[COVID-19: Case studies of CoR Members from the Political Groups](#)

The political groups in the European Committee of the Regions have collected a many examples of the challenges faced by their members, and their responses, as well as ideas about how the EU could help them. The following is just a new sample.

European People's Party: Among the examples available [on a special webpage](#) is the work of the former prime minister of Romania, Emil Boc, now mayor of Cluj Napoca. His 'Single Cluj' project has mobilised funding and resources for hospitals, and has enabled civil-society initiatives as well as the centralisation of information. Andrea Turčanová, mayor of Prešov in Slovakia, says her municipality is providing the most vulnerable people in society with protective clothing and is delivering food and medicine to the elderly (using an electric vehicle, she noted in passing).

Party of European Socialists: The group's [COVID-19 webpage](#) includes a video [message](#) from the former prime minister of Belgium, Elio De Rupo, with details of the response in region of Wallonia – of which he is president – and with a message to other regions: "All European regions must come together and help each other. And, after the crisis, we must reflect. We need strategic stocks and we also need to be able to anticipate the risk of a new pandemic. It is not normal that we are so destitute in a Europe as rich as it is today." Meanwhile, the mayor of Zerbst in Germany, Andreas Dittmann, has special plans for Easter – a campaign, called "Giving closeness while maintaining distance", in which local shops prepare Easter presents that are then delivered by local officials.

Renew Europe: Examples of local action on group's [dedicated webpage](#) are available in French and Spanish, as well as in English. Willy Borsus, vice-president of the Wallonia region (and deputy to follow CoR member Elio De Rupo, highlighted above), a run-down of public services and economic measures in Wallonia. Rait Pihelgas, mayor of Järva, says that in Estonia a particular concern is the false sense of security created by the relatively small number of cases in the country, he wants volunteers to help limit the number of people trying to enter the typically small stores open in rural areas.

European Conservatives and Reformists: Ilpo Heltimoinen, a CoR member from the city of Lappeenranta close to Finland's border with Russia, [reports](#) – on page 4 of the ECR's compilation – that some early-childcare facilities remain open and that an online 'corona neighbour help' page swiftly proved a success, ensuring that the elderly can get food without leaving their homes. The president of the Bratislava Region, Juraj Droba, says – on page 14 – that the regional government is working with local businesses to equip doctors and nurses with masks and protective gear; medical staff can sleep in re-purposed student dormitories, to avoid infecting their families. Slovakia requires everyone to wear a mask when they leave their homes. Mr Droba also has a

message to the EU: redirecting money from the European Regional and Development Fund would worsen the impact of the crisis on his region's social and educational infrastructure.

European Alliance: The group's coordinator in the CoR's natural resources (NAT) commission, welcomed proposals by the European Commission to ease some rules in its cohesion policy and release unused money to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. In a statement on the group's [website](#), Dariusz Strugała, mayor of Jaraczewo, said the changes the changes would increase flexibility and accelerate implementation. As a member of the board of the Association of Rural Municipalities of Poland, he highlighted the benefits of giving farmers to submit applications and the increase in advance payments. The group has brought together the experiences and response of its members to the crisis on this [page](#).

Greens: The position of the European Greens on the crisis and what is needed now can be found on the group's [website](#). □