



# Social Employers and EPSU initiatives on COVID-19

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#DialogueSProject



With financial support from the European Union



# Joint actions during the first stage of the pandemic

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## Statements

- **25th March 2020** - Joint Social Employers/EPSU statement on COVID-19 outbreak: the impact on social services and needed support measures.
- **17th April 2020** - Joint Social Employers/EPSU Letter to the EC calling to action to tackle the lack of PPE for social services workers all across Europe.
- **14th May 2020** - Open letter with other European representatives of social services organisations and social partner organisations in social services.

## Joint Webinars

- **9th June 2020** - Joint Social Employers/EPSU Webinar on “Safe and healthy workplaces in Social Services during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and the role of Social Partners”.
- **25th June** - Online summit, ‘Social Services & COVID-19: what role for EU?’ to discuss the role of the European Union in supporting social services during these difficult times, ending with a joint statement.



Just agreed

## Joint Position Paper

Preparing the social services sector for the  
COVID-19 resurgence and increasing its  
resilience

## Content

1. COVID-19 in the social services sector: challenges
2. Recommendations for the preparedness of the sector
3. How EU Institutions can help?
4. How EU social dialogue can help?

## 1. COVID-19 in the social services sector: challenges

- Lack of clear measures and protocols coordinated at national and European level
- Lack of testing in residential settings
- Lack of protective equipment
- Lack of funding to invest in safety and managing the crisis
- Understaffing and shortage of supplies
- High proportion of people with COVID 19 staying in residential care
- Lack of training on how to handle an infectious disease
- Lack of mental health support

## 2. Recommendations for the preparedness of the sector 1/2

- Provide reliable and updated information
- Update the occupational health and safety risk assessment
- Develop crisis management protocol
- Guarantee the access of staff to training in safety measures at the workplace
- Ensure access and availability of tests in social care facilities
- Encourage residents and staff to be vaccinated against seasonal influenza



## 2. Recommendations for the preparedness of the sector 2/2

- Ensure the access and availability of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Provide psychological support for users and staff
- Classify COVID-19, when a reliable link can be established between the working situation and the infection, as an occupational disease across Europe
- Use of digital tools

### 3. How EU Institutions can help?

- Coordination of common safety protocols and health guidelines at European level
- Develop guidelines on enhanced cooperation between health and social care and on cross-border movements for care workers
- Creation of social funds for emergency response
- Urgently facilitate social services' access to EU and national funds
- Ensuring sufficient and well-trained social care staff
- Recognition for the social services sector

## 4. How social dialogue can help?

Social partners play a **key role in ensuring occupational health and safety**, by jointly agreeing possible solutions, measures and initiatives to protect workers and users, and to promote the recognition of the sector.

**EU social dialogue can be fundamental to promote cooperation** among social partners in ensuring preparedness of social services by the exchange of good practices and the formulation of principles and guidelines.



Thank you for your attention!  
Any questions?