is possible to come back to a new summit" and he also committed to keeping direct contact with Parliament about all developments.

Most MEPs criticised his proposal as lacking ambition and pointed out current challenges show Europe should have a budget that allows it to act and live up to people's expectations.

[José Manuel Fernandes](#) (EPP, Portugal), who is a member of Parliament's negotiating team on the long-term budget, said: "It is perhaps a good thing that the Council has not reached an agreement. The European Parliament could not have approved an agreement that would go against the interests of European citizens. EU leaders are coming up with fine words and goals, but when it comes to backing those targets with the financial resources, they don't do so."

S&D group leader [Iratxe García Pérez](#) (Spain) said: "It is preferable to have no agreement [on the EU budget] rather than a bad agreement."

The capacity to act

MEPs said current challenges show the EU has to have the financial capacity to provide common solutions.

Renew Europe leader [Dacian Cioloș](#) (Romania) said the long-term budget can mitigate the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on business: “The European budget needs to play its role as an investment lever to get the economy going again.” Referring to the crisis on the Greek-Turkish border, he said: “Our border security and solidarity policy means that [EU border agency] Frontex needs appropriate resources and a budget that allows for real solidarity on the ground.”

Budgets committee chair [Johan Van Overtveldt](#) (ECR, Belgium) argued against cuts in defence and research programmes: “If there is one area where the EU needs to be investing, it is in our shared future. We really need to focus on innovation.”

[Margarida Marques](#) (S&D, Portugal), who is also a member of the Parliament’s negotiating team, said: “Our response, faced with the climate challenge, demographic challenge, digital challenge and international challenge has to be more Europe: a Europe that can solve the crisis at our borders, that can find a solution to the coronavirus”.

She added that the EU should be prepared to respond to crises that cannot be foreseen: “In the next seven years we must be aware that new unexpected challenges will also arise and Europe cannot say as in 2007-2008 that we are not ready.”

[Rasmus Andresen](#) (Greens/EFA, Germany), another member of Parliament’s negotiating team, noted that the situation is serious and EU countries should make efforts to find an agreement: “We are faced with a new economic crisis and all these nationalistic battles cannot be fought out.”

Broken promises

[Siegfried Mureșan](#) (EPP, Romania) reminded that in June 2019 the European Council adopted a [strategic agenda](#) committing to effective control of external borders, strengthening the single market and achieving digital sovereignty. Yet the proposal of Council president Michel foresees double-digit percentage cuts to the EU’s border guard agency, internal security, single market and Digital Europe programmes. “The proposal of Charles Michel does not respect the promises of the European Council. Our answer should be no.”

[Jens Geier](#) (S&D, Germany) also pointed out inconsistencies in EU leaders’ messages on Europe: “For years, we have been seeing the same situation. On Sunday, in speeches [EU leaders] ask for more border protection and more to be spent on climate, on common defence policy and so on. On Monday, member states aren’t prepared to stump up the money. By Tuesday, it’s all about how bad things are given the EU can’t solve the problems.”