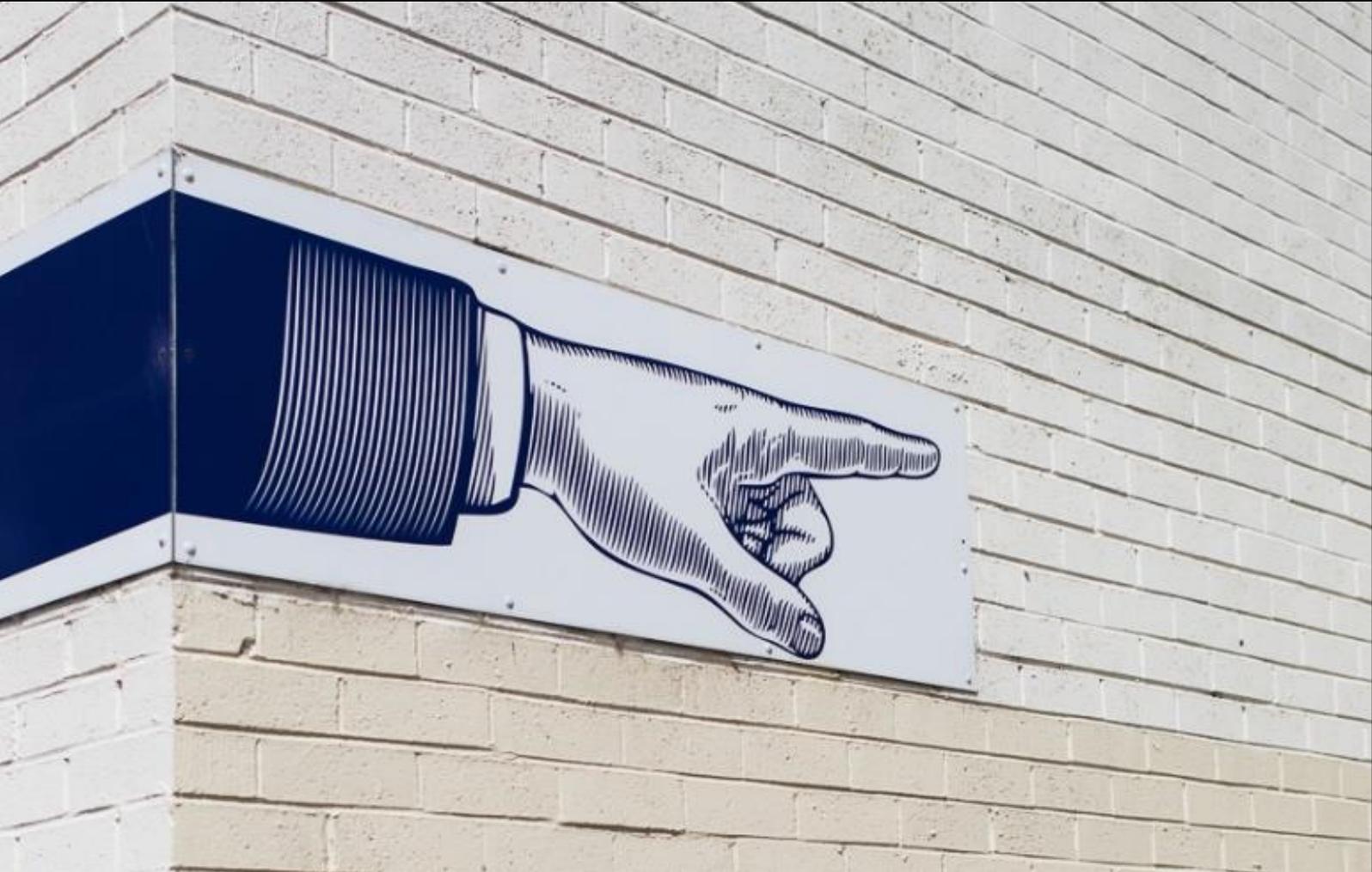


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Coronavirus Guidance

BPO Countries



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1. RÖDL & PARTNER NORWAY

If you travelled f.ex. to Italy, you should stay at home for 14 days.

<https://www.fhi.no/en/id/infectious-diseases/coronavirus/>

2. RÖDL & PARTNER ITALY

Below you will find all instructions about the current situation in Italy regarding coronavirus. Of course, it may not be that everything is updated perfectly, as there have been news from the government several times a day in the past few days. For example, we noticed that the article still speaks of "red zones", while each zone in Italy has been "blocked" since yesterday.

<https://www.roedl.com/insights/italy-coronavirus-limit-risk-infection-restrictions-mobility-work>

Coronavirus Emergency: Here you will find all the updates:

<http://www.salute.gov.it/nuovocoronavirus>

3. RÖDL & PARTNER PORTUGAL

The official entity in Portugal that monitors these situations is the DGS, General Directorate of Health.

This entity is publishing, as the phenomenon develops in Portugal, guidelines to mitigate and control this problem.

In this regard, specific guidelines for the adoption of Prevention, Control and Surveillance Procedures in **Companies** have been published on the 26th of February. Enclosed the mentioned guidelines(in Portuguese)

New guidelines may be published or updated at any time through the following link:

<https://www.dgs.pt/corona-virus/documentos/orientacoes.aspx>

4. RÖDL & PARTNER SPAIN

At this time the Spanish Government has adopted drastic global measures (as Italy has done, e.g.) apart from some general instructions about distance (1,5m) and hygiene (hands, etc.) and the order that sport events should be held without public. Nevertheless the Ministries are gathered right now evaluating the situation and they will expose the conclusions soon.

Despite this, some regions as Madrid, Vitoria, La Rioja and Labastida have closed educational centers (University and Schools). Regarding the situation of these mothers and fathers who are employees and must take care about their children, the Spanish Legislation set some special situations like temporarily leaves, temporarily contract suspensions and other permits that are being currently analyzed by us. In this regards we should wait until the Government speaks these days in order to know if new measures will formally take place as for example some financial helps due to facilitate the home office.

Here's how it works the labour aspects, the new measures for companies, in case of having to carry out a procedure of temporary suspension of labour contracts

The procedure for the temporary suspension of employment contracts of the entire workforce/part of the workforce, either for ordinary causes (economic, technical, organizational or production) or for reasons of force majeure implies that the business obligation to pay wages is suspended and the obligation to provide services by employees is suspended.

During the temporary suspension of contracts, employees are entitled to receive unemployment benefits.

The main difference between the ordinary suspension procedure and the force majeure suspension procedure is that

- The procedure for force majeure is faster, there is a requirement for a justified force majeure, there is no period of consultation with the workers' representatives. In this procedure, the competent Labor Authority has a short term to determine the existence of force majeure. Once the existence of force majeure has been confirmed, the suspension of temporary contracts will last at most as long as the force majeure/alarm state lasts. For this procedure, a number of economic benefits are foreseen for the companies, since companies with less than 50 workers do NOT have to pay social security contributions and companies with more than 50 workers have a 75% exoneration in relation to the payment of social security contributions.
- The procedure of suspension for ordinary causes (economic, technical, productive or organizational) is a longer procedure and requires more documentation and information from the Company. A collective bargaining procedure must be carried out and an agreement reached with the workers / workers' representatives. In this case there is NO exemption from payment of Social Security contributions for companies. In this case, contracts can be suspended for a longer period (the Law does not set a limit), which is convenient for companies, since the effects of the current situation in Spain can be prolonged in time, regardless of when the current state of alarm ends.

The most important thing in any case is to know what the new law considers to be force majeure. It is understood that there is force majeure : when the suspension of contracts has its direct cause in losses of activity as a consequence of the COVID-19, including the declaration of the state of alarm, which implies the suspension or cancellation of activities, temporary closure of premises of public affluence, restrictions on public transport and, in

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general, on the mobility of people and/or goods, lack of supplies that seriously prevent the continuation of the ordinary development of the activity, or in urgent and extraordinary situations due to the contagion of the staff or the adoption of preventive isolation measures decreed by the health authority, which are duly accredited.

Those companies that carry out a procedure of force majeure can only suspend their contracts until the causal event exists. In this case, the causal event is based on the Spanish royal decree that dictates the state of alarm in the country and that decrees the closure of stores / establishments, etc. This means that, if nothing changes, the state of alarm will be in force until March 29th, since initially a duration of 15 days has been foreseen. (Although will surely be extended)

In addition, companies that carry out procedures due to force majeure CANNOT DISMISSE EMPLOYEES during the next six months, since the Law requires the maintenance of employment.

The situation is getting worse every day, so there may be even more exceptional measures in the future. For now, the state of alarm and confinement has been extended until 12 April 2020.

Coronavirus update information – Spain – Ministry of Health

<https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/home.htm>

5. RÖDL & PARTNER DENMARK

Questions and Answers on the Corona Virus COVID-19 – Danish Health Authority
<https://www.sst.dk/corona-eng>

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| <p>Do employees have a right to refuse to work if colleagues are ill or customer traffic increases the risk of illness ("Do I have to go to work")?</p> | <p>Can an employee refuse to travel to risk areas ordered by the employer?</p> |
| <p>No. Employees must appear on duty if they are healthy. They cannot stay away from work for general and non specifically justified fear of a contagion risk.</p> <p>The Danish Public Health Service announced on 3 March 2020 that all people who traveled to special risk areas should stay at home for up to 14 days from the day they left these areas.</p> <p>These special areas concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- China: the whole country, except Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau- South Korea: Gyeongbuk Province and Daegu City- Iran: the entire country- Italy: regions of Emilia-Romagna, Lombardi, Piemonte, Veneto, Aosta Valley and Marche <p>The list of special risk areas is updated daily by the Danish State Serum Institute and the Danish Health Service and can be found on the information page of the Health Office via COVID-19: sst.dk/corona.</p> | <p>Yes. Business trips to the risk areas defined by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs may be refused without having any consequences on the employment of employee. This applies to the countries where the competent Danish authorities or authorities in the country concerned have advised against entry. This also applies to business trips to countries for which the responsible authorities have advised against all unnecessary trips.</p> <p>If the business trip concerns a country outside the declared special risk areas for which the authorities recommend special caution, the business trip cannot be refused. For these countries, employers and employees should agree on whether the business trip is mandatory and, if so, what precautionary measures the employee should take, if necessary.</p> |

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| <p>Are employees entitled to work in the home office or can home offices be arranged?</p> | <p>Do employees have to go to work when the train (local transport) stops running?</p> |
| <p>An employee cannot work in the home office without the consent of the employer and has no general right to have a home office set up.</p> <p>The employer can order home office as part of his right to issue instructions. He must then ensure that the employee has an appropriately equipped workplace.</p> <p>If the employee was ordered in quarantine by a doctor or if he belongs to the group that should stay at home for up to 14 days after being asked by the health department, this is considered an excused absence in the sense of the Danish labor law. If no home office can be set up or the service cannot be performed from home, the employee is still entitled to continued wages.</p> | <p>Yes. It is the responsibility of the employee to show up for work on time.</p> |
| <p>What happens if employees have children who need care because the school and / or kindergarten remains closed?</p> | <p>Are there any obligations on the employer to act based on the current risk of infection? Do employees have to follow prescribed protective measures?</p> |
| <p>If schools or kindergartens remain closed, there is no excused absence from duty. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that their children are cared for in other ways. Employers and employees can, for example, agree that the employee works in the home office, uses earned overtime or takes holidays.</p> <p>A short-term, unilateral arrangement of vacation by the employer is not possible, as this can only be done with a notice of one month in advance.</p> | <p>The Danish occupational health and safety regulations do not contain any specific rules in the event that an international risk of infection can affect jobs. However, the general regulations stipulate that the employer must always ensure that the risk of infection among employees is minimized or limited.</p> <p>Employers are encouraged to follow the recommendations of the Health Department and the relevant authorities regarding quarantine and other precautionary measures. In addition, employers should continuously inform their employees via internal communication channels about how they should act and what measures the employer may order.</p> <p>Employees must follow protective measures ordered by the employer.</p> |
| <p>What options do employers have to reduce any economic consequences?</p> | <p>Do the works council's rights to participate have to be taken into account when taking measures to reduce the risk of infection and mitigate the economic consequences of the employer?</p> |
| <p>Employers can create the best possible conditions for the employee to be able to work from home and thus reduce the amount of work lost - if this is possible depending on the type of work.</p> | <p>No. There is no works council comparable to the German works council with similarly extensive information and influence rights in Danish labor law.</p> |

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| <p>There are no regulations comparable to German work sharing plan (Kurzarbeitergeld) benefits in Denmark.</p> <p>Some employers have insurance policies that cover production downtime under certain conditions.</p> <p>In addition, employers should review supply contracts to determine whether, and if so how, loss of production through no fault of one's own or cases of force majeure are regulated.</p> | <p>If the Danish company concerned is bound by a collective agreement, the union should be involved to a reasonable extent through the shop steward.</p> <p>Companies with more than 10 employees have a safety officer or organization that takes care of the safety and health at work. These bodies have no express co-determination rights, but should be informed and involved in the planning of in-house precautionary measures.</p> |
| <p>Are employees entitled to continued payment in the event of a temporary closure?</p> | <p>What happens in the officially ordered quarantine case? Do employees continue to receive their salaries? Who reimburses these costs to the employer?</p> |
| <p>Yes. If a company closure is ordered by the authorities or by the employer, employees are entitled to continued wages.</p> | <p>If an employee is quarantined because of an order from an authority or his doctor, the same rules apply as in the case of illness. There is an excused absence from duty and the employee is entitled to continued payment from the employer.</p> <p>The amount of continued payment depends on the status of the employee. Employees under the Salaried Employees Act are entitled to continued payment in full. For employees who are subject to the scope of a collective agreement, the amount of the remuneration entitlement results from the respective collective agreement. For example, industrial workers are entitled to sick pay.</p> <p>The employer is generally not entitled to reimbursement of these wages and salary costs. It is only after 30 days of sick leave that the employer is entitled to reimbursement of the wage costs in the amount of the state daily allowance from the municipality at the employee's place of residence.</p> <p>Section 27 of the Danish Epidemic Act provides for compensation for measures imposed under the law. For this, damage or economic loss must be documented. However, the prerequisite for the application of this regulation is that measures have been initiated in accordance with Chapter 3 of the Epidemic Act, e.g. ordering hospitalization, treatment, isolation or cordoning off an area. It is therefore not enough that an official order has been issued. This must also be based on the Epidemic Act to trigger compensation. At the time of publication of this information (March 9, 2020), no such orders have been issued.</p> |

(Stand 31. März 2020)

6. VGD BELGIUM

This is what we know at this moment for Belgium:

The Belgian government has already taken a number of precautions to protect both the employer and the employee. Because by now, infected patients have emerged in Belgium.

- A. It is possible to request temporary unemployment due to force majeure or economic reasons with Corona virus as argument. If this unfortunate incident would happen at Stratasys, we will of course consider all the paperwork and conditions more in detail. The compensation payments for temporary unemployment - both for economic reasons and force majeure - will be increased from 65 percent to 70 percent of the salary. The aim is to limit the loss of income for the affected workers. The temporary unemployment can be requested if the employee is stuck abroad or the employee is mandatorily sent to quarantine or there is less work due to the Corona virus.
- B. The mere fact that the worker returns from China or another country affected by the coronavirus or the mere fact that the worker has had contact with a person coming from an affected area without any concrete indications of a risk of contamination, cannot be invoked to make this worker temporarily unemployed on grounds of force majeure.

When an employee returns from travelling: they should monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days and take their temperature twice a day.

Workers who want to stay at home for a certain period of time as a precaution: this is not temporary unemployment due to force majeure. It can be agreed that employees will telework or take (un)paid leave.

- C. The employee infected with the coronavirus will receive paid sickness (and can't claim unemployment compensation).
 - Travelling: Travel to coronavirus-free destinations is safe. Even if you plan to travel to a region where there is an epidemic, the likelihood that you will get infected is still very low. Please let your employees and contractors consult national travel advice before going on business trips. If the employees are told by Belgium not to go somewhere you should comply with this. The employees should also comply with any local restrictions on travel, movement or large gatherings.
 - Children who recently returned from a country or region with Corona and who are not sick can simply go back to school or day care. If a child becomes ill within 14 days of his return, the parents are advised to keep the child at home. The parents can ask for family-related leave or agree with the employer to take (un)paid leave. The lockdown of an entire district or village is rather unlikely in our country. Villages and cities are closely interconnected in our country, which makes it nearly infeasible to put them under quarantine.
 - "Getting your workplace ready for Corona": <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf> . This is a useful PDF with tips and tricks (in English).
 - For more information and FAQ: <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/faqs/> (in English).

More information / Update Corona – Belgium: <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/de/>

7. RÖDL & PARTNER FRANCE

Between spring budget 2020 on 11 March and Friday 20 March the government announced a series of measures designed to counter the threat posed to the UK economy by the outbreak of the Coronavirus that causes the respiratory disease COVID-19.

7.1 Measures announced on 20 March

On the evening of 20.3.2020 the Prime Minister announced further restrictions on the compulsory closure of bars, cafes, pubs and restaurants. Alongside these new measures, the Chancellor announced a further package of support for businesses facing the prospect of having to reduce staff numbers.

7.1.1 CORONAVIRUS JOB RETENTION SCHEME

- Grants of up to £2,500 per employee where those employees are unable to work (are 'furloughed') because of coronavirus, covering 80% of salary costs. Intended to run for three months in the first instance with the first payments expected in early April and the scheme fully up and running by the end of that month.
- The grants will be paid via HMRC.
- All UK employers will be eligible.
- **What next?** At present, no information has been provided on how to apply. Though it is generally understood to mean 'stood down but still employed', there is as yet no official definition of 'furloughed'. It is unclear whether employers will be expected to make up the remaining 20% of salary.

7.1.2 EXTENSION OF THE CORONAVIRUS BUSINESS INTERRUPTION LOAN SCHEME (CBIL)

- Maximum turnover for eligible businesses was previously set at £41 million per year; it has now been increased to £45m.
- The interest-free period has been increased from six months to twelve.
- The scheme is being managed by the British Business Bank but businesses will access them via one of 40 accredited lending providers, including most major banks.
- The maximum value of a facility provided under the scheme will be £5 million – higher than the £1.2m announced initially.
- **What next?** Discuss business plans with existing lending providers. Loans will be available from Monday 23 March 2020.

7.1.3 DEFERRAL OF TAX AND VAT PAYMENTS CURRENTLY DUE

- VAT payments from UK-based VAT registered businesses due between 20 March and 30 June 2020 won't need to be paid to the usual deadlines, with payment deferred until the end of the tax year.
- Self-assessment income tax payments for the self-employed which were due on 31 July 2020 can now be deferred until 31 January 2021.
- **What next?** Both deferral schemes apply automatically with no application required.

7.1.4 ACCESS TO WELFARE FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED

The minimum income floor for access to universal credit has been suspended for self-employed people affected by the economic impact of coronavirus.

7.2 Measures announced on 17 March

At a press conference on 17 March, the Chancellor announced a package of support worth £350 billion – around 15% of the value of the entire UK economy. It came upon the heels of a statement from the Prime Minister on 16 March which urged people to stop visiting cafes, pubs and restaurants. It was intended to send a strong signal to British businesses not to act hastily in downsizing because support would be forthcoming.

7.2.1 EXTENSION OF BUSINESS RATE DISCOUNT

- All hospitality, leisure and retail venues in England, regardless of rateable value, can now claim a 100% discount on business rates for 12 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
- Unoccupied properties that become vacant in the next 12 months will be charged 100% full rates from three months after they become empty.
- **What next?** The discount will be applied automatically to the next council tax bill, due in April 2020.

7.2.2 CASH GRANTS FOR VERY SMALL BUSINESSES

- Hospitality, leisure and retail businesses operating from units with rateable values between £15,000 and £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000.
- Businesses in these sectors with a rateable value of less than £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000.
- Those with a rateable value of more than £15,000 will receive £25,000.
- Your local authority will contact you if you are eligible for this grant.
- **What next?** Await notification from local authorities.

7.3 Measures announced in Spring Budget 2020

In what the Office for Budget Responsibility called the “largest Budget giveaway since 1992”, Rishi Sunak announced business support measures worth billions. Events have moved quickly, though, and many of the specific measures announced have now been superseded or further extended.

7.3.1 GRANTS FOR BUSINESSES RECEIVING SBRR OR RRR

- Businesses in England eligible for small business rate relief (SBRR) or rural rate relief (RRR) will receive a one-off cash grant of £10,000.
- **What next?** This will be processed automatically by local authorities.

7.3.2 STATUTORY SICK PAY RECLAIM SCHEME FOR SMES

- Small- and medium-sized businesses and employers will be able to reclaim statutory sick pay (SSP) paid for sickness absence due to COVID-19.
- The refund will cover up to two weeks’ SSP for each member of staff off work because of COVID-19.
- It applies to all UK businesses that employed fewer than 250 employees as of 28 February 2020.
- **What next?** Legislation needs to pass before details of how to apply can be published.

7.3.3 IR35 CHANGE POSTPONED TO APR 2021

The government has postponed the controversial reforms to the IR35 tax rules until April 2021

7.4 Interest rates

On 19 March 2020 the Bank of England cut interest rates to a historic low of 0.1%, having previously reduced them to 0.25% on the day of the Spring Budget.

7.4.1 CONTACT FOR FURTHER QUERIES

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In France, specific rules and guidelines have been laid down by the Government. A Decree n°2020-73 of January 31, 2020 adjusts the conditions for salary compensation for persons faced with situations related to the coronavirus. A “questions/answers for companies and employees” have also been published by the French Government on February 28, 2020. Updated information is available by following the internet link: <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus>.

Concerning your questions, the main rules and recommendations are as follows:

- Concerning travel to/ from risk areas or areas under containment, situation of employees with symptoms or in contact with infected people.

The French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs advises against travelling to China unless there are compelling reasons to do so for a while and postpone travels to this country. It is also recommended to postpone all non-essential travels to the Lombardy and Veneto regions of Italy, South Korea, Iran, and Singapore. These risk areas are subject to change and are regularly updated on <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus>.

Please note that in France, the employer is responsible for the health and safety of its employees in accordance with the provisions of Article L. 4121-1 of the French Labor Code. In the event of imperative travels, it is advisable to refer to the instructions of the above-mentioned website, and to check with the employee that all the recommendations are correctly implemented by them.

In case of employees coming from risk areas or areas under containment, the employer must put in place certain measures for 14 days (“period of vigilance”):

- Reorganization of the workplace with implementation of home office for the employees concerned;
- If it is not possible to implement home office for these employees (e.g. because the type of job of the employee is not compatible with home office), the employer must :
 - Avoid the contact of these employees with fragile people,
 - Cancel all non-imperative travels or meetings,
 - Avoid close contacts between employees (canteen, lifts, etc.).

Concerning home office, please note that home office can be implemented in the company when the reorganization of the workplace is necessary to ensure the continuity of the company's activity and to guarantee the protection of employees. According to article L. 1222-11 of the French Labour Code, the risk of epidemic justifies home office of the employees concerned, without their consent. The implementation of home office in this context does not require any particular formalism (e.g. amendment to the employment contract).

In other situations, according to article L.1222-9 of the Labour Code, the implementation of home office is only possible under some conditions. In particular, it can be implemented by collective agreement or, failing that, within the framework of a charter drawn up by the employer after consulting the "social and economic committee" (if such employee representatives exist in the company – this is not the case of Stratasys in France). In the absence of such a collective agreement or a charter, when the employee and the employer agree to implement home office, their agreement needs to be formalized (e.g. amendment to the employment contract).

It is also possible to move paid leave periods, already set by the employee for a later period, within the 14-days period of vigilance, according to exceptional circumstances and pursuant to Article L.3141-16 of the French Labor Code. Should the employee has not set any paid leave periods, the employer cannot impose him/her to take paid leaves during the 14-days period. If the employee has "RTT" days (additional days of rest), these days may be placed by the employer within the 14-days period, in accordance with the applicable provisions (provided for by agreement or by the collective bargaining agreement). The employer and the employee may also agree that the employee take some paid leave / "RTT" days during this period.

If an employee is contaminated, the employer must clean the premises, following the protocol described on the website <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus>.

In case of suspicion of sick employees, the site <https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus> should be consulted and the employee should be encouraged to refer to it. In the event of an identified risk or serious doubt, the employee concerned or, if this is not possible, the employer, must consult the emergency medical assistance service by calling 15.

More generally, to limit the risk of spreading the virus in the workplace, the employer must exercise enhanced vigilance and minimize the risk of contamination, as follows:

- Ensure regular ventilation of the premises (at least 20 minutes per day),
- Ensure reinforced cleaning of common areas (disinfection of stair railings, door handles, switches, work equipment),
- Provide the employees with information and rules to be followed on protection instructions,
- Provide hydro-alcoholic products and single-use towels, and even masks as recommended by the Government,
- Control entries and exits in the company and limit non-essential travels,
- Remind to the employees the emergency numbers.

In addition, the employer shall provide information and follow-up on health and safety matters as follows:

- Update the assessment document for professional risks ("document unique d'évaluation des risques professionnels")
- Implement measures to limit contagion and adapt the measures if necessary;
- Inform and train staff on the applicable measures, to ensure effectiveness of the safety and protection instructions.

Impacts for the employer/employees if schools or child care places have to close

If there is no other childcare option available for the employees, employees can contact the regional health agency (via the website www.ars.sante.frou or via the national telephone platform), so that a doctor authorized by this agency draws up a notice of work interruption corresponding to the recommended duration of isolation of the child. In this situation, the employee is compensated as if he/she were isolated: in this respect, Decree no. 2020-73 of

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January 31, 2020 provides for identical compensation rights to those provided for in the event of a sick leave, without application of the waiting period before compensation.

In such a context, in order to avoid work interruption of the employees, it is recommended to allow home office (when possible).

Last but not least, under articles L. 4131-1 et seq. of the French Labour Code, an employee may withdraw from a work situation (that is to say leave work) only if he/her has reasonable grounds for believing that the situation presents a serious and imminent danger to his/her life or health.

In situation of crisis, the possibilities for employees to recourse to the right of withdrawal are very limited, provided that the employer has taken all necessary measures to protect health and security of the employees, in accordance with the Government's recommendations. If these recommendations are not correctly followed by the employer, the employees may be authorized to exercise a right of withdrawal. However, the legitimacy of the use of this right will be assessed by the Court.

Please note that specific rules apply in order to temporarily modulate the company's activity (decrease or increase), in order to face particular situations.

Some measures can be put in place in order to reduce the company's activity, under some conditions:

- Partial activity (so called "activité partielle") (temporary closure of the establishment or reduction of the working hours of the employees),
- "FNE"-Training (implementation of training actions to facilitate the activity of employees in order to face the transformations resulting from economic and technological changes and to encourage their adaptation to new jobs).

Other provisions make it possible to respond to organize an increase of the company's activity. In particular, and under certain conditions, it is possible to modulate working hours (derogations from maximum working hours, rest periods, etc.).

7.4.2 UPDATE 25. MÄRZ 2020:

We would like to inform you that today the government has announced verbally new regulations regarding short-time working and especially regarding foreign companies that have no branches in France.

In her speech today, the Minister of Labor said that short-time working would be possible for workers employed in France by a foreign company without a branch in France, as long as the latter pays social security contributions in France.

This leads to important news. The regulation to be published and the decrees to be issued will certainly describe this announcement in more detail.

More Information / Update Coronavirus – Gouvernement français:

<https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus>

8. CZECH REPUBLIC

Latest information on Coronavirus:

<https://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/aktualni-informace-ke-koronaviru-2019-ncov-179250/>

9. RÖDL & PARTNER CZECH REPUBLIC

<http://www.roedl.net/cz>

On the basis of a proposal from the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Jana Maláčová, on 23 March 2020 the Government of the Czech Republic approved an expansion of the support provided during this crisis, this time targeting the support at employers. It should be noted that so far, NO DETAILED METHODOLOGY that would be like the German KURZARBEIT (short-time work) scheme has been published.

The measures introduced will protect additional firms that were indirectly impacted by the state-imposed restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 epidemic. Through the Czech Employment Office, the Government will compensate firms for the financial resources they had to expend. This primarily relates to wage costs in respect of employees. This measure will help employers better cope with the present situation without having to resort to layoffs.

The Minister, Jana Maláčová, stated the following: "I consider the additional measures that were approved today within the framework of the Antivirus program to be of key importance. Immediate help to firms and the safeguarding of jobs represent steps that are of vital importance for ensuring that our economy recovers from the effects of the epidemic quickly. People need certainty that they will not lose their jobs and firms need financial resources in order to keep their employees."

THE PREVIOUSLY-APPROVED SCHEMES UNDER THE MINISTRY'S ANTIVIRUS PROGRAM, which were aimed at companies on which the government-imposed epidemic-related measures had A DIRECT IMPACT, were the following:

9.1 Scheme A – Situations where employees are ordered into a quarantine

This measure is aimed at employees which were ordered to go into a quarantine and which are and/or will be receiving wage compensation in the amount of 60% of the average assessment basis.

THE EMPLOYER WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTING TO THE FULL AMOUNT OF THE WAGE COMPENSATION BEING PROVIDED TO THE EMPLOYEE.

9.2 Scheme B – Situations where companies are unable to assign work to their employees

This measure is aimed at situations where an employer is unable to assign work to its employees as a result of the extraordinary epidemic-related measures imposed by the Government. This is the situation where an employer is ordered to shut down operation in connection with the Government's imposition of measures to combat the spread of COVID-19. This applies to employees that are receiving wage compensation amounting to 100% of the relevant wage.

THE EMPLOYER WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTING TO 80% OF THE WAGE COMPENSATION BEING PAID TO THE EMPLOYEE.

The Ministry's ANTIVIRUS program has been expanded to include THREE NEW SCHEMES aimed at companies on which the government-imposed epidemic-related measures had an INDIRECT IMPACT:

9.3 Scheme C – Situations where companies are unable to assign work to their employees

This measure addresses situations where companies are unable to assign work to their employees due to the quarantine that has been imposed or because a large portion of employees have children at home that need to be taken care of. A large portion means at least 30% of the employees of a firm, facility or other organizational component, depending on the employer's operating situation. This applies to employees that are receiving a wage compensation amounting to 100% of the relevant wage.

THE EMPLOYER WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTING TO 80% OF THE WAGE COMPENSATION BEING PAID TO THE EMPLOYEE.

9.4 Scheme D – Situations where the inputs needed by companies are not available

This measure addresses situations where companies face a lack of the availability of the raw materials, products and services that they need for their activities as an employer in consequence of quarantine-related measures (or in general as a consequence of production shutdowns by suppliers) introduced by their suppliers, including foreign suppliers. This involves, for example, agreements stipulating a requirement to prove the origin of inputs, prohibitions of events or the introduction of other measures that demonstrably have an impact on the deliveries of supplies to the employer. This applies to employees that are receiving wage compensation amounting to 80% of the relevant wage.

THE EMPLOYER WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTING TO 50% OF THE WAGE COMPENSATION BEING PAID TO THE EMPLOYEE.

9.5 Scheme E – Decrease in demand

This measure is aimed at situations where the demand decreases for the employer's services, goods or other products in consequence of quarantine-related measures at the place where the employer's services, goods or other products are sold (in the Czech Republic or abroad). This applies to employees that are receiving wage compensation amounting to at least 60% of the relevant wage.

THE EMPLOYER WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTING TO 50% OF THE WAGE COMPENSATION BEING PAID TO THE EMPLOYEE.

9.6 Conclusion

On 23 March 2020, the Czech Government published for the first time, i.e. for the first time since the epidemic-related measures were imposed, the general features of the measures being prepared to help companies deal with the current situation. At the present time, we still do not have a detailed METHODOLOGY for the individual schemes. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs promised to publish such methodology on 1 April 2020.

The support will be implemented in the following manner. The employer will submit a request the refundation of the wage compensation that the employer paid to its employees. The employer will request such refundation after the end of the reported period, i.e. after the end of the calendar month in respect of which the employer is requesting the contribution. So in order to receive the contribution for the month of March, the employer will submit the request at the beginning of April.

Should you require any assistance with an evaluation of what you are entitled to in connection with the crisis-related measures, or if you would like assistance with submitting the relevant request for support, please do not hesitate to contact us.

10. RÖDL & PARTNER FINLAND

10.1 How to protect your company's cash flow

The Finnish government has agreed on extensive measures to secure workplaces and people's livelihood as well as to ease the financial situation of companies.

The following measures are available:

- Development funding as De minimis support
- Deferment of TyEL (employee pension insurance) and YEL (entrepreneur pension insurance) at 2% interest rate, and temporary reduction starting from 1st of June
- Deferment of tax payments (at 4% interest rate, starting from 25th of March)
- Application for additional funding from your bank
- Critical review of cost structure
- The regulations for temporary lay-offs and co-operation negotiations have been temporarily eased

10.2 Applying for development funding for business activities

Business Finland's financing services are intended for SME's and Midcap's who operate in Finland and whose business has suffered due to the coronavirus pandemic. Mid-cap companies are large companies with a turnover or group-wide turnover of up to EUR 300 million.

Customers of the funding services include, among others, the tourism industry, supplementary services for the tourism industry, creative industry and performing arts, and all industries whose subcontracting chains have been or will be impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Funding is also available to companies operating in the domestic market.

Funding for preliminary studies on business disruptions. Up to 10,000 euros of funding for the following purposes:

- Identify measures to remedy supply chain disruptions, regardless of industry
- Development of business activities in the tourism industry
- Development of business activities in the creative industries

Development funding for business disruptions. Up to 100,000 euros of funding, e.g. for the renewal and development needs:

- New services and products
- New partnerships and subcontracting models
- New ways to organize and move to Finland work and production
- Any other new measures that the company deems necessary under the circumstances

Before starting a project, let's agree together which costs should be monitored in payroll and accounting. Project accounting needs to comply with the terms and condition of the funding, so that the project's costs can be identified and that their connection to the accounts and the cost statements can be verified.

10.3 TyEL and YEL: Discounts and extended terms of payments

There will be temporary discount of 2,6 % to the Employer's TYEL payments which will enter into place no later than 1st of June, 2020.

Payment of TyEL (statutory earnings related pension insurance for employees) can now be postpone by three months. Pension insurance companies also have their own payment plans, which can be applied for. There will be an interest of 2 % during the extended term of payment, but there will be no penalty interest.

You can apply for extra payment time for wages that are paid between February and May. The application is done in the insurance companies' service portals.

In case the requirements are met you can use YEL (entrepreneur's pension insurance) flexibility and pay 10-20% less insurance fees. Flexibility does not reduce the amount of Kela allowances. Please ask your insurance company for more information!

We can do the application for you, if you have given us rights to access the service portal. Please get in touch with your contact person or with our payroll department. Send a message to our payroll department.

Send a [message](#) to our payroll department.

10.4 Payment arrangements for taxes

You can request a payment arrangement with eased terms for self-assessed taxes (VAT and employer contributions) in the MyTax service starting from the 25th of March. Taxes that are included in a payment arrangement are not recovered by enforcement authorities and the company's tax debt is not published.

You can also request a new, eased term payment arrangement if you already have an active payment arrangement. The payment time of the payment arrangement will be extended and the interest rate temporarily lowered.

In case you want us to file an application for payment arrangements for you, let us know for how long you would like the arrangement to last, and we will file the application in MyTax on your behalf.

- Choose 1-24 months installments (you can pay faster, but not slower)
- The first installment is due in three months
- New tax liabilities arising after a payment arrangement will automatically be transferred to the same arrangement until 31st of May, 2020.
- Late payment interest on these tax payments is 4% instead of the normal 7%

Prepayments of company income tax can be reduced or eliminated by application filed in MyTax.

10.5 Bank loan to secure funding

Finnvera (state-owned Finnish financing company) has been given additional authority over the financing arrangements made necessary by the coronavirus. If you need loan money, first contact your bank. Finnvera and the banks are flexible in their payment arrangements, and those should be agreed upon with your own bank as early as possible in the process. Finnvera enables the bank to provide working capital with a guarantee.

If you already have a guarantee from Finnvera, apply for installment-free months from the bank. If you have a loan from Finnvera, apply for a 6-month installment-free period through the online service. Read more [here](#).

10.6 Flexibility for temporary lay-offs and co-operation negotiations

The Finnish government has decided on measures to increase flexibility and cost-effectiveness of temporary lay-offs made necessary by the corona virus situation. The minimum negotiation period will be reduced in a layoff process to 5 days in all cases. In addition, the right to lay-offs is extended to fixed-term employment contracts to the same extent as for contracts of indefinite duration. In the event of a lay-off, the employee has the right to unemployment benefit and the right to terminate the employment contract despite the fixed term.

Lay-off flexibility due to the corona virus situation has already been transferred to many collective labor agreements. Check your own collective labor agreement's regulations. They may differ from government policy.

If your company had 20 employees, lay-offs must be initiated through co-operation negotiations. Please contact a [lawyer](#) for help.

10.7 Help from the Rödl & Partner Group

The personnel of our legal services are at your disposal regarding all matters requiring legal consultation. [Timo Huhtala](#) Attorney-at-Law, is responsible for labour law and international matters, and, [Tommi Koponen](#) Attorney-at-Law is responsible for business, contract law and insolvency.

10.8 Employee's unemployment benefits improved

As a counterweight to the flexibility granted for companies, the government decided to improve the unemployment benefits of employees. The days of personal liability are removed. The time limit of the unemployment benefits does not run during layoffs. The legislation will be specified regarding layoffs: employees are eligible for the daily unemployment benefit when the layoff has been agreed upon between the parties, too.

An employee will receive the earning adjusted daily allowance from the unemployment fund, if the employee has been a member of the fund prior to being unemployed and they meet the employment condition (the condition has been adjusted from 26 weeks to 13 weeks). If the employee is not eligible for the earnings adjusted daily allowance, they will receive the basic daily allowance, paid by KELA. If the employee is laid off, unemployed, or works a shortened work week, they must sign up as a person seeking for work, at the TE office, no later than the first day of the unemployment.

10.9 Securing livelihood for entrepreneurs and freelancers

In addition, the government decided to ease freelancers' and entrepreneurs' access to unemployment benefits, regardless of the type of the company. The temporary decline of conditions for business is grounds for assessing a business part-time business. Based on the part-time business, an entrepreneur is entitled to unemployment benefits. Therefore, a full-time entrepreneur does not have to stop conducting business in order to receive benefits.

Insuring the equality of entrepreneurs, the change applies to all types of companies. The entrepreneur's notification is sufficient, which reduces the need for research and deliberation at the TE office.

The changes to the Unemployment Security Act are temporary. The changes are prepared by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland.

10.10 Other actions

We will gladly go over these other actions in order to secure the continuation of business, in a video conference:

- Negotiating a grace period for your rent with your landlord
- Negotiating extended payment times with your suppliers
- Going over your cost structure critically, in order to find opportunities to reduce costs
- Doing calculations of your cash flow, in order to determine how far the money will suffice
- Making sure together, that your business will thrive!