Regional virtual meeting with ENP East partners on EU MS COVID-19 responses related to functioning of Public Administrations

Public Service and HRM

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Preparing roadmaps for reopening public bodies

Drafting plans to manage the return to on-site work and the reopening of ministries and agencies to users after COVID-19 confinement

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Easing confinement: reopening public services

Ministries and public bodies reopening premises and services in an unusual and uncertain situation: what are the risks?
Risk: no social distancing
Risk: chaotic queueing
Other reopening risks

- Staff absenteeism
- Problems with contractors and suppliers
- Worried or angry users
- IT breakdowns
- Users or staff with symptoms
- New COVID-19 outbreaks
For successful return to work and reopening, ministries and public bodies should **prepare roadmaps**

These roadmaps should guide managers and supervisors with managing a long “transitional period” of **gradual return of staff** to on-site work and **progressive reopening of services**.
Why do we need those roadmaps?

1. Adapt workplaces

2. Re-think service delivery

3. Flexible HR management
1. Adapt workplaces
Take measures to protect staff and users
2. Re-think service delivery
Extend deadlines & expiry dates

Extend **deadlines** for applying, appealing or payment, as much as possible.

Extend **expiry dates** of ID cards, official documents, licenses and authorisations, whenever possible, after evaluating risks.
Certificates and other administrative requirements: reduce the burden and be flexible

Due to the situation, users could face difficulties fulfilling all usual requirements

Think of **innovative solutions:**

- “once-only” principle
- change the subject obliged to provide certain information (i.e. employer instead of individual)
- accept sworn declarations instead of official documents
- issue conditional or temporary approvals/authorisations/licences
- ...
Create or reinforce e-services and phone services

• Allow for full or partial electronic or phone procedures.

• If the outcome of the procedure requires a physical document, provide home delivery, post or “click and collect”.

Adapt opening hours?

**Extend opening hours/days?**
- What for? For additional service delivery? Or for easier physical distancing?

*To be able to deliver the service, a minimum number of critical staff should be present during opening hours*

**Reduce opening hours?**
- Reducing opening hours might be necessary if there is a shortage of staff
Think about each one of the services you provide:

1. Is the service equally important and urgent for all individuals?
2. Should we give priority to certain users?
3. Should we adapt service provision for vulnerable individuals, families with kids,...?
Create or reinforce an appointment scheduling system

- Online, using mobile applications and websites
- By phone
- [At the premises, if walk-in users]
Organise queuing

- At the entrance of the building
- Inside the office
3. Flexible HR management
Adapt HR arrangements, according to your organisation’s needs

- Extended teleworking.
- Staff with special needs: ill, confined, quarantined, with family responsibilities.
- Absenteeism: increased and unexpected.
- Flexible working-time arrangements: staggered work times, shift work, overtime, leave,…
- Mobility to reinforce priority services.

*Training*: Covid + new functions; Staff well-being!
How to prepare your roadmaps?
Prepare **phased** back to work and reopening, tailored to your organisation and branch.

**Phase 1**
Management and key staff
Strict preventive measures
Closed to users

**Phase 2**
Some non-vulnerable staff
Strict preventive measures
Partially open to users?

**Phase 3**
Most of staff are back
Less-strict preventive measures
Partially/fully open to users

**Phase 4**
(Nearly) All staff are back
Mild preventive measures
Fully open to users

Allow teleworking & Extend e-services
Different regions/premises, different roadmaps

Most ministries and public bodies will need a general roadmap, as well as a specific one for each region/territory and for each of their branches/premises.
Prepare your roadmaps in full co-ordination with the relevant authorities

Prepare your roadmaps, **under the guidance of the relevant authorities**, such as the prime ministry, the civil service co-ordination body or the ministry of health and in co-ordination with the **local/municipal** authorities
Listen to your staff, stakeholders and users about their concerns and consult the draft roadmap with them.
Communicate your plan

Make sure that staff, stakeholders and users know what to do during the reopening period
Key actions to prepare and implement reopening

1. Analyse and assess: your agency, workplace, staff, users/sector, stakeholders, IT systems, legal framework
2. Consult and coordinate: with the relevant authorities
3. Communicate/listen/agree: with your staff/with your stakeholders
4. Services and activities: prioritise, postpone, suspend
5. Services: manage demand, ensure offer (use innovative solutions)
6. Services: inform your users and provide answers (multichannel)
7. HR: provide flexible solutions
8. Implementation: empower managers and supervisors
9. Ensure visible leadership

Consider the roadmap a living document: learn and improve & be prepared to correct the course [PDCA: Plan, Do, Check, Act].

Develop a contingency and business continuity plan for any new outbreak.
SIGMA Guidelines

SIGMA/OECD, Guidelines for preparing a post-confinement operational roadmap for public bodies, May 2020

First edition, 11 May 2020
Useful materials

EU-OSHA, COVID-19: Back to the workplace - Adapting workplaces and protecting workers, April 2020
https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/COVID-19:_Back_to_the_workplace_-_Adapting_workplaces_and_protecting_workers

International Labour Office, An employer guide on managing your workplace during COVID-19, March 2020

International Labour Office, Prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 at work: action checklist, April 2020 (in different languages)

https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/331584

International Labour Office, Staggered hours schemes, 2004

International Labour Office, Guide to developing balanced working time arrangements, 2019

Framework for Reopening Schools (UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, World Food Programme)
https://www.unicef.org/documents/framework-reopening-schools
The OECD is compiling data, information, analysis and recommendations regarding the health, economic, financial and societal challenges posed by the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19). Please visit our dedicated page for a full suite of coronavirus-related information, including a chapter on Governance and the paper *Public servants and the coronavirus*.


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