



European Committee  
of the Regions

## SEDEC Bulletin N°2

COVID-19 impact and response measures

27 April 2020



*The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically affected our world and our way of living, with the loss of thousands of lives and unprecedented consequences for every aspect of our daily existence. The Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC) at the European Committee of the Regions is preparing regular bulletins on the policy fields within its remit, reflecting recent research, articles and discussions on the socio-economic impact of the pandemic in Europe and on the different actions and response measures being planned and implemented at EU, national, regional and local level.*

*Anne Karjalainen (FI/PES), Chair of the SEDEC commission*

### Social policy and employment

On 2 April 2020, the European Commission proposed a new temporary unemployment reinsurance scheme under the [SURE instrument](#) (Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency) in order to ensure that businesses can stay afloat by supporting the costs of short-time work schemes, with EUR 100bn of financial assistance in form of a loan from the EU to the Member States.

The Commission is using a dedicated [online open-source platform](#) for the social economy to share expertise and discuss best practices, initiatives and actions that help in the fight against COVID-19 (coronavirus), such as technological solutions, services for the elderly, volunteering requests, food delivery services, online courses, etc.

On 9 April, the Eurogroup agreed to a EUR 540 billion "corona package" to support Member States in dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 crisis ([link](#)). On the same day, the Council published a report on the comprehensive economic policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which includes a series of proposals for economic support for employees and SMEs ([link](#)).

On 17 April 2020 the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on EU coordinated action in response to the COVID-19 crisis. The resolution welcomes the Commission's SURE proposal, and calls for its swift implementation and the launch of a permanent European Unemployment Reinsurance Scheme.

The EU has managed to bring home over half a million citizens affected by coronavirus travel restrictions, by funding repatriation flights and pursuing intense consular cooperation. At the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak, some 600 000 EU citizens declared themselves stranded outside the EU, most of whom were short-term travellers. At a meeting of the European Parliament's Transport Committee on 21 April, Internal Market Commissioner Thierry Breton promised to ensure support for Europe's tourism industry, and told committee members that, as tourism was one of the hardest-hit sectors in the current health crisis in Europe, a special sustainable tourism summit could be organised in September or October to deal with the fallout of the pandemic ([link](#)).

The ETUC is urging the European Commission to reconsider plans to abandon its pledge to introduce binding measures to boost equal and fair pay because of the COVID-19 outbreak. ([link](#))



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### Policy responses from a research and innovation point of view

The European Commission has been at the forefront of supporting research and innovation and coordinating European and global research efforts, including preparedness for pandemics. The Commission has continued to launch a number of special actions in the past month, addressing epidemiology, preparedness and response to outbreaks, the development of diagnostics, treatments and vaccines, and the infrastructure and resources that enable this research.

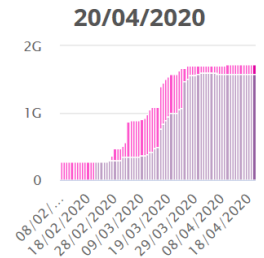
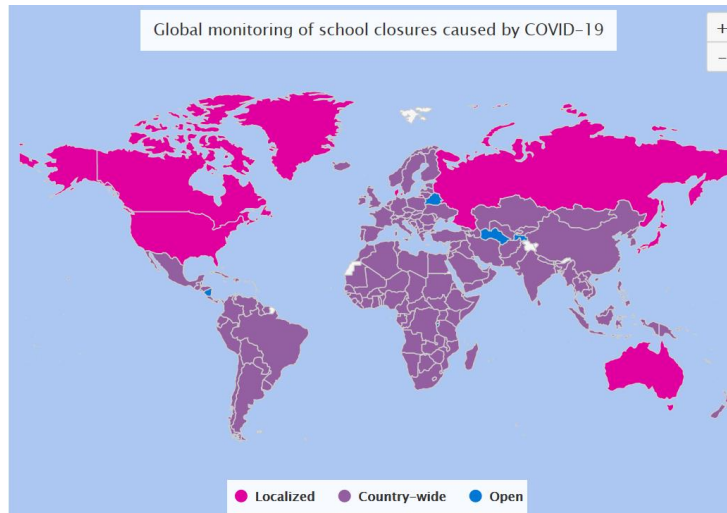
On 1 April 2020, it was announced that the JRC had developed a [new control material](#) to help prevent false negatives in coronavirus tests. The [first "ERAvsCorona" action plan](#) was adopted on 8 April 2020, aimed at short-term coordinated research and innovation actions. On 24-26 April, an [EUvsVirus Hackathon](#) is being held under the aegis of the European Innovation Council (EIC) to tackle coronavirus challenges.

On 20 April the European Commission, together with a number of partners, launched a **European COVID-19 Data Platform** to enable the rapid collection and sharing of available research data. The platform is part of the [ERAvsCorona Action Plan](#), and will provide an open, trusted, and scalable European and global environment where researchers can store and share datasets, such as DNA sequences, protein structures, data from pre-clinical research and clinical trials, and epidemiological data. It is the result of a joint effort by the European Commission, the European Bioinformatics Institute of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory ([EMBL-EBI](#)), the [Elixir](#) initiative and the [COMPARE project](#), as well as the EU Member States and other partners.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology's health research hub, EIT Health, has reorganised its activities to focus on COVID-19, launching a [matchmaking](#) site allowing healthcare experts to cooperate across borders. The JRC has [developed an indicator](#) of hospital bed capacities, taking into account territorial demographic characteristics and COVID-19 fatality rates by age. Its experts have also helped to develop a distribution methodology for the Emergency Response Coordination Centre, to make sure these supplies can get to where they are needed most, when they are needed most.

### Education and Youth, Culture and Sport

**1.** The COVID-19 pandemic has affected education and training systems worldwide. It has changed ways of learning, teaching, communicating and collaborating. Over 91% of the world's student population is directly impacted and several other countries have implemented localised closures impacting millions of additional learners. All of this has consequences for students, teachers and families, as well as for the wider communities in cities and regions.



**1,575,270,054** affected learners  
**91.3%** of total enrolled learners  
**191** country-wide closures

Source: [UNESCO/UNESCO Institute for Statistics \(UIS\)](#)

The COVID-19 outbreak is negatively affecting activities under the Erasmus+ programme and European Solidarity Corps. The European Commission has published a [COVID-19 factsheet](#) that gives essential practical advice to participants in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) mobility activities in the light of the COVID-19 outbreak. To help ensure continuity in education and training activities, the Commission has also made available a wide range of [online learning](#) materials:

- [online platforms](#): School Education Gateway; eTwinning; EPALE, etc.
- [EU-funded projects](#): EduHack; Bio talent; Code n' Social; Open Mind, etc.

An upcoming review of the [Digital Education Action Plan](#) in mid-2020 will further support the development of online learning at different levels of education across Europe.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is also heavily affected, but ready-made online resources with VET-specific content are less developed. There have been strong calls for the European Commission and national public authorities to create a database with existing resources to be shared for free around Europe. To capture the variety of initiatives that have been undertaken, the European Commission launched an [online survey](#) on 18 March 2020, and the initial results are now available.

On 22 April, the European Investment Fund (EIF) and the European Commission launched a new pilot guarantee facility to improve access to finance for individuals and organisations looking to invest in skills and education. The [Skills & Education Guarantee Pilot](#) (S&E Pilot) will provide an EU guarantee of up to EUR 50 million backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), triggering debt financing for skills and education projects in Europe, with the aim of mobilising more than €200 million in total financing. Interested financing institutions or providers of education and training can apply to become financial intermediaries and participate in the scheme by responding to the open [Call for Expressions of Interest](#) published by the EIF.



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On 14 April, the [EU education ministers](#) held an informal video conference to discuss the implications of COVID-19 on education and training. Within the EU, the vast majority of EU Member States decided to close education and training facilities due to the pandemic (in Sweden nursery and primary schools are still operating; Denmark reopened schools on 14 April, but not universities). Ministers exchanged good practices for distance learning, such as organising virtual learning and teaching, upgrading existing IT systems, providing fair access to and preserving quality of education and training, and tailored support for students, teachers and families. Moreover, ministers exchanged information about national plans for the end of the school and academic year, assessment, grading, exams, and enrolment in different levels of education. Five or six Member States plan to reopen schools in mid or late April, seven or eight others are considering doing so in May, while the other countries have not announced any lifting of the measures until further notice. In Portugal and Malta, schools are closed until the end of the school year. Ministers welcomed the [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative \(CRII\)](#) and expressed interest in funding possibilities to support education and training in response to the coronavirus crisis. Commissioner Mariya Gabriel called on Member States to act in a coordinated manner and said that the Commission remained fully engaged in the preparation and implementation of the Digital Education Action Plan (important for distance learning).

On 15 April, the European Parliament's [Culture and Education Committee \(CULT\)](#) called for "a clear policy, clearly communicated and consistently implemented across member states" concerning the fate of Erasmus students and ESC volunteers. In a letter addressed to the European Commission, the committee members underline that the 165 000 Erasmus+ exchange students and the 5 000 volunteers in the European Solidarity Corps need a guarantee that they will retain their status and that the extra costs they incur will be reimbursed.

### [Learning City Webinar Series 2020, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning \(UIL\)](#)

In April, UIL is continuing its [webinars](#) for cities to share and learn about measures taken at different stages of the emergence of COVID-19:

- 22 April 2020: Measures developed by cities for migrants and refugees during COVID-19
- 23 April 2020: Special French edition: Measures taken by francophone cities during COVID-19
- 29 April 2020: Mental health, health, and well-being
- 6 May 2020: Distance education

On 10 April, the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLLP) issued a [statement on the impact of the COVID-19 in education and training](#) from the point of view of civil society. It underlines the need to upskill teachers, educators and trainers, and ultimately to invest massively in education and training. It calls for flexibility in the upcoming decisions, and points out that health will remain a pivotal priority during public health crises while learning remains a weapon to defeat them.

2. At a video conference on 8 April, the [EU ministers of culture and media](#) examined the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the **cultural and creative sector**. Member States and representatives of the European Commission exchanged views on the measures implemented to mitigate the negative impacts of the crisis and on measures that should be taken at the European level.



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The Vice-President of the European Commission, Věra Jourová, and Commissioner Thierry Breton presented the measures already being implemented and noted that the media and audiovisual industries were playing a very important role during the crisis and had a responsibility to prevent fake news and disinformation. Commissioner Gabriel mentioned the EU funding provided through the European Social Fund, Cohesion Fund, State Aid model and SURE model, and highlighted the need for a flexible approach to the beneficiaries of the Creative Europe programme.

Nina Obuljen Koržinek, the Croatian minister for culture, concluded the conference by noting that "*[...] all Member States have undertaken the necessary steps in order to help artists, cultural workers, cultural institutions and companies in the cultural and creative industries in situation when cultural events are being postponed or cancelled. [...] We are all faced with the same challenges and I am convinced that the results of today's debate will help us to cope with this crisis and its consequences on culture, both at the European level and in Member States.*"

On 21 April, the European Parliament's [Culture and Education Committee \(CULT\)](#) asked the [European Commission to ensure](#) support for the press and media, where advertising revenues had dropped as much as 80%. It is important for EU support to reach SMEs, individual creators and charities from the cultural and creative sectors. CULT has asked the Commission to create an emergency fund for media, earmark structural funds for culture, and beef up the guarantee instrument.

**3.** Because of confinement measures, communal exercise facilities – as well as that brisk walk to the office – are not available. To help Europeans exercise and remain physically active even under these unprecedented circumstances, the European Commission has launched a campaign to [#BeActiveAtHome](#), using social media as a way to boost physical activity.

As part of the [SHARE Initiative](#), the 14 members and numerous other organisations have signed a [Position paper](#) on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the sport sector, calling for quick and adequate support and a clear action plan. They consider it crucial to support and stimulate a sustainable sport sector (both public and private) in the context of the European initiatives Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency ([SURE](#)), Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative ([CRII](#)), and Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus ([CRII+](#)) as well as other initiatives at national and European level.

On 21 April, the [EU sport ministers](#) held a video conference discussing the consequences of COVID-19 on sports activities. The ability of sports federations to function has been affected and there have been huge economic losses because the majority of sporting events have been cancelled. Ministers stressed that sports activities at local and grassroots level as well as the regular functioning of a number of small clubs and sports organisations had also been disrupted. Every opportunity should be taken to reallocate existing and planned funds at national level and the use of EU funds and the recognition of sport as an important part of regional development should be considered in line with national priorities and in cooperation between relevant stakeholders. Commissioner Mariya Gabriel expressed readiness to support Member States' efforts in helping sport in the crisis and post-crisis recovery. There is already flexibility for sport application deadlines and project implementation within Erasmus+ and future programmes.



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### Information society, artificial intelligence and audiovisual/telecommunications technologies

On 16 April, the EU established a **toolbox** setting out a common approach to using mobile applications to support contact tracing in the EU's fight against COVID-19. Contact tracing and warning can play an important role in all phases of the outbreak, especially as part of containment measures. This common approach to contact tracing apps therefore aims to ensure interoperable and privacy-preserving digital contact tracing of EU citizens, to be applied consistently by all Member States with the full support of the EU. The aim of contact tracing could also be to have anonymised and aggregated data on infection patterns in society, as a means to make containment decisions at local level.

[https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/ehealth/docs/covid-19\\_apps\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/ehealth/docs/covid-19_apps_en.pdf)

The EU Member States agreed that **COVID-19 mobile applications** should not process the location data of individuals, in order to avoid security and privacy issues.

<https://euobserver.com/coronavirus/148098>

On 10 April 2020, Google and Apple jointly announced an initiative related to the **use of the Bluetooth protocol to support contact tracing applications**. To implement the protocol, in May, they intend to launch application programming interfaces (APIs) that enable interoperability between Android and iOS devices to support contact tracing apps officially approved by public health authorities. In the coming months, they intend to build this functionality into the underlying platforms of their operating systems, which users of the device could opt into. The protocol excludes processing of any location data unless the user opts in, applies "Rolling Proximity Identifiers" that prevent identification of the user, processes proximity identifiers obtained from other devices exclusively on the device, and permits only users to decide whether to contribute to contact tracing. This initiative could help address, at least in part, local and regional authorities' concern to find out where citizens need most help and which places should be particularly monitored in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2020/04/apple-and-google-partner-on-covid-19-contact-tracing-technology/>

The European Audiovisual Observatory has launched a project to track support measures for the audiovisual sector during the pandemic. The measures are specific to the audiovisual sector and include public support, regulation and industry agreements, e.g. postponement of payments or relaxing of deadlines. It also takes account of the impact of measures beyond the sector, such as unemployment compensation. A regularly updated data tracker is freely available from the Observatory's website in the format of an excel table:

<https://www.obs.coe.int/en/web/observatoire/covid-19-audiovisual-sector-measures>. The relevance of these measures for local and regional media depend on the sector's structure and regulation in each EU Member State.



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### ❖ Responses at regional and local level

#### Social policy and employment

##### Valencia (Spain)

The Valencian Regional Government is helping economically vulnerable young people undertaking work placements with the support of the European Eurodyssey programme in other European regions until they are able to return to their countries of origin. 12 young people –foreigners currently in Valencia and young Valencians in Italy, France and Belgium – are affected, after the programme was cancelled due to the security measures instituted because of COVID 19. ([link](#)).

##### **Brussels (Belgium)**

The [Brussels Helps](#) initiative supports Brussels residents who either need help during the crisis or voluntarily offer their help. Organizations in need can also benefit from this plan of action (for example for making masks or finding a babysitter). A EUR 30 million fund has also been released to support not only operators on the front line of this crisis but also the sectors of social action (for [homeless people and migrants](#)), senior care, domestic help, support for people with disabilities, etc.

##### **Grenoble (France)**

Grenoble has instituted a series of economic measures to support businesses during the crisis:

- the collection of tourist tax and road taxes is suspended
- exemptions will also be proposed to support cafés and restaurants in particular and all local shops affected by the closure measures
- In addition, shops located within the metropolitan area will be able to benefit from the suspension of their rents and from exemptions if necessary
- the metropolitan area will maintain its support for the organisers of cancelled events, when expenses have been incurred
- corporate cash flow: no penalties for late payment in connection with public contracts.

##### **The Hague (The Netherlands)**

The Hague, together with Rabobank, will be distributing [330 laptops to low-income families](#) in order to enable every child living in the city to access online classes during the coronavirus lockdown. This local measure complements a similar one proposed at national level (EUR 2.5 million for free laptops for children from poor families).

#### Research and innovation

##### [Spanish National Research Council marshals resources to boost work on COVID-19](#)

The Spanish National Research Council has been taking steps to improve and enhance research on COVID-19 through various [activities](#). For example, the council has made polymerase chain reaction facilities for running diagnostic tests, and 3D printers and reagents, available to central and regional authorities.



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### [Digital sweeping plan makes street cleaning more efficient in Mechelen](#)

At the beginning of this year, Mechelen was the first municipality in Belgium to start using a smart street cleaning system developed by the Dutch company Jewel. The software knows which bins have been emptied, where the sweeper has passed and which plants have been watered. It maps the routes travelled and indicates which tasks still need to be done. Even during the COVID-19 crisis, Mechelen's Public Cleanliness Team is continuing to work to keep the streets and squares in the city clean and green.

### [Free telemedicine services in Romania during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

The restrictions imposed by the Romanian authorities during the coronavirus pandemic have kept many people at home. In this context, many public hospitals and private healthcare operators have launched telemedicine services both nationally and regionally. This innovative tool allows patients to see doctors remotely while following the recommendations for social distancing.

### [Groningen – Fund for entrepreneurial solutions](#)

Groningen has started a fund of EUR 250 000 to finance innovative entrepreneurial COVID-19-related initiatives, the Corona Innovation Fund. Ideas are themed around multi-partner SME support, fast implementation and retention of employment, and approval happens within one week.

### [Nicosia – Tracing corona contacts with an app](#) and a COVID-19 hackathon

The RISE research centre in Nicosia, Cyprus, has developed a mobile app to help limit the spread of the corona virus. The app, COVTRACER, monitors the movements of confirmed carriers of the virus to identify people they have been in contact with. The use of the app is voluntary. It has been downloaded 8 000 times since the launch. A hackathon organised by the RISE Centre for Excellence in Research and Innovation, coordinated by the municipality of Nicosia and HackCyprus, was aimed at finding creative digital solutions for the problems caused by the spread of COVID-19. 198 people participated in the competition at the beginning of April 2020. 15 projects around the themes "Save Lives", "Save Communities", "Save Businesses" and "Save Mental Well-Being" made it to the final stage. [Read more here](#) and [download the report](#) describing the projects.

### [German researchers call on decision-makers to enable safe walking and cycling during \(and after\) the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

German researchers launched a petition for the creation of temporary walking and cycling infrastructure that enables social distancing and increases the health of each individual as well as overall public health. Walking and cycling should be supported by means of **swift infrastructure adjustments**, such as temporary bike lanes, modal filters for motorised vehicles, and shared street space in places where pavements for pedestrians are crowded. Speed limits should be enforced to reduce the risk of traffic accidents.





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### Education and Youth, Culture and Sport

#### Education and Youth

##### Ile-de-France Region, France

[Digital classrooms](#) have been introduced in the whole region, offering an online database and a communication tool for all parents, teachers and children and a free online language course tool (qioz.fr). The region is pushing for IT infrastructure to be strengthened to cope with the increased traffic influx.

##### Castile and Leon, Spain

The government launched a new initiative for children during the pandemic - a TV programme called "[Aprendiendo en casa: la hora educativa](#)". The educational content has been designed by publishers such as Smile&Learn, Pearson Education, Oxford University Press, Cambridge English and MacMillan Education.

##### Istria, Croatia

The [Istrian education system has been giving a hand to the health sector](#). Primary and secondary school students from the Istria County, along with their teachers, headteachers and other school staff, helped to make protective visors for medical staff using 3D printers at the schools' disposal.

##### Alimos Municipality, Greece

[Alimos Municipality](#) is offering a programme of free online educational tutorials. This is offered free of charge to secondary school pupils via Skype and Google Classroom so that children do not miss out on their lessons. The municipality is also offering online creative workshops concerning books in collaboration with the National Library of Greece, for recreation at home.

##### Podkarpackie, Poland

Six online projects for children have been created to assist teachers and parents in the education process. Children and young people are invited to participate in online theatre, radio and public speaking workshops.

#### Cultural and Creative Sectors

##### Autun, France

The city of Autun has [launched the Autun "apprenante" operation](#) and is producing a series of educational videos on the flagship pieces in the Rolin museum, to ensure continued cultural education for pupils and adults.

##### The Hague, Netherlands

Councillor Robert van Asten wrote an [open letter](#) to everyone working in The Hague's cultural sector, explaining what is being done to help them and the public. The city is offering economic support, as well as encouraging creative solutions to the current problems faced by the cultural sector.



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### Brittany, France

In order to protect and maintain their activities, the region has created an [exceptional community life fund](#) to support the cultural, sports and tourism sectors. The region is also offering continued financial support to associations affected financially by the cancellation of events or projects and is extending agreements to finance actions that have been postponed due to the epidemic.

### Region of Murcia, Spain

The Education and Culture Department of the Government of Murcia has launched a campaign called [#MeCulturizoEnCasaRMurcia](#). Concerts and musicals are being posted on YouTube in order to spread culture during these difficult times.

### Brussels, Belgium

The subsidy programme [Image de Bruxelles](#) has made special arrangements for events taking place, in whole or in part, from 1 March to 30 April 2020 inclusive. For events postponed until later in 2020, the subsidy granted remains in place without modification of the award decision or of the amount awarded. For cancelled events, the Brussels government authorises the use of this grant to settle invoices for expenses that have already been incurred for the event and cannot be cancelled.

### **Sport**

#### Madrid, Spain

The City Council has launched [#SiempreContigo](#), a service that provides recommendations to the older population on undertaking physical activity and checks their condition during home confinement. The service is carried out by coaches who call the person to track their emotional and physical condition.

#### Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Ireland

The [Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Council](#) sports team have produced videos on how to exercise at home and stay healthy. Local sports clubs have also been volunteering in the establishment of a new dedicated helpline for elderly and vulnerable people needing help with food deliveries, medicine or fuels.

#### Brussels, Belgium

A single [premium of EUR 4 000](#) is available for any company in a number of sectors – including recreational and sports activities – that is required to close following decisions adopted by the National Security Council.

### **Information society, artificial intelligence and audiovisual/telecommunications technologies**

#### **Cross-border cooperation: the Baltic Sea Interreg projects are using information society and technology to help local authorities implement health policies**

A case in point is the ongoing Baltic Sea Interreg project "BaltCityPrevention", which is making active use of the potential of information society. Within this project, 15 partners from seven countries are testing a user-oriented approach to developing and implementing prevention schemes. The model and



toolboxes developed within this project in cooperation with innovative university research include work with focus groups, motivational interviewing, eHealth applications, chatbots and health games, all of which are currently being tested and can help local and regional authorities strengthen prevention and health policy implementation in emergencies like the current COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://projects.interreg-baltic.eu/projects/baltcityprevention-100.html> and

<https://www.interreg-baltic.eu/news-detail/news/how-transnational-cooperation-helps-strengthen-health-care-systems-in-the-baltic-sea-region.html>

#### **AI: transnational partnership and local use of its applications in Riga Diagnostics Hub, Latvia**

Smartomica, a Latvian biotech company, has entered into a partnership with global healthcare technology leader MetAdvice to develop an IT-based decision-making platform for COVID-19. The partnership is developing a knowledge-based decision support system called ARIADNA (Artificial Intelligence Applied Diagnostic Navigation Atlas) One of its key elements is an artificial intelligence-based system for the aggregation and analysis of relevant experience and information on the diagnosis and treatment of the virus, such as protocols from different countries, scientific articles and relevant clinical trials, for expert groups developing national protocols and decision-makers in healthcare. It helps medical professionals to more efficiently navigate issues related to treatment of COVID-19.

<https://smartomica.com/rdh/> and [https://labsoflatvia.com/en/news/ariadna?fbclid=IwAR0udCe-5VM175sbwxifCjuDHAdMnJ4Q2ENQLcRuBKfn3t4Yj\\_bSv\\_yQ26g](https://labsoflatvia.com/en/news/ariadna?fbclid=IwAR0udCe-5VM175sbwxifCjuDHAdMnJ4Q2ENQLcRuBKfn3t4Yj_bSv_yQ26g)

#### **Additional useful links**

EC: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response_en)

JRC (ScienceHub): <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en>

European Parliamentary Research Service - Coronavirus - Impact and reaction (26 March 2020):

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/649349/EPRS\\_BRI\(2020\)649349\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/649349/EPRS_BRI(2020)649349_EN.pdf)

EU local news: <https://www.themayor.eu/en>

EPRS and other EP publications: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/home.html>

See also <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/priorities/eu-response-to-coronavirus>

ESPON programme: <https://www.espon.eu/collecting-experiences-and-evidence-local-and-regional-responses-covid19>

Eurocities: <https://covidnews.eurocities.eu/>

CEMR: <https://www.ccre.org/en/actualites/view/3994>

OECD New Digital hub for Covid19: <http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/>

ERRIN news: <https://errin.eu/news> (primarily R&I /regional focus)

EARTO news: <https://www.earto.eu/news/> (primarily R&I)

EUA (European University Association): <https://eua.eu/news/>

Vanguard Initiative: <https://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu/news>

Lisbon Council: <https://lisboncouncil.net/news-a-events.html> (Digital/AI/Social/R&I)