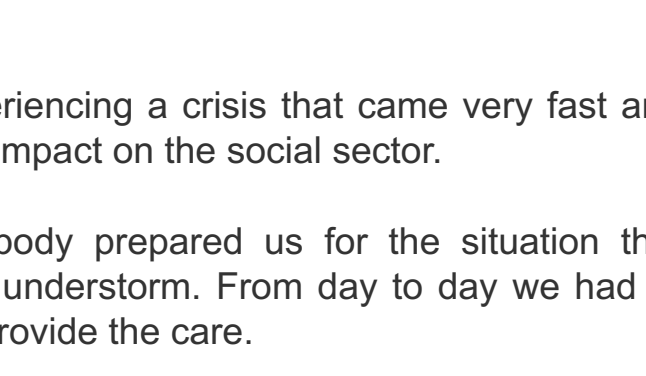
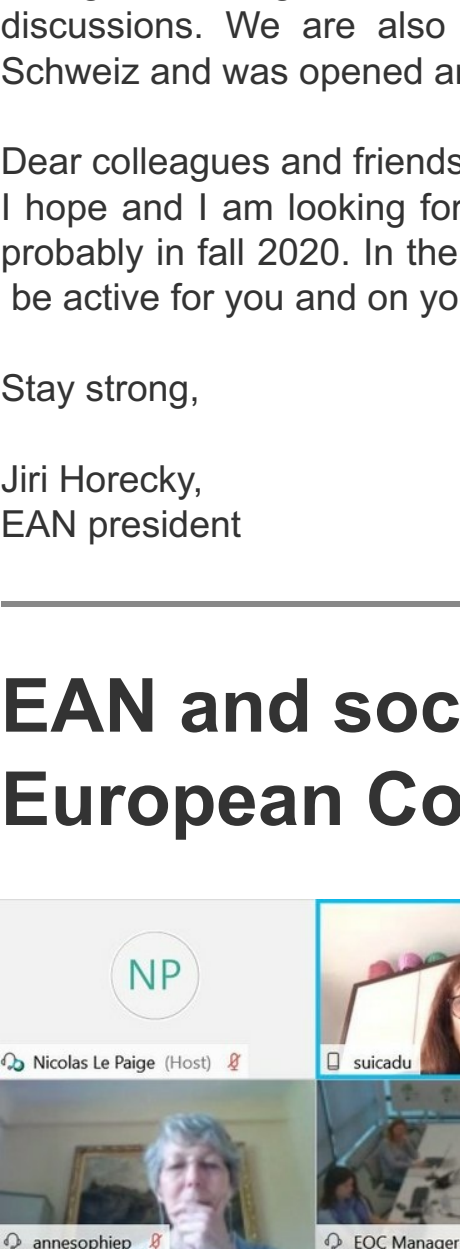




EUROPEAN AGEING NETWORK former EDE|EAHSA



# Newsletter May 2020



Dear colleagues,

The whole world is experiencing a crisis that came very fast and had and still has a huge impact on the social sector.

Nobody warned us, nobody prepared us for the situation that arrived like a summer thunderstorm. From day to day we had to change the way we provide the care.

As European Ageing Network we organised online meetings so that we could share our mutual experience but also good ideas and innovative solutions. Some of you have shared your experience with overcoming the impact of the crisis. It has resulted in a practical and useful inventory of best practices and experiences.

We (together and from the initiative of EASPD) addressed the European Commission, to take action in the social sector. As an EAN representative I also participated in a conference call with four EU commissioners concerning the Covid 19 crisis impact on the social sector. Together with other social service providers in Europe, we try to raise awareness for our specific situation and to promote more effective and efficient EU support.

In this newsletter you will find more information about these initiatives.

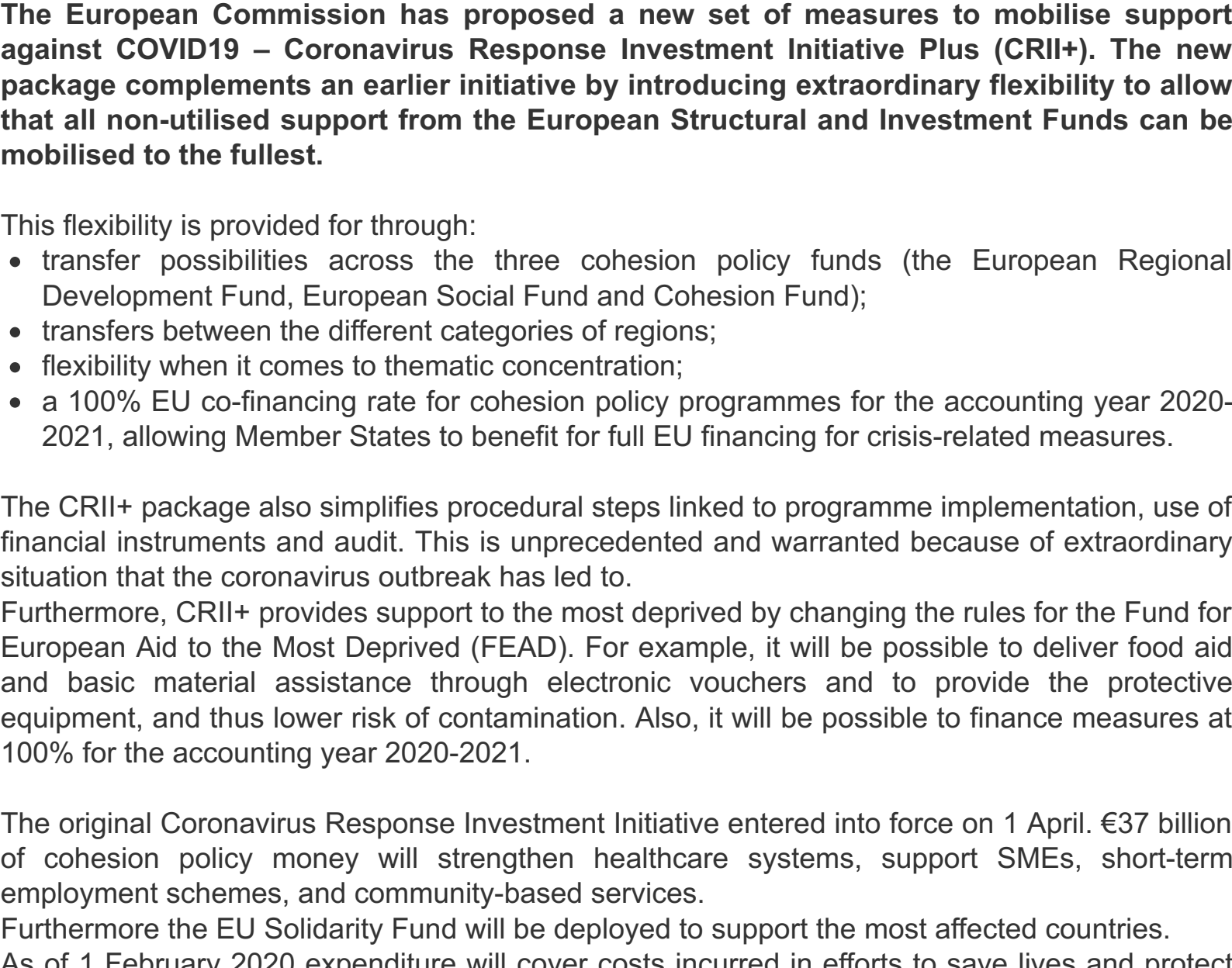
I do have belief that "there will be dawn after rain" but I also belief the COVID-19 crisis will change the long term care sector. We should, must and will be a part of this change and discussions. We are also co-working on that initiative that was proposed by CURA VIVA Schweiz and was opened and discussed at the Global Ageing Network.

Dear colleagues and friends, I hope and I am looking forward to meeting you in person and shaking hands with you – very probably in fall 2020. In the meantime we will organize our virtual meetings, keep you informed be active for you and on your behalf.

Stay strong,

Jiri Horecky,  
EAN president

## EAN and social service providers meet with European Commission to address problems



On 29th April, EAN participated in a high-level meeting to exchange on the impact of COVID-19 on social services and exchange on EU initiatives to support service providers in this current situation. Chaired by Vice President of the European Commission Dubravka Šuica and attended by European Commissioners Nicolas Schmit, Stella Kyriakides and Helena Dalli, the meeting brought to light issues linked to funding, staffing and protective equipment in social services and the impact of this on persons with disabilities, older persons, and others benefiting from care and support.

The High-Level Meeting was chaired by Vice President of the European Commission Dubravka Šuica and attended by European Commissioners Nicolas Schmit, Stella Kyriakides and Helena Dalli, as well as representatives from EASPD, the European Disability Forum, the European Federation of Public Service Unions, and others.

In his opening remarks, Luk Zelderloo, Secretary General EASPD (European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities) affirmed the need for the EU to play a more important role in tackling the social consequences of COVID-19 as that is what is expected -and needed- by social service providers. The discussion then covered the major challenges linked to the human rights of people, staffing challenges and recognition of social workers, ensuring continuity to the funding of social service providers and meeting additional costs, prioritizing access to protective equipment and other more long-term challenges. This was followed by an open and fruitful exchange on follow-up steps the European Commission could promote to support action at national level.

Initiatives discussed ranged from Targeted Guidance to Member States on social service provision during COVID-19, to the mobilization of EU funds and a possible EU emergency fund for social services. The meeting also addressed the need for existing EU initiatives to refer to and support better the specific challenges experienced by social services during the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative and the Guidelines on the uplifting of confinement measures.

## Open letter to EC

In follow-up of the meeting with the Commissioners, EAN together with social services providers have sent an open letter to the Commissioners on 14 May, requesting to take urgent steps to promote access to social services for the millions of people with support needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among several suggestions, the letter proposes the creation of an Emergency Fund for Social Services and that the European Recovery Plan is committed to supporting the most vulnerable in our societies.

## Webinar 3 June 2020

On 3 June, EAN and social services providers will participate in a EC-webinar for accessing European funding programs for social services. The virtual helpdesk will provide advice to social services to access the EU's Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative (CRII and CRII Plus), the EU's main funding instrument to help Member States respond to COVID-19.

In order to provide useful input, EAN has called its membership in a questionnaire for precise ideas and suggestions for EU-funded projects.

## EC extends Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative

The European Commission has proposed a new set of measures to mobilise support against COVID19 – Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus (CRII+). The new package complements an earlier initiative by introducing extraordinary flexibility to allow that all non-utilised support from the European Structural and Investment Funds can be mobilised to the fullest.

- This flexibility is provided for through:
- transfer possibilities across the three cohesion policy funds (the European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund and Cohesion Fund);
  - transfers between the different categories of regions;
  - flexibility when it comes to thematic concentration;
  - a 100% EU co-financing rate for cohesion policy programmes for the accounting year 2020-2021, allowing Member States to benefit for full EU financing for crisis-related measures.

The CRII+ package also simplifies procedural steps linked to programme implementation, use of financial instruments and audit. This is unprecedented and warranted because of extraordinary situation that the coronavirus outbreak has led to.

Furthermore, CRII+ provides support to the most deprived by changing the rules for the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). For example, it will be possible to deliver food aid and basic material assistance through electronic vouchers and to provide the protective equipment, and thus lower risk of contamination. Also, it will be possible to finance measures at 100% for the accounting year 2020-2021.

The original Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative entered into force on 1 April. €37 billion of cohesion policy money will strengthen healthcare systems, support SMEs, short-term employment schemes, and community-based services.

Furthermore the EU Solidarity Fund will be deployed to support the most affected countries. As of 1 February 2020 expenditure will cover costs incurred in efforts to save lives and protect citizens.

Of the total, about €8 billion will come from unspent pre-financing in 2019 under the structural funds. The new measure allows member states to spend unspent money to mitigate the impact of the pandemic instead of returning it to the EU budget. Another €29 billion will be disbursed early from allocations which would have been due later this year.

Member states will also have greater flexibility to make transfers between cohesion policy programmes in order to redirect resources to where they are most needed.

## EU pushes for bigger say on health

New details on long-term budget redraft sees EU executive call for 'standalone health programme' in proposed reversal of decision by previous administration.

Brussels is arguing for more power to make health policies and react in emergencies in the latest leaked version of the EU's long-term budget redraft. The move to create a standalone health programme would reverse the decision by the previous EU administration under Jean-Claude Juncker to consolidate health spending with several other programmes into an enlarged programme called the European Social Fund.

The new programme would concentrate on continuously improving health conditions across the member states, through better prevention, access and treatment which has already been pursued through the currently existing programme. A new strand of work would also envisage the EU with greater capacity to act in health emergencies.

Debate over EU influence in health is nothing new – there are always competing visions within the bloc over the role of the Commission. Some countries favour a more activist role for the Commission, while others are naturally wary of vesting Brussels with more political power.

EU law designates healthcare as a matter for the member states to manage on their own; but the Commission has always found ways – sometimes stealthily – to increase its role in the sector.

The previous Commission argued that the reason for folding health into this new social programme was to simplify the way its diverse programmes operate, by reducing the number of separate legal instruments and making it easier to transfer funds from one budget pot to another. The proposed budget for health for 2021 through 2027, €413 million, was down 8 per cent on the current period, however. (Source: Science/Business)

## ECDC publishes new guidelines for monitoring in long-term care facilities

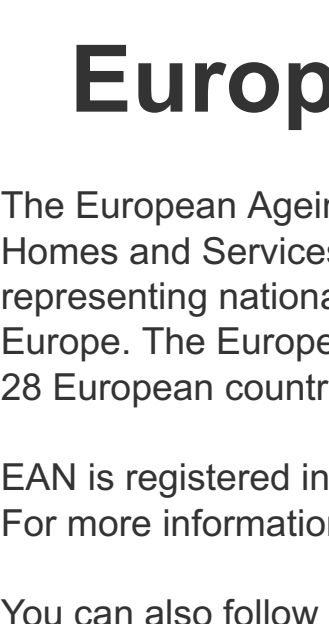
The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has published new guidelines for Member States planning to implement monitoring systems at Long-term care facilities (LTCFs). The target audience for this guidance is public health experts, healthcare professionals and administrators working in long-term care facilities at local/regional level, and national public health authorities.



The high COVID-19 morbidity and mortality observed among residents in long-term care facilities (LTCF) in EU/EEA countries poses a major challenge for disease prevention and control in such settings. Furthermore, the lack of special surveillance systems and the differences in testing strategies and capacities among countries may have led to a significant under-ascertainment and under-reporting of cases, contributing to a general underestimation of the disease burden and mortality in LTCFs.

The full guidelines can be found [here](#).

## FESE calls for extra attention for social care



Social partners across various sectors are issuing guidelines and opinions on the concerns they are dealing with as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak, as well as possible responses.

On 20 March the Federation of European Social Employers (FESE, of which EAN is an affiliated member) hosted a webinar to discuss about the initiatives developed by social services employers to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak in the sector. The webinar allowed members and partners to share current developments and some relevant initiatives and practices to tackle COVID-19 challenges for the sector.

FESE sent a joint letter sent to the Commission together with EPSU (the European Public Service Union) asking to develop the awareness in all Member States that social care and support is key to face the outbreak and has to be prioritised in relevant measures to protect staff and beneficiaries as providing personal protective equipment and tests.

The joint letter to the European Commission can be found [here](#).

## EU-OSHA action plan for healthy workplaces

Under the tagline, 'Healthy Workplaces Stop the Pandemic' EU-OSHA has started an initiative to address the occupational health and safety challenges linked to the current pandemic, offering a range of workplace guidance on COVID-19.



Resources include: EU guidance to limit the spread of the virus and on preventive measures for a safe and healthy return to workplaces; information on how to minimise exposure to biological agents; awareness-raising videos and a range of links to good practice material from EU and international organisations.

The action plan ties in with the Agency's Lighten the Load campaign on musculoskeletal disorders, which will be launched in October. But the pre-campaign website already offers practical guides, tools and visual resources for a healthy home-based workplace.

More information can be found [here](#).

## Cedefop creates Cov19R social distancing risk index



Cedefop, the EU's agency supporting the development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies, created a new coronavirus social distancing risk index, Cov19R, to assess which individuals face a higher risk of coronavirus exposure by doing their jobs, and therefore need greater social distancing.

The index was created by identifying skills descriptors distinguishing jobs according to whether they rely on physical proximity or contact with others; the degree to which a job can be performed (remotely) via digital technologies was considered a risk-mitigating factor. The Cov19R index reveals that EU jobs in the accommodation, catering or food services sector, wholesale and retail trade and social and personal services, face the highest risk of coronavirus-related exposure. In such sectors, employees are most likely to engage in intensive communication, teamwork and customer-handling tasks, therefore facing greater social distancing risk.

The overall impact of the coronavirus pandemic on EU jobs will depend on several factors, including how 'essential' their services are in terms of meeting basic population needs, the extent to which they can be carried out remotely and their pre-existing employment and institutional structure.

More information can be found [here](#).

## "We should not treat older people as invisible or powerless", says UN-Chief

The United Nations has published a policy brief that provides analysis and recommendations to address the challenges caused by COVID-19.



The UN calls to respect the rights and dignity of older people in response to COVID-19. To achieve this, the UN recommends to "build stronger legal frameworks at both national and international levels to protect the human rights of older persons", and ensure that "all social, economic and humanitarian responses take the needs of older people fully into account, from universal health coverage to social protection, decent work and pensions".

The full statement can be found [here](#). The COVID-19 Policy brief can be found [here](#).

## SecureHospitals.eu



Missed MOOC Round 1?  
Round 2 is coming soon.  
Join us in autumn 2020!

[www.securehospitals.eu](http://www.securehospitals.eu)

## Upcoming conferences and meetings

### May 2020

- 19-22 May Longevity Leaders World Congress, virtual
- 29 May Working group Nutrition in elderly care, via Zoom

### June 2020

- 3 June EC seminar - Virtual helpdesk Social services to access the EU's Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative (CRII and CRII Plus)
- 5 June Working group Taboos & dogmas, via Zoom

### November 2020

- 16-17 Nov EAN General Assembly & Executive Board meetings (Lisbon, PT)

### October 2021

- 11-13 Oct Alzheimer Europe Conference (Helsinki, FI)
- 27-29 Oct EAN Conference and LARES Congress (Alicante, ES)

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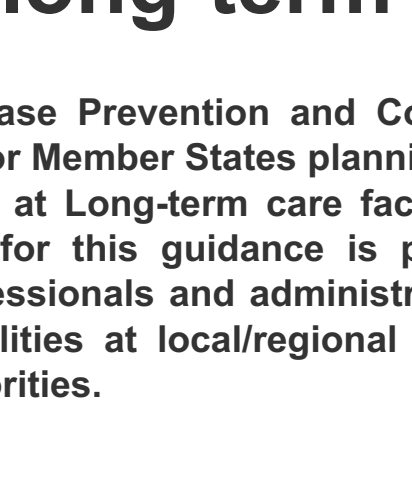
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## European Ageing Network (EAN)

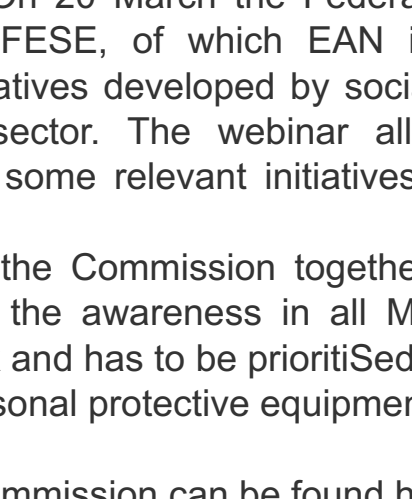
The European Ageing Network (EAN) is the new association of the European Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (EAHSA) and the international umbrella organisation representing national associations for directors and providers of long-term care services in Europe. The European Ageing Network groups more than 10.000 care providers, is present in 28 European countries, and is servicing millions of older people in Europe.

EAN is registered in Luxembourg, has its Secretariat in Prague and a branch office in Brussels. For more information, or for a membership application, contact [info@ean.care](mailto:info@ean.care).

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