

Non-exhaustive overview of European government measures impacting undocumented migrants taken in the context of COVID-19

March-August 2020

This document provides an overview of measures adopted by EU member states and some countries outside the EU in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and foreseen economic downturn, about which PICUM has been informed by its members or has learned of through regular media monitoring.¹

Additional information and analysis are provided on regularisation measures taken in Italy and Portugal.

Given the limitations of time and capacity, our intention is not to provide an exhaustive presentation, but rather to give a useful summary of measures broadly helpful to people who are undocumented, or who are documented but with insecure status, whatever may have been the authorities' motivations for their implementation.

Please contact intern3@picum.org if you have additional information about any of these measures, or wish to propose a correction.

¹ We are grateful to all PICUM members who commented on earlier drafts of this document, and to PICUM trainees Raquel Gomez Lopez and Thomas MacPherson who were instrumental in gathering relevant information and preparing this summary.

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FOR UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

1. Regularisation

At least two countries – Italy and Portugal - have implemented temporary regularisation measures for some undocumented people. These schemes grant(ed) time-limited residence authorisation for specific groups of migrants.

One country, Spain, has made one of its permanent regularisation mechanisms more accessible.

1.1. Italy

In May, Italy adopted a regularisation programme with the potential to regularise a few hundred thousand undocumented **agricultural workers, domestic workers and carers**.² The regularisation is part of a broader 55 billion euro [stimulus package](#) to cushion the economic impact of the coronavirus.

In March, the Italian Minister of Agriculture (“Italia Viva” party, close to the Democratic Party) had [called for a regularisation](#) to avoid a [labour shortage](#) in the Italian fields because some migrant workers had left the country due to the COVID-19 pandemic, other seasonal workers could not travel to Italy for the summer season, and to prevent the spread of the virus in informal settlements. Her call was backed by agriculture associations and trade unions, but opposed by the Democratic Party’s coalition partner, the anti-establishment Five Star Movement. The Five Star Movement argued the regularisation would only further legitimise labour exploitation instead of reducing it.

From their negotiations came the below [regularisation programme](#)³, **which consists of two tracks, for which people could apply for between 1 June and 15 July 2020.**

On 16 June, the government [announced](#) that the period to apply under the regularisation scheme would be prolonged until 15 August in response to the lower-than-expected number of applications. (see “Impact and limitations” below)

Track 1: Employers apply for work contract with foreign national or declare existing irregular employment

In the first track, **employers could submit an application to conclude an employment contract with a foreign national on the territory, or to declare an existing irregular employment relationship**. The contract had to be in one of the concerned sectors. The worker would get a normal residence and work permit valid for the duration of the work contract. If at any time in the future the worker loses the job they regularised through, they can receive a residence permit of up to one year to look for another job, also in a different sector.⁴

2 The concerned sectors are defined as: agriculture, livestock and animal husbandry, fishing and aquaculture and related activities; assistance to the person for themselves or for members of their family, even if they are not living together, suffering from pathologies or handicaps that limit their self-sufficiency; domestic work to support family needs.

3 Article 103, paragraph 1, of the law decree. n.34 of 19 May 2020

4 Article 22, par. 11, of Decree Law 286/98

If an existing employment relationship is being regularised, the employer is expected to pay any unpaid wages and outstanding social security and tax contributions. The employer will not face criminal or administrative charges for employing the undocumented worker whose regularization they apply for, and ongoing proceedings are suspended and closed if the regularisation application is successful.⁵

Employers who were convicted in the past five years for crimes related to facilitation of irregular immigration, recruitment of people into sex work, the exploitation of minors, illicit brokerage, labour exploitation, or employing undocumented workers, cannot apply for track one. This includes provisional/non-definitive sentences.

The application costs 500€, to be paid by the employer, and must be submitted through an online portal.⁶ Submitting the application is sufficient for the employment to be temporarily authorised pending its final approval.

Track 2: Worker with recently expired permit can apply for permit to look for work

In track two, **people whose residence permit expired after 31 October 2019 and has not been renewed or converted into another permit can apply for a temporary permit to look for work.** The permit is only valid for six months from the submission of the application.

The person must have carried out work in one of the concerned sectors before 31 October 2019, which they have to prove by providing some documentary evidence that can be verified by the Labour Inspectorate.

A certificate is delivered when the application is submitted, which allows the worker to stay regularly for six months to look for a job in agriculture, domestic or care work and enrol in the local employment office. Once the person can show an employment contract or remuneration and social security documents proving regular employment in one of the sectors, the temporary permit is converted into a normal residence permit for work purposes.

The application costs 130€ and can be submitted at the local one-stop office for immigration.

Certain conditions apply for both tracks:

- The worker must have been in the country before 8 March 2020, the start of the lock down, and not left since. This can be proved through any document originating from a public entity, including documents such as a doctor's certificate, a hospital record or a post office receipt, as well as documents related to the person's entry and status (passport stamp, border police record, Eurodac record, police registration).
- A person can apply even if they received an expulsion order in the past, unless they received it for certain specific reasons.⁷ The worker is not eligible if they have been convicted, even with a non-definitive sentence, of crimes against personal freedom, drugs, the facilitation of irregular migration, recruitment of people into sex work, the exploitation of children, or are considered a threat to public order or the security.

⁵ Criminal proceedings for the facilitation of irregular migration or "illicit brokerage for exploitation of work" are not suspended.

⁶ <https://nullaostalavoro.dlci.interno.it/Ministero/Index2>

⁷ Threat to public order and state security, terrorism, etc.

- Administrative proceedings against the worker for irregular entry and stay will be suspended (and closed if the application is successful).

In addition to the regularisation programme, steps were announced to address workers' health and safety and housing conditions. **In parallel to the regularisation programme, sanctions for employing undocumented workers have been doubled. In addition, no one can be "expelled" during the application window.**

Impact and limitations

The government estimated that about 200,000 people, out of an estimated undocumented population of 560,000 to 700,000 people, would be affected by the regularisation programme. However, a preliminary government [report](#) from 15 June 2020 showed that just 32,000⁸ people had applied in the first two weeks, though the number of applications seemed to grow daily. The newspaper *Il Manifesto* [identifies](#) two causes for the slow number of applications: the difficulty of finding employers willing to submit a regularisation application under track one, especially in the agricultural sector; and the difficulty of proving that the undocumented worker was present in the country before 8 March 2020.

According to the government, "domestic work and personal assistance represent 91 per cent of the applications already completed (21,695) and 76 per cent of those in progress (5,906)." The region of Lombardy led the way among Italian regions for requests submitted for domestic work and for personal assistance and the region of Campania for agriculture. The most common countries of origin for applicants were Morocco, Egypt and Bangladesh for domestic work and personal assistance; and India, Albania and Morocco for agriculture and livestock. The vast majority of employers (track one) had Italian nationality: 17,294 out of 23,950 (72 per cent of the total).

The fact that undocumented people can apply for a permit by themselves under track two is very positive; as is the fact that the normal residence and work permit granted to workers under track one, and accessible to job-seekers who find work under track two, allows for the worker to change jobs and sectors, and receive a permit of up to one year to look for another job. According to [EFFAT](#), it's the first time an Italian regularisation programme foresees track two.

However, it is a limited regularisation in terms of target group, timeframe during which people can apply and the duration of the permits awarded. Italy's measure reflects the government's aim to address acute shortages in the Italian labour market created by the COVID-19 pandemic first and foremost. The measure is [critiqued](#) by undocumented people, migrant workers and human rights advocates for its narrow economic focus, leading to a nation-wide strike on 21 May. The measure also repeats the mistakes of previous regularisations by requiring applications under track one to be made by employers. Employers already employing undocumented workers have little incentive to regularise their status and to pay due wages, tax and social security contributions. This creates the conditions for exploitation and a market for employers to sell contracts to workers seeking to regularise their status ([some employers have reportedly asked for up to 7,000 euros](#)). The minimum annual income of €30,000 for employers to qualify to apply for the regularisation may also exclude some small agricultural producers.⁹

⁸ 23,950 of which had been completed and 7,762 were still in progress on Monday 15 June

⁹ Medici per i diritti umani (MEDU), [La pandemia di Rosarno](#), 7th report on the living and working conditions of migrant workers in Piana di Gioia Tuaro, 2020.

The Leone Moressa Foundation has [calculated](#) that the country's coffers will benefit between 2,800 and 5,250 euro in tax revenue per regularised person annually, if the government's initial estimate of 200,000 is reached.

The government set up a toll-free number (800171100) to respond to any questions.

1.2. Portugal

Portugal was the first and only European country to focus regularisation measures on people with a [pending residence application](#). This can be seen either as a temporary regularisation, or as temporarily extending the rights that having a pending residence application grants a person (i.e., a social protection measure).

In March, nineteen civil society organisations (mostly socio-cultural associations of Nepali, Pakistani, Brazilian and Bangladeshi people) [sent a letter](#) to the Secretary of State for Integration and Migration expressing their concern about the situation of migrants in Portugal in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. They called for safeguarding the rights of workers who have started a regularisation process and of people with a residence permit that would expire soon, amongst others.

In response, the government order ("despacho") of 27 March 2020 granted access to health care, welfare provisions and the labour market to those who had applied for a residence permit to the [Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service](#) (SEF) before 18 March 2020. This included in-country applications for residence permits (regularisation) for work purposes – a major concern of the nineteen civil society organisations.

The measure was valid until 1 July 2020, when SEF reopened, and the application document, or 'stub', that people received when they submitted a residence application was deemed sufficient evidence of eligibility, functioning essentially as a temporary residence permit.

Impact and limitations

The rights granted through the regularisation are far-reaching, but the target group is very limited and the measure very temporary. The Portuguese organisation SOS Racismo has estimated that roughly 20,000 to 30,000 people were reached, while 80,000 to 100,000 migrants were [excluded](#). For instance, tens of thousands of [Sub-Saharan African workers](#) were not in an ongoing residence procedure at the start of the measure and so could not benefit from the procedure. By 1 July, thousands of people would also very likely have lost one of the essential requirements for the original residence permit application – employment – therefore ending up in a more precarious situation than before.

1.3. Other regularisation measures

Country	Description of Measure	Source
Spain	<p>Several measures were taken recognising that people who had applied for regularisation based on social attachment (<i>arraigo social</i>) might no longer meet the requirements, to give them a chance to still regularise their status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cases where a temporary residence authorization was applied for before 9 June 2020 on the basis of social attachment (subject to a one-year employment contract), but where the start of the employment relationship was not possible and it was therefore not possible to register with social security, the applicant had 45 working days to look for another job. • In cases where authorisation for a temporary residence permit for reasons of social attachment (subject to a one-year employment contract) was applied for before 9 June, but the start of the employment relationship was not possible and it was therefore not possible to register with social security or to find another job, the applicant had 45 working days to provide a social attachment report proving their social integration. • In cases where a request for authorisation of temporary residence for reasons of social attachment was submitted before or during the state of alarm, or in which there was a report exempting the applicant from requiring an employment contract, economic means less than or equal to those of the initial family reunification must be accepted in the assessment of financial means to temporarily reside in Spain. Or other words, the minimum financial means normally required by the immigration regulation for the family reunification were waived. • In cases of denial of temporary residence for reasons of social attachment before 9 June, it is possible to submit new applications. 	<p>Blog Extranjería, Nuevas Instrucciones DGM: arraigo, renovaciones y reagrupación, 9 June 2020.</p> <p>Dirección General de Migraciones (2020), Instrucciones DGM 6/2020 sobre los procedimientos iniciados relativos a arraigos sociales en el contexto del COVID 19, 8 June 2020.</p>
UK	<p>Family members of people working for the National Health Service (NHS) in any role or working for an independent health and care provider, including the social care sector, who die(d) from COVID-19 automatically get indefinite leave to remain. This is significant for people with temporary status in the UK and is also applicable to those residing irregularly.</p>	<p>UK Government, Coronavirus (COVID-19): bereavement scheme for family members of NHS and health and social care workers, 20 May 2020.</p>

2. Access to services and basic income

2.1. Financial assistance, shelter and food

In many countries, undocumented migrants were able to access **food and nutrition schemes and shelters that were made available by national, regional or local governments for all residents in need.**

For example, in at least seven countries undocumented migrants could access food and nutrition schemes (Belgium, Finland, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland). In at least eight countries, they could access emergency shelter (Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and the UK). However, PICUM members surveyed noted that in some of these countries the access to and provision of food and shelter were pre-existing COVID-19 and not increased or improved by governments despite the increased needs generated by the pandemic, and NGOs had to step in to address even these basic needs.

In some countries, specific efforts were made to ensure that undocumented migrants could access these **essential services as well as some emergency income support measures**, often in partnership with civil society organisations.

Access to social services and basic income

Country	Description of Measure	Source
Ireland	<p>Undocumented migrants have been granted full access to social welfare and health care during COVID-19 outbreak, and authorities have confirmed that there will be no data sharing between service providers and immigration officers, in compliance with the firewall principle.</p> <p>Moreover, undocumented workers who lost their job due to COVID-19 were eligible to apply for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment, a weekly payment to all employees and the self-employed who have lost employment due to the pandemic (including those who have been temporarily laid off but whose employers cannot afford to pay them). It is a payment of €350 per week for a period of 12 weeks.</p>	<p>Houses of the Oireachtas, Health (Preservation and Protection and other Emergency Measures in the Public Interest) Bill 2020: Committee and Remaining Stages, 20 March 2020.</p>
Italy - municipal level only (some cities)	<p>The central government made available €400 million via the Civil Protection Department for municipalities across Italy to issue supermarket vouchers to local residents. It is up to each municipality to set the criteria to access the financial aid.</p> <p>In Rome, a judicial decision found that as the purpose of this benefit is to help those in vulnerable situations, it is illegitimate to set conditions such as having a registered address, which de facto would limit the number of beneficiaries, and that are not requested by law. The judgement refers to the fundamental rights necessary for a free and dignified life (art. 1 ECHR, 25 UDHR and 11 ICESCR) to every person under a State Party's jurisdiction, including undocumented migrants. The decision made undocumented migrants in Rome eligible to receive supermarket vouchers.</p>	<p>E. Bellavia, "Coronavirus, il giudice contro il Campidoglio: "Buoni spesa anche agli immigrati irregolari!", La Repubblica, 22 April 2020.</p>

The Netherlands – municipal level only (some cities)	<p>The City of Amsterdam is among Dutch cities that provided night shelter space for all homeless people, including undocumented migrants (for the most part, refused asylum seekers), on behalf of the Ministry of Health, until 1 August.¹⁰ The number of day shelters was increased until the end of 2020. “Isolation shelters” were also created where homeless people can stay if they are or are likely infected by COVID-19.</p> <p>The Hague also arranged temporary shelter (e.g. in hotels) for all people staying on the streets (including undocumented migrants) until 1 July.</p>	<p>FairWork</p> <p>1104enzo, Opvang voor ongedocumenteerde gezinnen, 3 Mai 2020.</p>
	<p>As of 1 July, the City of Amsterdam has provided financial support to various NGOs to strengthen their support to undocumented people. For instance, the Red Cross received funding to provide food through unofficial food banks for those who are unable to make use of official food banks (Voedselbanken Amsterdam). This is currently planned to continue into October. Financial support was also provided to the Wereldhuis and Medecins du Monde to enhance their support to undocumented migrants.</p>	<p>The City of Amsterdam</p>
Spain – regional level only (some regions)	<p>In early April, the government of the Balearic Islands passed an extraordinary expansion of Guaranteed Social Income¹¹ to cover all adults experiencing a social emergency as a result of COVID-19, regardless of their administrative situation. As payments can only be made into bank accounts, the regional government granted direct subsidies (459 € per family holder, to which an extra amount is added depending on the number of members in the family) to six NGOs for them to pay the equivalent amounts to undocumented migrants without a bank account who are in need and have some form of identity document. The measure initially covered April and May (subject to possible extension).</p>	<p>G. Sánchez, “Cómo acceder a ayudas por el coronavirus cuando ni siquiera tienes una cuenta bancaria,” elDiario.es, 2 May 2020.</p> <p>M. Ferragut, “Más de 2.300 familias vulnerables quedan sin ningún tipo de ayuda,” Diario de Mallorca, 10 June 2020.</p>

¹⁰ Note, shelter to undocumented migrants who are working to resolve their situation is also provided under certain conditions by the municipality in “normal” times. For more information, see here (in Dutch)

¹¹ In May 2020, Spain adopted a nation-wide minimum income guarantee ([Real Decreto-ley 20/2020, de 29 de mayo, por el que se establece el ingreso mínimo vital](#)). A regulation developing it will still be adopted, but it currently excludes undocumented migrants unless they are undocumented migrant women who are victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and of forced prostitution (this is provided for by the Contingency Plan against gender-based violence during the Covid19 ([Plan de contingencia contra las violencias de violencias de genero ante la crisis del COVID-19](#)) which also foresees other measures for survivors of domestic violence and of other forms of gender based violence. There is currently a patchwork of minimum income schemes managed by the regions (Autonomous Communities), who may continue complementary regional schemes in the future.

<p>Spain – regional level only (some regions)</p>	<p>The government of the Canary Islands provided for an emergency payment for registered residents that are not eligible for the regional minimum income (no minimum period of registration required). The payment was equal to 75% of the regional minimum income (367 € per household, to which an extra amount is added depending on the number of members in the family/ household). Undocumented residents could also apply. If they do not have a bank account, the assistance was made available by means of a prepaid card or through payments by NGOs that received direct subsidies from the regional government.</p> <p>The application for the payment was closed on 27 May and the first payment started to be issued from that day. There will be a second (and last) payment in October with the remaining budget to the same recipients.</p>	<p>“El ingreso canario de emergencia se empezará a pagar a partir del 27 de mayo”, El Día, 20 June 2020.</p> <p>“Santana garantiza que el ingreso canario de emergencia se abonará antes del 26 de junio”, La Provincia, 9 June 2020.</p> <p>“El Gobierno realizará en las próximas semanas el segundo pago del Ingreso Canario de Emergencia”, Diario de Avisos, 14 October 2020.</p>
<p>Switzerland – regional level only (some cantons and cities)</p>	<p>The Canton of Geneva adopted a law on 30 June that would allow it to provide financial compensation for up to 80% of income lost during the period from 17 March 2020 to 16 May 2020 to certain workers unable to access mainstream social protection (including workers who have not paid sufficient social security contributions to access unemployment payments, such as undeclared and undocumented workers). According to this law, people who have lived in the Canton of Geneva for at least one year and have exercised a gainful activity for at least three months preceding the introduction of semi-confinement in mid-March would qualify for support. This includes undocumented migrant workers. However, the law has been suspended due to a political challenge, and will likely be subject to a referendum vote in 2021 in this case, it will only come into effect if it passes this vote).</p> <p>The City and the Canton of Zurich gave funds to various NGOs working for the rights of undocumented migrants or precarious migrant women workers to provide direct support to their clients to meet basic needs in the form of direct cash payments as well as vouchers for food shops.</p>	<p>Bilan, “Coronavirus: une dernière aide à Genève à ceux qui ont trop perdu,” 25 May 2020.</p> <p>B. Achermann and S. Jäggi, “Delicate help,” Zeit, 29 May 2020.</p> <p>Kanton Zürich, Massnahmen des Kantons Zürich zur Abfederung der wirtschaftlichen Belastungen aufgrund der Anordnungen zur Eindämmung des Coronavirus. Notstandsmassnahmen gemäss Art. 72 Kantonsverfassung, 18 March 2020.</p> <p>Kanton Zürich, “Corona-Krise: Breites sozialpolitisches Engagement im Kanton Zürich,” 9 April 2020.</p>

United States of America – local and regional level only (some cities and regions)	<p>Using a \$20 million donation from Open Society Foundations, the New York City COVID-19 Immigrant Emergency Relief program provided direct, one-time emergency relief payments to immigrant families, including undocumented workers, via a citywide network of community-based organizations. This initial funding was foreseen to reach up to 20,000 undocumented workers and their families affected by COVID-19-related job loss and facing financial distress; and provide payments of between \$400 and \$1,000 according to family size.</p>	<p>City of New York, "Mayor de Blasio Announces New York City COVID-19 Immigrant Emergency Relief Program with Open Society Foundations," 16 April 2020.</p>
	<p>In the State of California, the state-funded \$75 million Disaster Relief Fund supported undocumented Californians affected by COVID-19 who are ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits and disaster relief, including the CARES Act, due to their immigration status. Approximately 150,000 undocumented adult Californians were eligible to receive a one-time cash benefit via community-based non-profit organisations of \$500 per adult with a cap of \$1,000 per household to deal with specific needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Philanthropic partners (Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR)) committed to top up the Disaster Relief Fund by \$50 million (to a total of \$125 million).</p>	<p>Executive Department State of California, Executive Order N-50-20, 15 April 2020.</p>
	<p>The State of Washington announced a \$40 million "Immigrant Relief Fund" for undocumented workers and other immigrants in Washington state whose residence status excluded them from the stimulus payments and supplemental unemployment benefits Congress provided to U.S. citizens and permanent residents. The \$40 million will be distributed in one-time payments of \$1,000 to immigrants who have lost income because of the pandemic. The fund will be administered by a non-profit organisation, not yet selected, with the help of community organisations around the state. Applicants will need to prove that they don't qualify for other support, but personally identifiable information will not be shared with the state. The first payments will be made in October.</p>	<p>O. Donovan-Smith, "Inslee announces \$40 million pandemic relief fund for Washington immigrants," The Daily World, 13 August 2020.</p> <p>B. Adlin, "Washington earmarks \$40m for undocumented workers excluded from federal aid," South Seattle Emerald, 10 August 2020.</p> <p>C. Bick, "Relief fund for undocumented workers to go live in autumn, inslee says," South Seattle Emerald, 13 August 2020.</p>

2.2. Health care

Undocumented people face significant restrictions in accessing health care in most of EU countries, so it is notable that, according to an [European Migration Network \(EMN\)-OECD Inform](#),¹² **undocumented migrants were able to access COVID-19 related emergency health services free of charge in 9 EU member states** (Belgium, Estonia, Greece, Finland,¹³ Lithuania, Luxembourg, Spain, Poland and Slovakia) and in the following non-European OECD countries: Chile, Colombia, Israel, South Korea,¹⁴ Mexico and Switzerland.

That being said, undocumented peoples' pre-existing access in these countries was not equal.

For instance, Belgium has for two decades had in place a national scheme (referred to as Aide Medical Urgent/Dringende Medische Hulpverlening (AMU/DMH)) to allow undocumented people to access a wide range of preventative and curative services.¹⁵ Spain also has a national health system that provides for access to undocumented people, although in practice this varies by region.¹⁶ In some such countries, where there is already some degree of access, the pandemic resulted in local initiatives, as set out below, to ease administrative and other barriers.

Elsewhere, in Luxembourg, for instance, undocumented people have extremely limited access to all forms of care, even emergency care;¹⁷ so the provision of free COVID-related emergency is more striking.

At the same time, it is important to note that there is always a gap between undocumented people's entitlements to access services and receipt of care in practice, due to various practical barriers, such as lack of awareness of the entitlements, complicated administrative procedures, and concerns that accessing services could lead to immigration enforcement. In countries where existing access to care for undocumented migrants is extremely limited, measures to provide access to specific services on public health grounds can sometimes have limited impact, because there may be limited trust and familiarity with the health system, and significant administrative barriers.

12 This information is gathered by the European Migration Network and its National Contact Points, and has not been verified by PICUM. The same study indicates that undocumented migrants could access COVID-19 related emergency care in 19 EU member states at highly varied cost (Belgium, Cyprus, Czech, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, and Slovakia). EMN/OECD (2020) [EU and OECD Member States responses to managing residence permits and migrant unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic – EMN-OECD Inform](#), 30 July 2020. Given that costs are heavily subsidised in some countries, this means that COVID-19 related care is accessible for undocumented migrants in some other EU member states than those that provide free services. Indeed, PICUM members in the following countries indicated accessibility of COVID-19 related care for undocumented: Belgium, France, Germany (only in Berlin), Ireland, Israel, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

13 While Finland is among the countries that the EMN-OECD report says provides free COVID-19 care, it should be clarified that undocumented patients are normally billed for the full cost of care after treatment. In the event they cannot pay, the state may cover the costs. In May, the Ministry of Social and Health Affairs made a [recommendation](#) that the full cost of treatment not be collected by municipalities for COVID-19-related urgent care for undocumented people, among other vulnerable groups. The Ministry offers reimbursement to municipalities that cover this type of care.

14 Korea made testing for COVID-19 available to everyone, including irregularly staying migrants, and fees for testing and treatment are the same as for citizens.

15 See, e.g., PICUM (2016), [Sexual Reproductive Health Rights of Undocumented Migrants: Narrowing the Gap between Their Rights and the Reality in Europe](#).

16 Medicos del Mundo, <https://www.medicosdelmundo.org/que-hacemos/espana/migracion-y-salud>

17 European Network to Reduce Vulnerabilities in Health (2017), [2017 Legal Report: Access to Healthcare in 16 European Countries](#), at pp.80-81.

Access to health care

Country	Description of Measure	Source
Finland – national and local level (some cities)	In Finland, undocumented patients are normally billed for the full cost of care after treatment and, if they cannot pay, the state may cover the costs in some cases. In May, the Ministry of Social and Health Affairs recommended that the full cost of treatment not be collected by municipalities for COVID-19-related urgent care for undocumented people, among other vulnerable groups. The Ministry offers reimbursement to municipalities that cover this type of care.	Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriön suositus kunnille ja kuntayhtymille: Kotikunnattomat henkilöt ja koronavirusinfektioon liittyvän tutkimuksen ja kiireellisen hoidon kus tannukset (18 May 2020)) Physicians for Social Responsibility (the guidelines are not public)
	In the City of Helsinki , guidelines have been issued to health care professionals working in public healthcare in Helsinki outlining, for example, what to do when an undocumented patient contacts the phone service or goes to health station that specializes COVID-cases and to which people who have COVID-19 symptoms are referred.	
Germany – local level only (some cities)	In March 2020, the Berlin Senate Department for Health, Nursing and Equality negotiated a cooperation agreement between the Kassenärztliche Vereinigung Berlin (Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians) and the “Clearingstelle” (a Berlin organisation that supports people without health insurance to access healthcare). As a result, from 15 April 2020 to 31 July 2020, people without health insurance could receive a cost coverage certificate through the “Clearingstelle”, which sped up the process of receiving medical treatment from any general practitioner in Berlin . After that, the Clearingstelle went back to providing its usual (a more comprehensive but also slower process) support to help those who are uninsured to access healthcare.	Berlin administration, “Ab sofort hausärztliche Versorgung für Menschen ohne Krankenversicherung,” 17 April 2020. Berlin Hilft, “Corona: Ab sofort hausärztliche Versorgung für Menschen ohne Krankenversicherung,” 17 April 2020.
The Netherlands – municipal level only (some cities)	In the City of Amsterdam , undocumented people with COVID-19 symptoms can access free testing through the public health service (GGD), without the support of NGOs because the GGD fills in 99999999 for the citizen service number that is normally required to make an appointment.	FairWork City of Amsterdam

<p>Norway – local level only (some municipalities)</p>	<p>The municipality of Oslo has supported the Health Centre for Undocumented Migrants in Oslo with infection control equipment for free and is paying for a general practitioner to practise at the Health Centre for one day a week for 6 months, April-October.¹⁸</p> <p>The public dental clinic and the Health Centre for Undocumented Migrants in Oslo also reached an agreement enabling the Health Centre to refer patients with acute dental needs to the public dental clinic for free.</p> <p>In Bergen, the migrant health centre run by the municipality has been providing health care to undocumented migrants.</p> <p>The municipalities of Oslo and Bergen have rented hotel rooms for undocumented migrants and others without access to accommodation to quarantine/isolate in case of infection with or exposure to COVID-19.</p>	<p>Information provided by Health Centre for Undocumented Migrants, Oslo.</p> <p>T. Rabe, "Could Covid-19 lead to increased access to healthcare for irregular migrants in Norway?," IMISCOE, 23 June 2020.</p>
<p>UK</p>	<p>According to governmental policy, no one in the UK, including undocumented people, will be charged for treatment, testing or diagnosis of COVID-19, even if the outcome is a negative result. There remains uncertainty, however, about how COVID-related "secondary care" (which includes hospital-based care, and for which undocumented people may normally be charged) will be interpreted in individual cases, including where an individual has commenced treatment but later tests negative.</p>	<p>UNHCR UK (2020), UNHCR UK FAQs on COVID-19 in Relation to Refugees and Asylum Seekers</p>

18 COVID 19 related care (advice, testing, outpatient and specialised hospital treatment) is available to undocumented migrants in Norway under provisions on infectious diseases.

3. Detention, voluntary returns and deportations

Forced returns were suspended or significantly reduced in many EU member states as a result of the pandemic.¹⁹ In this context, several EU member states – including Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom – released people held in immigration detention. The level of support to people released varied greatly from country to country. At the same time, in many countries, the conditions for those who remained in detention worsened with, for example, serious limitations on visits and impossibility to maintain physical distancing. In some cases, open centres in a number of countries were turned into de facto detention.

Country	Description of Measure	Source
Belgium	Federal authorities released an estimated 300 people on March 19 from immigration detention. However, their release was often accompanied by the issuance of an order to leave the territory within 30 days and no provision of accommodation.	<p>“300 mensen zonder papieren vrijgelaten coronavirus zet dvz onder druk,” De Morgen, 19 March 2020.</p> <p>L. Carretero, “Coronavirus : en Belgique, “l’Etat ne fait rien pour protéger les migrants”,” Info Migrants, 31 March 2020.</p>
France	Many people have been released from detention. In the second half of March, the number of people in detention was halved.	European Council on Refugees and Exiles, COVID-19 measures related to asylum and migration across Europe , 28 May 2020.
Germany	Many people have been released from detention. Some of the detention facilities released all detainees. As of mid-April, there were still 25–30 migrants detained. Some detention facilities released all detained people.	European Council on Refugees and Exiles, COVID-19 measures related to asylum and migration across Europe , 28 May 2020.
Ireland	Voluntary returns were not being processed and deportations orders were postponed and rescheduled. This delay concerned all persons subject to deportation, removal or transfer orders that were due in the next four to six weeks starting 16 March. As of 31 July 2020, deportations and removals were still suspended.	<p>Global Detention project, COVID-19 Updates>Ireland, 29 April 2020, 31 July 2020, (several entries).</p> <p>Department of Justice and Equality, “Impact of COVID-19 on Immigration and International Protection,” 2020 (Updated FAQs).</p>
Italy	The number of people in immigration detention gradually and constantly decreased between March and May 2020, from 425 on 12 March to 178 on 29 May (a drop of 58%). These were individual releases based on a case-by-case evaluation by either administrative or judicial authorities.	E. Roman, “Rethinking Immigration Detention during and after Covid-19: Insights from Italy,” University of Oxford, 10 June 2020.
Lithuania	Deportations were suspended during the quarantine period. Third-country nationals whose residence permits expired during the lockdown and were not able to leave the country were not subject to return decisions or administrative consequences but were required to leave once lockdown was lifted. The Migration Department granted a tolerance period of 2 months from the end of the quarantine (17 August 2020) to complete the necessary procedures or leave the country; afterwards, regular rules apply.	<p>Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, “Legal Status of Foreigners in the Republic of Lithuania during the Quarantine,” 24 March 2020.</p> <p>Migration Department, “Less than 2 weeks remained until the end of the tolerance period”, 6 August 2020.</p>

¹⁹ According to the European Migration Network, [EMN Bulletin](#), May 2020, this includes Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic and Estonia.

Malta	Forced returns were suspended or significantly reduced.	European Migration Network, EMN Bulletin , May 2020.
The Netherlands	As of 15 May, 260 persons remained in detention in the Netherlands. Sixty-four people with Dublin claims had been released and placed in shelters, followed by an additional 130 persons who did not receive shelter. In June, a government official reported that no moratorium on new immigration detention orders had been established or was under consideration. People awaiting removal to another member state under the Dublin regulation were released; for the remainder, their cases were assessed individually about the possibility of removal.	Stichting Landelijk Ongedocumenteerden Steunpunt Global Detention project, COVID-19 Updates > The Netherlands , 25 May 2020, 31 July 2020, (several entries).
Romania	The government asked NGOs to provide accommodation to migrants released from detention centres.	European Council on Refugees and Exiles, COVID-19 measures related to asylum and migration across Europe , 28 May 2020.
Slovakia	Forced returns were suspended or significantly reduced.	European Migration Network, EMN Bulletin , May 2020.
Slovenia	Several migrants in return procedures were released and granted permission for temporary stay, valid until their removal or for six months renewable. However, no accommodation or support was provided.	European Council on Refugees and Exiles, COVID-19 measures related to asylum and migration across Europe , 8 April 2020.
Spain	Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Spain released the majority of migrants in detention centres (CIE), and closed all its detention facilities but one. ²⁰	D. Moreno and S. Ortega, " El Gobierno prevé liberar a todos los internos de los CIEs antes del lunes ," Público, 2 April 2020.
UK	More than 700 people were released from immigration detention centres between 16 March and 21 April. While 295 people also entered immigration detention between the start of the UK lockdown on 23 March and the end of April, the number of people detained at any given time fell significantly, from 1,278 at the start 2020 to 313 at the start of May 2020.	J. Ironmonger, " Coronavirus: UK detention centres 'emptied in weeks' ," BBC, 7 May 2020. Free Movement, " Almost 300 migrants put in detention during pandemic ," 28 May 2020. Electronic Immigration Network, " Home Office statistical report highlights large fall in numbers across the immigration system due to Covid-19 pandemic ," 1 June 2020. UK government, " Statistics relating to Covid-19 and the immigration system, May 2020 ," 28 May 2020.

²⁰ However, the above does not apply to the enclave of Melilla, where 1600 were detained during the lockdown with an estimated capacity of 500 places. See R. Soto and L. Muñoz, [Los masificados CETI de Melilla y Ceuta: cárceles a cielo abierto amenazadas por el coronavirus](#)," Público, 3 April 2020.

FOR REGULAR MIGRANTS

4. Residence permit extensions

Many European countries adopted policies to extend residence permits in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent closing of international borders and, in many cases, suspension or reduction in capacity of immigration offices to process renewals.

At least 10 EU member states provided for automatic extensions of certain permits for a period of time (Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovakia and Spain).²¹

Some governments provided the possibility for extensions, but upon request or application, and in some countries, such as Belgium, a positive decision is not guaranteed.

Below is a non-exhaustive overview of these extensions, both automatic extensions and upon request.

Country	Description of Measure	Source
Belgium	Third-country nationals who could not leave the country due to COVID-19, for reasons of force majeure (quarantine, flight cancellation, border closure, etc.) could request an extension of their stay in Belgium. This does not presuppose a positive decision. Extended work authorisations must be obtained separately from the competent regional authority and access to the labour market depends on having previous authorisation. The application is made to their local town hall, which can issue a temporary 'declaration of arrival'. This document will entitle them to stay in Belgium for two months from the expiration date of their current permit.	Immigration Office (2020), " Third-country nationals prevented from leaving Belgium for reasons of force majeure ". KPMG, " Belgium – COVID-19 Measures Taken by Belgian Immigration Authorities ," 23 March 2020.
	Based on Article 1 of the Arrêté No 2020/001 of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region , a work permit B (maximum 90 days or young au pair) which would expire during the suspension period, keeps its validity for the duration of the suspension. Provided that the employee is also granted residence, the employee or young au pair can continue to work during the suspension period (ended on 15 June).	Brussels Economy and Employment (2020), Covid-19 measures – work permits . Urban Brussels, Arrêté de pouvoirs spéciaux n°2020/001 relatif à la suspension temporaire des délais de rigueur et de recours ," 28 April 2020.

²¹ Nine of these 10 countries' policies (all except the Czech Republic) have been indicated both by PICUM members and respondents to the EMN-OECD Inform (EMN/OECD (2020) [EU and OECD Member States responses to managing residence permits and migrant unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic – EMN-OECD Inform](#), 30 July 2020). According to the latter, automatic extensions for certain permits have also been provided for in Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Malta and Portugal. There are discrepancies in our information regarding the Germany and Malta which have not yet been resolved. The fact that that some permit extensions had to be applied for and others were automatic in the Czech Republic could be the reason for the Czech Republic being omitted from the list in the EMN-OECD Inform).

<p>Czech Republic</p>	<p>Seasonal workers and people on special work permits for shortage occupations, whose permits were due to expire during the state of emergency (12 March to 17 May 2020), got their permits <u>automatically prolonged until the end of the state of emergency (17 May 2020)</u>. As it was not possible to extend, renew or convert these permits, those whose permits were subject to this automatic extension had to leave the Czech Republic by 17 July 2020 (60 days after the end of the state of emergency).</p> <p>Long-term visas and residence permits could also be extended until the end of the state of emergency (17 May 2020), but only if the holder <u>applied by post</u> before the expiry of their permit.</p> <p>Normally applications for extensions or renewals of permits are possible after the permit has expired if the applicant can demonstrate they couldn't apply in time for reasons beyond their control. The government deemed the state of emergency would be automatically considered such an obstacle for the first 5 days after its end; then people had to prove why they were not able to apply in this time period.</p> <p>Following a Czech government decision taken on 4 May 2020, third-country nationals' visas or visa-free travel periods, which were set to expire during the state of emergency, were automatically extended until <u>17 July 2020</u>.</p>	<p>See 7 May Labour MG call</p> <p>European Commission, "Czech government delays expiration of residence permits to 60 days after end of state of emergency," 4 May 2020.</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, "Stay of Foreign Nationals after the End of State of Emergency," 4 May 2020.</p>
<p>Finland</p>	<p>If a third-country national cannot return to their country of origin or country of permanent residence because of restrictions imposed due to COVID-19, the Finnish Immigration Service <u>will consider</u> granting a short-term temporary residence permit valid until <u>31 October 2020</u>.</p>	<p>Finnish Immigration Service (2020), Effects of the coronavirus on customers who are in Finland, (updated entries)</p>
<p>France</p>	<p>All residence permits, receipts and long-stay visas that expired between March 16 and May 15, 2020, which were <u>automatically</u> extended by 3 months, were <u>automatically</u> extended by an additional 3 months, by ordinance n° 2020-460 of April 22, 2020. (i.e. a total extension of <u>6 months</u>).</p>	<p>Schengen Visa Info, "France Extends Validity of Visas & Residence Permits for Another Three Months," 27 April 2020.</p>
<p>Germany</p>	<p>Visas of third-country nationals who were in Germany before 17 March 2020 or who entered Germany after this date and before 9 April 2020, <u>could be extended</u> until <u>30 June 2020</u>, but only via <u>online application</u> to the local immigration authority.</p>	<p>The Local, "From visas to taxes: These German deadlines have been extended due to the coronavirus," 22 April 2020.</p>
<p>Greece</p>	<p>Any residence permit, residence card or permanent residence card which expired or was due to expire between 11 February 2020 and 12 May 2020 and could have been renewed, was <u>automatically</u> valid for up to an additional <u>five months from its expiration date</u>, until no later than 12 October 2020.</p> <p>Any residence permit application certificate (blue certificates) or special legal residence certificate which expired before 12 March 2020 or was due to expire between 13 March and 12 May 2020 and could have been renewed, is now <u>automatically</u> valid for up to an additional <u>five months from its expiration date</u>, until no later than 12 October 2020.</p>	<p>Generation 2.0, "Extension of residence permits due to the coronavirus," 3 April 2020.</p> <p>Eurofast (2020), "Extension of the period of validity of residence permits & other support measures due to Covid-19 outbreak".</p>

Hungary	The validity period of residence documents, permanent residence and immigration permits (excluding short-term visas and entry visas for receiving a residence permit) due to expire during the state of emergency, which began 11 March , is automatically extended until the 45th day after the end of the state of emergency .	National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing, Notification about the validity period of residence documents , 9 April 2020.
Ireland	All residence permits that were due to expire between 20 March 2020 and 20 May 2020 were automatically extended by two months .	Maples, The impact of COVID-19 on work permit and visa applications ,” 22 April 2020.
Israel	Israel introduced an online visa extension application process.	Hotline for Refugees and Migrants – Israel, Online system for visa renewal , 10 May 2020.
Italy	The validity of existing residence permits, work permits, and related documents, which were due to expire during lockdown, were automatically extended until 31 August 2020 .	KPMG, Italy – Status of Reopening Country, Work and Resident Permits Extended ,” 1 May 2020.
Lithuania	Deportations were suspended during the quarantine. Third-country nationals whose residence permits expired during the lockdown and were not able to leave the country, were not subject to return decisions or administrative liability, but were required to leave once lockdown is lifted. The Migration Department granted a tolerance period of 2 months from the end of the quarantine (17 August 2020) to complete the necessary procedures or leave the country; afterwards, regular rules apply.	Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, Legal Status of Foreigners in the Republic of Lithuania during the Quarantine ,” 24 March 2020. Migration Department, Less than 2 weeks remained until the end of the tolerance period ”, 6 August 2020.
Luxembourg	The period of validity for visas and residence permits that were due to expire after 1 March 2020 was automatically extended for the duration of the state of emergency .	Real Avocats, Immigration law : what about COVID-19 ? ,” 26 March 2020.
Malta	On 19 March, the Minister for Citizenship announced that third-country nationals employed as live-in carers and health care professionals whose single permits were set to expire, could temporarily extend their single permit for a period of 3 months on request by sending an email to medical.ima@gov.mt . All requests are understood to have been accepted.	Fenech & Fenech Advocates (2020), Extension of single permit: live-in carers and health care professionals ”. Lovin Malta, Foreign healthcare workers living on work permit in Malta get automatic three month extension amid COVID-19 concerns ,” 19 March 2020. Aditus Foundation
Morocco	On 17 March 2020, the Ministry of Interior announced that the Government of Morocco would continue to honour residency cards that were due to expire during the period that borders and airspace were closed.	U.S. Embassy & Consulate in Morocco, Health Alert: Morocco Announces Extension of 90-Day Stay Limit ,” 26 March 2020.

<p>The Netherlands</p>	<p>As of 23 March 2020, third-country nationals whose short-stay visa expired or expired within 1 month, whose flight was cancelled or who could not book a flight due to COVID-19 restrictions, and who still met the conditions for a short-stay visa, <u>could apply</u> for an extension. The total stay with a visa may never exceed 180 days and extensions due to corona do not count in the calculation of the total stay.</p> <p>It is not possible to apply for an extension of the period when they can be in the country without a permit (i.e. permit-exempt term). For people who do not need a visa to stay in the Netherlands, if their permit-exempt term is about to expire and cannot leave because of COVID, they do not need to report it. The Dutch government will be less strict in controlling people who stay longer than is allowed but expects them to try to return when their right of residence expires.</p>	<p>Kroes Advocaten, “Schengenvisa about to expire in the Netherlands & Corona,” 23 March 2020.</p> <p>Immigration and Naturalisation Service, Coronavirus (COVID-19): effects on application or stay >Short stay (visa or permit-exempt term), 7 July 2020. (Updated FAQs)</p>
<p>Poland</p>	<p>Temporary residence permits/visas, work permits, and other documents entitling third-country nationals to work in Poland, which were due to expire during the “epidemic emergency” period, have been <u>automatically</u> extended until the end of the <u>30th day following the end of the state of epidemic emergency</u> (the emergency state was announced on 14 March 2020).</p> <p>Third-country nationals staying in Poland <u>permanently</u>, including refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, are <u>not required to apply for new residence cards</u> until the relevant offices restore regular service.</p>	<p>European website on Integration, “Poland implements special measures for residence permits during the COVID-19 pandemic,” 1 April 2020.</p> <p>European website on Integration, “Poland implements special measures for residence permits during the COVID-19 pandemic,” 1 April 2020.</p>
<p>Russia</p>	<p>On 19 March 2020, the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs announced that visas, residence permits, temporary residence permits, and visa-free regime temporary stay periods would be extended <u>upon application</u>.</p>	<p>Irina Anyukhina, “COVID-19: Russia Introduces Temporary Procedure To Extend Visas And Residence Permits For Foreign Citizens,” Mondaq, 4 April 2020.</p>
<p>Slovakia</p>	<p>Third-country nationals’ temporary, permanent or tolerated residence that was due to expire during the crisis situation or within one month of the situation being revoked are <u>automatically</u> extended for <u>two months after the end of the crisis situation</u>. (A state of emergency ended on 13 June 2020. However, the extraordinary situation declared on 11 March 2020 remains in place.)</p> <p>Persons with a temporary residence for the purpose of business who will be submitting their renewal applications next year will not be obliged to meet the requirement of minimum income/profit for this year <u>if they submit an affidavit</u> stating that their business activities have been affected by the crisis situation.</p>	<p>IOM Migration Information Centre, Changes in the Act on the Residence of Foreigners related to the crisis situation caused by the COVID-19 disease, 17 June 2020.</p> <p>European Website on Integration, “Measures to alleviate negative impacts of COVID-19 on migrant communities in Slovak Republic,” 9 April 2020.</p>

Spain	All residence and work permits due to expire during the state of emergency – or that expired in the three months prior to the declaration of the state of emergency (13 March) – <u>were automatically extended</u> from the day following their expiration for <u>six months following the end of the state of emergency (due to end 21 June)</u> .	Ministerio de Sanidad, Orden SND/421/2020, de 18 de mayo, por la que se adoptan medidas relativas a la prórroga de las autorizaciones de estancia y residencia y/o trabajo y a otras situaciones de los extranjeros en España , BOE, 20 May 2020.
UK	It was announced on 31 March 2020 that doctors, nurses, paramedics and their family members with leave that was due to expire by 1 October would get a free and <u>automatic one-year extension</u> . On 29 April this scheme was extended to cover other health-related professionals (e.g. midwives, radiographers, social workers, pharmacists).	Free Movement, " Coronavirus and the UK immigration system ," 13 August 2020. (Continuous updating)
	Third-country nationals whose leave was due to expire after 24 January and before 31 May and who could not leave the UK due to coronavirus were granted visa extensions until 31 May <u>on request</u> . Following an announcement on 22 May, visas that were extended under this measure were <u>automatically</u> extended further to the end of July. However, those who had not already asked for an extension had to make a <u>request</u> for the extension.	Free Movement, " Coronavirus and the UK immigration system ," 13 August 2020. (Continuous updating)

5. Other measures related to residence and work permits and procedures

Several governments took additional measures to mitigate the impact of loss of income, reduced hours and job loss on people's ability to meet conditions of residence and work permits and family reunification. Measures included, for example, enabling workers to change employer and renewing permits normally dependent on work regardless of employment status.

Certain measures were also taken to facilitate access to work permits in certain sectors in particular need, in particular agricultural work.²²

Some examples of such measures are outlined below.²³

COVID-related measures - other than extensions - related to residence and work permits and procedures

Country	Description of Measure	Source
Czech Republic	<p>Those holding a single work permit visa can more easily change their employer.</p> <p>Employee card (EC) holders and Blue Card holders were able to change their employer before the end of the state of emergency even if within the first six months of the card being issued (normally, the EC holder can start a new job only after 6 months from when the EC was issued).</p> <p>EC holders who lost their job no more than 60 days before the state of emergency was declared (12 March) or during the state of emergency could find another job within 60 days from the end of the state of emergency (normally it is 60 days from the end of the employment).</p>	<p>Sdružení pro integraci a migraci (SIMI)</p> <p>European Council on Refugees and Exiles, COVID-19 measures related to asylum and migration across Europe, 8 April 2020.</p>
Finlandw	<p>The entry of 3,000 non-EU individuals was allowed, from May 14, into Finland for carrying out agricultural, forestry and fishery work in spring and early summer.</p> <p>Since 9 April 2020, amendments to the Aliens Act and the Seasonal Workers Act have allowed third-country nationals already residing in Finland based on a residence permit or a seasonal work permit to change employer or sector without applying for an extended or new permit. The temporary measures remain in force until 31 October 2020.</p>	<p>Y-Axis, "Now, easier for non-EU agricultural workers to enter Finland," 29 May 2020.</p> <p>European Trade Union Confederation, "National measures targeting seasonal workers to address labour shortages (particularly in the agricultural sector)," 29 May 2020.</p>

²² The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) compiled [national measures targeting seasonal workers to address labour shortages](#), which includes more in-depth information about some of the above measures.

²³ See also the EMN/OECD (2020) [EU and OECD Member States responses to managing residence permits and migrant unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic - EMN-OECD Inform](#), 30 July 2020.

	<p>People with a pending asylum application that was submitted before 29 June 2020 have been temporarily granted access to employment in jobs in agriculture, forestry, horticulture or fisheries without having to wait the usual 3 months (for those with a travel document) or 6 months (for those without a travel document). This measure has been extended until 31 October 2020. In the cases of negative asylum decisions, the asylum seeker's right to work under this amendment and in these specific fields is tied to the termination of reception services, rather than when the negative decision acquires legal force or becomes enforceable.</p>	<p>Finnish Immigration Service, "Asylum seeker's right to work in seasonal work," n.d.</p> <p>Finnish Immigration Service, "Asylum seeker: Your right to work will be temporarily extended if you are working in the field of agriculture, forestry, horticulture or fisheries," 29 June 2020.</p>
Germany	<p>The Immigration Act introduces new regulations for the stay and immigration of skilled workers (i.e., university graduates and employees with qualified vocational training). Companies hope to be able to hire specialists from abroad faster than before.</p>	<p>Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat, The Skilled Workers Immigration Act (into force on 1 March 2020, started the procedure in 2019)</p>
Russia	<p>In April, President Vladimir Putin signed a decree which relieves migrants required to work until mid-June from paying permit fees, but many employers are reportedly still requiring people to pay them.</p>	<p>P. Reevell, "Coronavirus lockdown leaves hundreds of thousands of migrants without food in Russia," ABC News, 31 May 2020.</p>
Spain	<p>The government is launching a procedure to expedite permits and approvals for doctors and nurses who already have a residence permit in Spain, as well as asylum seekers with appropriate training.</p>	<p>M. Martín, "El Gobierno dará autorización de trabajo a inmigrantes con perfil sanitario," El País, 2 April 2020.</p>
	<p>A government instruction has been promulgated to make it easier for unaccompanied children aged 16 to 18 to obtain a work authorization. Only applicable to those with residence status.</p>	<p>M. Martín, "El Gobierno facilitará el permiso de trabajo a los menores migrantes," El País, 7 March 2020.</p>
	<p>On May 26, the Council of Ministers adopted a measure enabling third country nationals aged between 18 and 21 - who had been granted authorisation to work by the royal decree of 7 April - to request a two-year residence & work permit, renewable for an additional two years. These young people are former unaccompanied minors, who resided regularly in the country but were not allowed to work.</p>	<p>Jefatura del Estado, Real Decreto-ley 19/2020, de 26 de mayo, por el que se adoptan medidas complementarias en materia agraria, científica, económica, de empleo y Seguridad Social y tributarias para paliar los efectos del COVID-19, 27 May 2020.</p> <p>M. Martín, "El Gobierno concederá un permiso de trabajo de dos años a los jóvenes inmigrantes que se han incorporado al campo," El País, 26 May 2020.</p>

Spain	<p>From 4 April 2020, the income requirement for family reunification of children under 18 has been relaxed. Depending on the best interests of the child, the circumstances of each case, and the number of members of the family unit, different thresholds apply for the minimum resources required at the time of authorisation. If the applicant earns the official minimum wage (950€ per month), this is always deemed sufficient. Flexibility should also be applied regarding the requirement for the resources to be maintained for one year. Denials of family reunification of a child under 18 due to lack of financial means should be adequately and exhaustively motivated in each case to meet the standard of “undoubtedly” insufficient means.</p>	<p>Blog Extranjería, Nuevas Instrucciones DGM: arraigo, renovaciones y reagrupación, 9 June 2020.</p>
	<p>The extension of temporary residence and work permits has been facilitated, to reduce the risks of people becoming undocumented because they could not work due to Covid-19. A minimum period of continuous economic activity of 6 months per year is required to qualify for renewal.</p> <p>As of 8 June, that period now includes the time in which the employee has been affected by a suspension of their contracts by force majeure, or any economic, technical, organizational or production reasons according to the Royal Decree-law 8/2020 of 17 March.</p> <p>In case of self-employment, the requirement of continuous economic activity of 6 months is met if the person is receiving the extraordinary benefits provided for by the Covid-19 regulations due to cessation of activities.</p>	<p>Dirección General de Migraciones, Instrucciones DGM 5/2020 sobre la renovación de las autorizaciones de residencia y/o trabajo en el contexto del COVID 19, 8 June 2020.</p>

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