

COVID-19 and ENTERPRISES

Briefing Note [No. 30]

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The COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting enterprises of all sizes and types in unprecedented ways. This brief aims to highlight key information resources available on the functioning of enterprises in the crisis, including its impact on enterprises, responses by enterprises and policy measures to support affected enterprises.

Disclaimer: Due to the rapid evolution of the situation around the COVID-19, there has been a large and growing amount of information resources related to enterprises and the pandemic. Therefore, this brief contains not only the resources of the ILO, but also those from external organizations. Reference to those external resources does not constitute an endorsement by the ILO of the opinions expressed in them.

Visit the ILO website for regular updates on responses to the COVID-19 crisis.

► ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus

1. Resources for enterprise response

[ILO: Needs assessment survey: The impact of COVID-19 on enterprises](#) | 3

Aug 2020

This survey tool has been developed by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ILO-ACT/EMP) to help employers and business membership organizations (EBMOs) evaluate the needs of enterprises as a result of on-going COVID-19 crisis. This survey tool is an update to the first one released in March 2020 and assists EBMOs gain membership insights by assessing priorities and challenges enterprises are facing due to the prolonged crisis situation.

[UNIDO: Guiding MSMEs' business recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic](#) | 21 May 2020

To help micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) identify potential issues arising from the health crisis and get down to solving them as quickly as possible, the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has published this guide. The lead questions in this publication highlight typical priorities that arise during a business recovery, and are grouped by phases. They begin with the immediate-reaction questions (Are any of your staff affected by COVID-19? Are your premises operational?); then progress to questions that clarify where businesses stand in the wake of COVID-19 (Are you paying employees on time? Are any of your key suppliers affected by COVID-19 and, if so, will this have any impact on your business?); and conclude with more detailed assessment questions which will help (re)shape businesses after the disaster, covering various aspects of work, such as marketing, pricing, inventory, funding, and more.

[The fear of robots displacing workers has returned](#) | 30 July 2020

Covid-19 presented employers with a simple choice: find ways for workers to do their jobs safely, or shut down. At least some have chosen a third option, of dispensing with humans altogether. Among the many breathless headlines

prompted by the pandemic are those warning of a new wave of job-destroying automation. The pace of automation in some parts of the economy, like factory floors and warehouses, is almost certain to accelerate. Yet on the whole, robot-induced mass unemployment should remain near the bottom of workers' lists of worries.

[Teleworkability and the COVID-19 crisis: a new digital divide?](#) | May 2020

The paper discusses the extent of teleworking in the EU before and during the COVID-19 outbreak, develops a conceptual analysis to identify the jobs that can be done from home and those that cannot, and on this basis quantifies the fraction of employees that are in teleworkable occupations across EU countries, sectors and socio-economic profiles.

[Building Resilience in Manufacturing and Supply Systems in the COVID-19 context and beyond: Latin America Perspectives](#) | 17 July 2020

The COVID-19 global crisis continues to disrupt manufacturing and global supply chains with severe consequences for society, businesses, consumers and the global economy. While the pandemic has reached Latin America later than other regions, its impact is as devastating as elsewhere. Recognizing this urgency, the World Economic Forum's Regional Action Group for Latin America brought together the foremost government and public and private sector leaders, to discuss the industry implications, responses and collaboration to build resilience on manufacturing and supply systems in Latin America.

2. Government response for enterprises

[ILO portal on the country policy responses](#)

This ILO portal is being frequently updated to provide recent updates on the measures implemented by governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and the ILO by country and territory.

UK: £20 million to improve small business leadership and problem-solving skills in the wake of coronavirus | 3 Aug 2020

Two new leadership programmes to help small business leaders grow their companies in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic have been launched on 3 August. [The Small Business Leadership Programme](#) will focus on strengthening decision-makers' leadership skills, so they are able to address management challenges, some of which, such as remote working, have arisen from coronavirus. Additionally, [the Peer Networks Programme](#) will focus on helping business owners improve their problem-solving skills, through a series of guided exercises.

UK: Eat Out to Help Out launches today – with government paying half on restaurant bills | 3 Aug 2020

From 3 Aug 2020 customers will get up to 50% off on bills when visiting participating restaurants, pubs and cafes. Half price discount will run through August and applies to all food and non-alcoholic drinks consumed on the premises – with Pizza Express, Costa Coffee and Nando's among thousands signed up. The scheme, part of the Chancellor's Plan for Jobs, aims to protect jobs in the hospitality sector – which has been hit hard by coronavirus.

Canada to Expand Employment Benefits as Covid Support Plan Ends | 31 July 2020

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday unveiled a plan to wind down his flagship Covid-19 income support benefit and bring recipients into an expanded employment insurance system. the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit will be phased out as the first people to receive the C\$2,000 (\$1,494) monthly payments start losing eligibility at the end of August. Those who don't immediately qualify for employment benefits will receive a stipend while the government reworks the country's employment system.

[The day after tomorrow: Africa's battle with Covid19 and the road ahead](#) | 31 July 2020

This report provides an account of Africa's battle against COVID-19, maps a profile of the continent's vulnerabilities that render it susceptible to systemic collapse, and analyses ways in which it can build resilience in the face of future crises. The report takes a systemic perspective, and provides analyses oriented around four axes—health, economic, socio-political and technological systems; and three key elements—risk, response and resilience.

3. Enterprises response

Production innovation and adaptation

[Tongrentang cafe to target young consumers](#) | 5 Aug 2020

Tongrentang Group, a renowned traditional Chinese medicine pharmacy, has opened two fusion cafes that offer drinks and healthcare services in Beijing, and the shops have been quite popular among consumers, especially the young people. "We need to keep pace with the changing times. Our herbal drinks have been highly recognized by young consumers," said He Junshuai, director of brand management of healthcare services at Tongrentang Group Co Ltd.

Support to customers and communities

[UK: Thousands of business advisers to offer free services to small firms](#) | 09 July 2020

Thousands of expert professional and business services advisers have signed up to offer free online advice to help small businesses bounce back from coronavirus (COVID-19). The Recovery Advice for Business scheme, supported by the government and hosted on the Enterprise Nation website, will give small

firms access to free, one-to-one advice with an expert adviser to help them through the coronavirus pandemic and to prepare for long-term recovery.

Recovery and post-recovery planning

[Airlines have a chance to emerge from the crisis leaner and greener](#) | 1

Aug 2020

When aviation industry rebounds, the twin priorities should be to put the industry on a sounder financial footing, and to make flying less polluting. For both objectives the way forward is the same: to loosen incumbents' grip on the skies.

[How should Chinese companies prepare for the post-COVID-19 era?](#) | 4 Aug 2020

In the first half of 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak caused tremendous loss of life and property. The impact of the pandemic has been keenly felt and has fuelled extensive discussions across various sectors. If we look at the current changes on a longer timescale, however, we find that the outbreak has not really changed the course of human society. On the contrary, it is like a booster accelerating existing processes and facilitating the emergence of new trends. These new trends will greatly influence the future trajectory of China's economy and Chinese companies.

Other/multiple response

[How are companies responding to the coronavirus crisis?](#) | 25 June 2020

The dramatic spread of COVID-19 has disrupted lives, livelihoods, communities and businesses worldwide. Organizations around the world are coming together and innovating to minimize the impact on public health and to limit disruptions to economies and supply chains. On this page, the World Economic

Forum regularly updates good practices of its partners, corporations and other organizations globally on fighting the pandemic. Updated on 25 June, 2020.

Activities of employers and OHS services during the developing COVID-19 epidemic in Poland | 30 July 2020

The epidemic is affecting the global economy, plunging many industries. The global extent of the epidemic and government controls, restrictions and constraints have led to imbalances in world trade and have put many companies under pressure. The epidemic is a test of individual companies' ability to operate effectively in the new environment. It is up to managers to mitigate its impact on business. The aim of the article is to identify the activities of employers in Poland related to the protection of workers with the developing epidemic COVID-19.

4. Workers/multi-stakeholders response

Australia's Economic Reconstruction after COVID-19: A National Jobs Plan, And Five Ways to Get Started | 22 July 2020

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), with economist Dr Jim Stanford and the Center for Future Work have developed a National Economic Reconstruction Plan, with 5 concrete ideas to get started - 1. Early Childhood Education and Care Strategy; 2: Training for Reconstruction; 3: Rediscover Australia; 4: National Reconstruction Investment Plan; 5: Sustainable Manufacturing Strategy.