



## Sweden

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

*EFFAT affiliates: HRF, LIVS, Unionen, Kommunal*

#### Governmental measures

In close consultation with the social partners, the Swedish government proposed a crisis package for Swedish businesses and jobs on the 16th of March along with some monetary stimulus from the Riksbank.

The Government (the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party) as well as the Centre Party and the Liberal Party have presented a proposal for an additional amending budget, including measures such as:

- Introduce the possibility of short-term layoffs, which means that the employers' pay costs can be reduced by half, while the worker gets at least 90 percent of the pay. Three quarters of the costs will be covered by the state.
- The costs for sick pay will be assumed by the central government on a temporary basis during April and May.
- Companies can defer payment of employers' social security contributions and certain taxes.
- The qualifying day - which means that the worker does not get sickness benefit for the first day of sickness - will be discontinued. In addition, the appropriation for the disease carrier allowance will be increased.

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

Almost all collective agreements are to expire during the spring. The large wage negotiations round of 2020 is postponed due to the Corona crisis. Trade unions and employer organisations in the industry sector have agreed to restart the negotiations in the autumn.

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

##### **Agriculture sector**

Work and employment in the agriculture is not under threat by the Corona crisis, as agricultural workers are in huge demand now to keep Swedish food production going.

Many countries have closed their borders and cross-border travel has basically stopped because of the Corona virus. This will probably have negative consequences for Swedish berry and vegetable picking, which relies on migrant workers. For many years it has been very difficult to get hold of domestic labour, therefore berries and vegetable growers have relied on seasonal workers coming from other countries, both from EU countries and also from third countries, including Belarus, Ukraine and Thailand.

In the southern part of Sweden, plant seedlings would normally take place during these weeks, but growers are wondering if they should grow the berries this year as it is uncertain if they will have enough workers for picking.

Most farms do not allow access to the sites to all non-essential visits. Many farms in Sweden rely on temporary agency workers from the Baltic States that arrive in three-month rotations to manage the milking. The closing of many EU borders is causing major problems for these milk farms.



Farm and companies producing grains have not felt the crisis because they primarily rely on Swedish workforce.

### **Food, Drink and Tobacco sector**

The situation in the Swedish food, drink and tobacco sector is difficult, especially in smaller businesses such as bakeries and cafés, which have lost almost all their revenues. The social partners in the food sector have signed a collective agreement on short-term layoffs to save the jobs in the food industry. The agreement is based on the government's proposal for short-term leave, where the state enters and covers part of the salary costs so that redundancies and bankruptcies can be avoided. Various companies are already using this agreement to reduce working hours for workers.

The Government has declared the food chain to be of strategic importance.

### **HRCT sector**

The Swedish HRCT sector is severely impacted as tens of thousands of workers have lost their employment. The social partners in the sector have signed a collective agreement on short-term layoffs to save the hospitality industry. The agreement is based on the government's proposal for short-term leave, where the state enters and covers part of the salary costs so that redundancies and bankruptcies can be avoided.

The Hotel and Restaurant Union in Sweden has now signed a crisis agreement based on the government's lay-off rules. It covers all types of employment except those who are employed on a single day. The lay-off period is determined jointly by the parties at each workplace. It can be valid for a maximum of 6 months with a possible extension of 3 months. In addition, the following rules apply:

- With a work reduction of 20%, the salary is reduced by 4%.
- With a work reduction of 40%, the salary is reduced by 6%.
- With a work reduction of 60%, the salary is reduced by 7.5%.

Currently many temporary and on-call workers are not covered by the governmental measures and HRF is looking for new measures to protect these workers

### **Domestic Work sector**

The municipality has received indications that two large companies hiring household employees are giving notice, both companies have so far notified probationary employees and extra workers are not taken in. So, the industry is feeling corona as customers do not want help to the same extent these days.

### [Measures adopted in specific companies](#)

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

### [Additional information](#)

#### [HRF – Measures taken](#)