



## Bulgaria

### ***Impact of COVID-19 outbreak in the EFFAT Sectors and measures taken to deal with the consequences of the pandemic***

*EFFAT affiliates: FNSZ, FKP PODKREPA, NFZGS, FITU Food,*

#### Governmental measures:

Since 13 March 2020, Bulgaria has been in an extraordinary situation, and a state of emergency has been announced.

The expected losses in state incomes are estimated to be around 3 billion BGN (1,5 billion EU). In light of this and in response to the ongoing health emergency, priority has been given to medical equipment, healthcare materials and support for emergency service personnel.

Parliament has adopted emergency budget measures to support employers whose businesses have stopped, covering 60% of the wages of their workers during the state of emergency with money drawn from the Unemployment Fund. Currently any business affected by the Coronavirus is eligible.

Trade Unions have also successfully defended the right to paid leave, and continue to provide regular information and answers to questions on working rights in cases of suspected violations/limitations.

More information on the governmental measures can be found on the ETUC webpage [here](#).

#### Impacts in the EFFAT sectors and specific measures adopted to deal with them:

##### **Agriculture sector:**

During this crisis, the Agriculture and Food-Processing sectors have taken on even greater significance. Trade unions have therefore called on government and responsible sectoral employers' organisations to take common measures to ensure the health and safety of the workers, and to ensure that at every workplace working rights are respected. Unions have encouraged their activists and members to collaborate in implementing measures for health and safety and to give signals and report back if there is a lack of instructions, or basic hygiene and protective equipment (masks, gloves, etc.).

Bulgaria is a "sending" country. Seasonal workers, who traditionally migrate to other EU countries are now 'available' in the local labour market. Large groups of seasonal workers are also coming back from countries severely affected (Italy, France, Spain), at which point they are being placed under quarantine as a precaution. In such cases, "Health Mediators" are very important in raising awareness among those communities.

Workers who left other sectors will be able to orient themselves to agriculture and to food-related sectors and activities. There are already serious requests and proposals from employers in some subsectors which are characterized by manual labour – fruits and vegetables, food processing – to provide jobs to people from other sectors.

In order to increase the attractiveness of agricultural jobs, trade unions and employers' organisations must join forces to improve working conditions and pay levels. Given the need to respond to fast-paced and unprecedented events, dialogue between the social partners in the sector remains active.

**Food, Drink and Tobacco sector:**

Due to the public health restriction measures imposed, food outlets and pharmacies are the only or vast majority of businesses still open, with turnover still being generated.

**HRCT sector:**

The most affected sectors are those of tourism/ hospitality as well as transport and logistics. Around 200 thousand workers in hotels and catering will lose their jobs (according to the Employers' statistics).

Measures adopted in specific companies:

For more information on the measures adopted in transnational companies please check the main page

Links to affiliates communications/statements

- [Analysis state of Emergency](#)