

Part VI

Building a better future for all

221. The objective of the instruments examined in the General Survey is the development and implementation of comprehensive national employment policies which not only cover all aspects of economic growth and employment, but are also inclusive, consensus-based and ensure equality of opportunity and treatment for all. This part of the Addendum examines the situation of certain groups of people who were already vulnerable to poverty, discrimination and exclusion, and are now among those worst affected by the pandemic.

222. The Committee recalls that global pandemics, such as the HIV pandemic, and now COVID-19, tend to follow the fault lines of society, throwing existing inequalities into sharp relief. It is therefore essential to address these inequalities, both to safeguard public health and to attain the goal of decent work for all.³⁴¹ In this context, Recommendation No. 205 sets out key principles for the development and implementation of policy responses that promote employment and decent work as foundations for crisis response and recovery. In particular, the Recommendation indicates that, in taking measures to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work in response to crisis situations, Members should take into account the “the need to pay special attention to population groups and individuals who have been made particularly vulnerable by the crisis”.³⁴²

223. The Committee notes that targeted measures have been taken in many countries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that are tailored to the needs of specific groups in vulnerable situations.³⁴³ While both the measures taken and the groups targeted differ according to the socio-economic circumstances of each country, they all have the welcome objective of providing necessary support for specific groups of people during and beyond the crisis.

Portugal – The Government indicates in its report that as part of efforts to ensure the creation of sustainable high-quality jobs that offer some stability to workers, particularly those in situations of greater vulnerability, Ordinance No. 207/2020 of 27 August requires employers to maintain the worker’s contract of employment at the same level for a period of 24 months. In addition, the employer is required to provide the worker with vocational training. Portugal has also taken measures to ensure that all persons, including migrants and refugees, regardless of status, are guaranteed access to the National Health Service (SNS).

³⁴¹ The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019, emphasizes that it is “imperative to act with urgency to seize the opportunities and address the challenges to shape a fair, inclusive and secure future of work with full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all”, para. I(B). [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) No. 8](#) establishes the objective of promoting “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

³⁴² Para. 7(h).

³⁴³ ILO, “[COVID-19 and the World of Work: Impact and Policy Responses](#)”, ILO Monitor, 1st ed., 18 March 2020.

► 1. Disadvantaged groups who were already vulnerable to socio-economic shocks have been hit the hardest

224. The Committee observes that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in disparate employment-related effects, with notable variations across regions, countries and economic sectors. COVID-19 knows no national or class boundaries and can infect anyone in any country or at any level of society. However, existing inequalities mean that not everyone has adequate resources to be able to protect themselves and their families from the socio-economic and health impacts of the pandemic.³⁴⁴ The virus and the containment measures adopted have led to disproportionate and adverse impacts on persons who were already vulnerable, including the groups identified in the instruments under examination, such as young people, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, older workers, domestic workers, indigenous and tribal peoples, people living with or affected by HIV and those living in rural areas. The severe impacts of COVID-19 on persons in vulnerable situations is due to a number of factors. First, they are more likely to be concentrated in poorly remunerated jobs in the economic sectors most affected by the pandemic. Second, workers in vulnerable situations are more likely to be in informal jobs, or in precarious employment under part-time, temporary or casual arrangements, and are therefore extremely vulnerable to economic shocks.

Intersectional or multiple grounds of discrimination

225. The Committee emphasizes that, where individuals belong to more than one disadvantaged group, multiple and intersectional discrimination compound and exacerbate existing inequalities,³⁴⁵ affecting both health³⁴⁶ and economic outcomes.³⁴⁷ Intersections occur not only between different groups, such as women with disabilities, but also with other characteristics, such as sex, age, race, cultural background and socio-economic status. Policy responses to the crisis need to take into account both multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities, including pervasive gender inequality.³⁴⁸

226. Moreover, as countries have implemented social distancing, quarantine and other containment measures, the data shows higher infection rates and deaths among specific minorities. For example, in the *United States*, there is evidence that the disparate effect of the virus on African-Americans is at least in part a function of their disproportionate role as frontline essential workers, in conjunction with their long-standing health and social inequalities, including less access to health insurance, poor health service coverage in certain geographical areas, and unconscious bias among health providers.³⁴⁹ Not only does

³⁴⁴ Marion Police, "[Le coronavirus, exhausteur d'inégalités](#)", *Le Temps*, 13 March 2020.

³⁴⁵ The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in its [General Comment No. 20](#) on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights, highlighted that: "Some individuals or groups of individuals face discrimination on more than one of the prohibited grounds, for example women belonging to an ethnic or religious minority. Such *cumulative discrimination* has a unique and specific impact on individuals and merits particular consideration and remedying".

³⁴⁶ For instance, evidence shows that the COVID-19 pandemic could be disproportionately affecting people from black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. See Tony Kirby, "[Evidence Mounts on the Disproportionate Effect of COVID-19 on Ethnic Minorities](#)", *The Lancet* 8, No. 6 (2020), 547-548.

³⁴⁷ For instance, minority women in particular face compound hardship during the COVID-19 crisis, given the intersecting burdens they face due to gender discrimination and inequality. For example, women, including minority women, are disproportionately represented in informal sector jobs that are more vulnerable to disruption and which fail to provide health coverage or paid leave. Rural and poor minority women are often responsible for collecting water in crowded public spaces to cover basic needs. See OHCHR, "[COVID-19 and Minority Rights: Overview and Promising Practices](#)", COVID-19 response, 4 June 2020, 1.

³⁴⁸ United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, "[We Are All In This Together: Human Rights and COVID-19 Response and Recovery](#)", 23 April 2020.

³⁴⁹ Hye Jin Rho et al., Center for Economic and Policy Research, "[A Basic Demographic Profile of Workers in Frontline Industries \(2020\)](#)". Kenya Evelyn, "[It's a Racial Justice Issue: Black Americans are Dying in Greater Numbers from Covid19](#)", *The Guardian*, 8 April 2020.

intersectional discrimination lead to increased poverty, it also gives rise to a higher risk of infection and poorer health outcomes. In many low-income communities around the world, the poorest lack access to basic water, sanitation and hygiene to protect themselves from the virus.³⁵⁰ Social stigmatization not only keeps those who are marginalized in poverty, it also impedes efficient health responses.³⁵¹

227. In addition to the stigma, discrimination and exclusion already encountered by disadvantaged groups,³⁵² they are now also facing rising levels of violence and harassment. Incidents have been reported in all regions of xenophobia, attacks against people from groups scapegoated for spreading the virus,³⁵³ the forced return of refugees and asylum-seekers and the mistreatment of migrants.³⁵⁴

228. The Committee emphasizes that, in developing and implementing crisis response and recovery measures in the short and longer term, it is crucial to take into account the need to combat discrimination, prejudice and hatred on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, disability, age or sexual orientation, or any other grounds.³⁵⁵ It also urges countries to take action against multiple and intersectional discrimination. In this context, the Committee welcomes the specific measures adopted in a number of countries to address the rising tide of stigma, discrimination and violence against certain groups.

Philippines – The COVID-19 Related Anti-Discrimination Act establishes penalties for discriminatory practices against confirmed, suspect, probable and recovered COVID-19 patients, repatriated land-based or sea-based Filipinos, healthcare workers, responders, service workers and their families and household members. Discriminatory acts include harassment and assault, stigmatization, failure to provide assistance, and unlawful refusal to honour valid and existing contracts.³⁵⁶

European Parliament Resolution of 17 April 2020 on EU coordinated action to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences

In its resolution, the European Parliament calls on both the Commission and Member States to take all measures to maintain as many jobs as possible, paying special attention to those in precarious forms of work. It also calls on them to prioritize aid and crisis-mitigation measures for the most vulnerable citizens, including women and children exposed to domestic violence, the elderly, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and people from remote and isolated regions, and people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, who all run the greatest risk of being infected with COVID-19, but also suffer the most from its economic effects.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁰ Michelle Lokot and Yeva Avakyan, “[Intersectionality as a Lens to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Implications for Sexual and Reproductive Health in Development and Humanitarian Contexts](#)”, *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, 28(1), 2020.

³⁵¹ UNICEF, “[Quick Guide to Avoiding Coronavirus-related Stigma](#)”, 20 March 2020; WHO, “[A Guide to Preventing and Addressing Social Stigma Associated with COVID-19](#)”, 24 February 2020.

³⁵² They are also at greater risk from the virus itself. See, for instance, CDC, “[Health Equity Considerations and Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups](#)”, updated on 24 July 2020.

³⁵³ In some countries, leaders have used terms such as “foreigner’s disease” to describe COVID-19. In various locations, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Roma or people of Asian origin have all borne the brunt of such abuse. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers from different minority groups have also been similarly stigmatized. See OHCHR, “[COVID-19 and Minority Rights: Overview and Promising Practices](#)”, Topics in Focus COVID-19 and Minority Rights, 4 June 2020.

³⁵⁴ United Nations Secretary-General: “We Are All In This Together”, 2020.

³⁵⁵ Recommendation No. 205, Para. 7(f).

³⁵⁶ [COVID-19 Related Anti-discrimination Act \(House Bill No. 6817\), 28 May 2020.](#)

³⁵⁷ [European Parliament Resolution of 17 April 2020 on EU Coordinated Action to Combat the COVID-19 Pandemic and its Consequences](#) (2020/2616(RSP)), paras 32 and 35.

► 2. The particular situation of specific groups

229. The following sections address the impact of COVID-19 on the specific groups covered by the 2020 General Survey, taking into account the increased impact of multiple and intersectional discrimination.

(a) The importance of inclusive, gender-responsive policy responses

230. The Committee observes that the current pandemic is affecting women and men differently. To develop policy responses that are both effective and inclusive, in response to discrimination arising from or exacerbated by crises, and when measures to prevent crises, enable recovery and build resilience, countries should respect, promote and realize equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men without discrimination of any kind, taking into account the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and Recommendation (No. 90), 1951, and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and Recommendation (No. 111), 1958.³⁵⁸

Czechia – The Government indicates in its report that, between March and May 2020, women constituted approximately 75 per cent of the beneficiaries of the measures adopted. Flexible working time, homeworking or teleworking are measures that have widely used during the COVID-19 crisis. The situation has proved that the use of these measures is feasible on a larger scale. This experience might expand availability of flexible forms of work, and at the same time, increase the employment rate of parents with children, especially women.

Trinidad and Tobago – In its report, the Government indicates that a National Policy on Gender and Development will be presented to the Parliament for its adoption. Pending its final adoption, it is already used by the Government. Several measures and recommendations arising from the Policy are being addressed. Some of these include:

- The amendment to the legislation on the Sexual Offences Act in 2019, which included the creation of the Sexual Offenders Register;
- The amendments to the Domestic Violence Act in 2020, to give more protection to victims, including children;
- The laying of the Sexual Harassment Policy in the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago;
- The operationalization of two government-owned Domestic Violence Shelters;
- The expansion of gender mainstreaming to the private sector and civil society organizations; and
- The expansion of the Gender Focal Point Mechanism with the State Sector to drive gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting.³⁵⁹

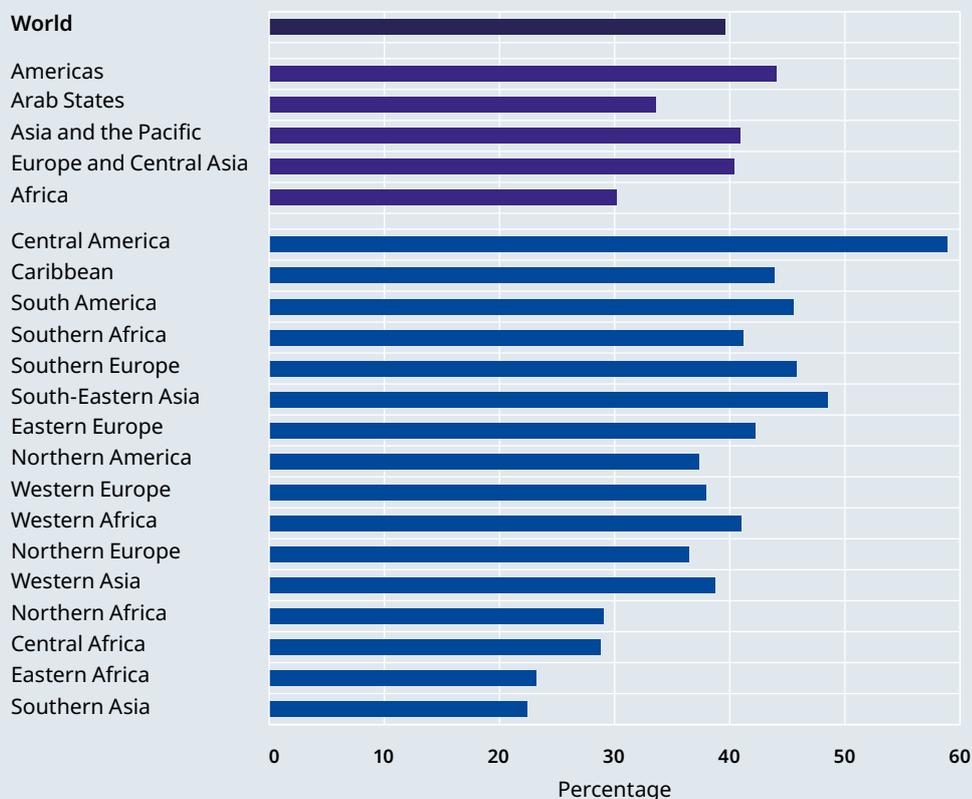
³⁵⁸ Recommendation No. 205, Para. 15(a).

³⁵⁹ Similarly, the Government of Myanmar indicates in its report that the Operational Plan 2020–22 for the Implementation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women is being developed.

231. The lockdowns and social distancing measures introduced during the pandemic have disproportionately affected female-dominated sectors.³⁶⁰ The garment manufacturing industry, where as many as three-quarters of workers are women, has been severely affected, especially in middle- and low-income countries.³⁶¹

Figure 6.1

Share of women working in sectors hit hard by the COVID-19 crisis, worldwide and by region and subregion



Source: ILO, "COVID-19 and the World of Work", ILO Monitor, 5th Edition, 9.

232. Comprehensive measures that are of particular relevance to women have been taken in a number of countries to contain job losses and protect incomes. These include measures to extend and increase the level of out-of-work benefits,³⁶² and special programmes for the self-employed,³⁶³ temporary workers and domestic workers, among whom women are

³⁶⁰ Key sectors in which women predominate include accommodation and food services, real estate, business and administrative activities, manufacturing and wholesale/retail trade. In 2020, 41 per cent of total women's employment (527 million women) is concentrated in these sectors, compared with 35 per cent of total male employment. In high- and middle-income countries, the share of women employed in high-risk sectors is even greater. See ILO, [The COVID-19 Response: Getting Gender Equality Right for a Better Future for Women at Work](#), Policy Brief, May 2020.

³⁶¹ Monika Queisser, Willem Adema and Chris Clarke, "[COVID-19, Employment and Women in OECD Countries](#)", VOX EU/CEPR, 22 April 2020.

³⁶² For example: *Australia, Canada, Ireland, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States.*

³⁶³ For example: *Canada, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and United Kingdom.*

over-represented.³⁶⁴ In some countries, one-off emergency cash payments have been made,³⁶⁵ sometimes in the form of a universal benefit.³⁶⁶

233. Businesses run by women also face a higher risk of bankruptcy than those managed by men. Women are over-represented as operators of MSMEs, where they often experience greater difficulties than men in accessing credit and financial services, obtaining loans at fair interest rates and accessing information and communication technologies (ICTs).³⁶⁷ The Committee notes that support measures have been introduced in some countries to assist MSMEs managed by women and cooperatives during the pandemic.

Canada – The Government has provided CAD15 million in new funding through the [Women Entrepreneurship Strategy \(WES\)](#), which will be available for current WES Ecosystem Fund recipient organizations, enabling these third-party organizations to provide timely support and advice to women entrepreneurs facing hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁶⁸

Costa Rica – As part of the COVID-19 response, the National Cooperative Development Institute has reduced all interest rates on credit for cooperatives to limit unemployment and for business projects for priority sectors of the population, including women, young persons, older adults, indigenous and afro-descendent persons, rural workers, migrants and persons with disabilities.³⁶⁹

234. Women are over-represented in essential services such as healthcare, communications and utilities, and emergency services.³⁷⁰ The pandemic has demonstrated the essential nature of the services, which are economically undervalued, that are provided by care economy workers, such as health and social workers, workers in emergency services and cleaners, who tend to be predominantly women, often working under precarious conditions and in poorly remunerated jobs requiring long working hours.³⁷¹ Lower pay also undermines the capacity of care workers to obtain care for their own family members, adding to their overall care responsibilities.³⁷²

235. COVID-19 lockdowns have increased the burden of unpaid care work performed by women who, prior to the pandemic, were already doing three times as much unpaid care work as men.³⁷³ Due to the crisis, many women and men, and particularly single parents, a high proportion of whom are women, have had to significantly increase the hours they devote to unpaid care work.³⁷⁴

³⁶⁴ Of the 70.1 million domestic workers worldwide, 49.7 million (71 per cent) are women. ILO, [Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work](#), Geneva, 2018; See also ILO, [The COVID-19 Response: Getting Gender Equality Right for a Better Future for Women at Work](#), 2.

³⁶⁵ For example: *Australia* and *United States*.

³⁶⁶ For example: *United States*.

³⁶⁷ María Noel Vaeza, “[Gender and COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean: Integrating Gender into the Response Framework](#)”, UN Women, Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean.

³⁶⁸ Government of *Canada*, [Canada’s COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#).

³⁶⁹ Liseth Guzmán Sandí, “[INFOCOOP bajó tasas de interés para apoyar a las cooperativas y afrontar el impacto del COVID-19](#)”, 18 March 2020.

³⁷⁰ For example, approximately 90 per cent of the nursing workforce is female. See WHO, “[Delivered by Women, Led by Men: A Gender and Equity Analysis of the Global Health and Social Workforce](#)”, *Human Resources for Health Observer*, (24), March 2019. See also ILO, “The COVID-19 Response”, 3.

³⁷¹ WHO, *Delivered by Women, Led by Men*; ILO, *The COVID-19 Response*.

³⁷² WHO, *Delivered by Women, Led by Men*; ILO, *The COVID-19 Response*.

³⁷³ UN, [Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women](#), 9 April 2020, 13.

³⁷⁴ UN, [Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women](#), 15.

(b) Young persons: A “lockdown generation”?

236. Young people often face significant challenges in the labour market; indeed, at the time of the COVID-19 outbreak, employment for young persons had not fully recovered from the impact of the 2008 global financial crisis.³⁷⁵ As of 2019, prior to the advent of the pandemic, the global youth unemployment rate stood at 13.6 per cent, well above the pre-financial crisis rate of 12.3 per cent in 2007. The rate of young persons not in employment, education or training (NEET) was over 31 per cent for young women, compared with 13.9 per cent for young men, and rises to almost 40 per cent in lower-middle-income countries.³⁷⁶

237. The pandemic is affecting young people in three main ways:

- ▶ containment measures have disrupted education, training and work-based learning, which in turn is likely to reduce employability and affect future earnings;
- ▶ the virus has made it increasingly difficult for young people to find work, especially for recent graduates, to re-enter the labour market, or to change jobs; and
- ▶ the current wave of job losses and the collapse of businesses and start-ups has led to reduced earnings and deteriorating conditions of work.³⁷⁷ These shocks are taking a heavy toll on the mental well-being of young people, who may bear the impact of the pandemic throughout their working lives, resulting in the emergence of a “lockdown generation”.³⁷⁸

238. As of 22 June 2020, over 1 billion learners in 144 countries had been affected by school closures.³⁷⁹ Closures have involved universities, technical and vocational education and training institutions and work-based learning, including apprenticeships and traineeships. Over two-thirds of training is now provided remotely and nearly every second training centre has switched to providing online training.³⁸⁰ The impact of these closures varies, but is greater in low-income countries (and in poorer households in both low- and high-income countries), where young people already face barriers in accessing computers and the internet.³⁸¹ This in turn reinforces existing inequalities between and within countries.³⁸² Disruptions to education and training are likely to result in a reduction in both the quality and quantity of employment opportunities available to young people over the course of their working lives.³⁸³

³⁷⁵ ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work”, 4th ed., 6.

³⁷⁶ ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work”, 4th ed., 6; ILO, [Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the Future of Jobs](#), Geneva, 2020, 27 and 28.

³⁷⁷ ILO, “[Preventing Exclusion from the Labour Market](#)”, 1 and 7.

³⁷⁸ According to a global survey carried out by the ILO and other partners of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, 60 per cent of young women and 53 per cent of young men respondents view their career prospects with uncertainty or fear. More than half the surveyed youth have become vulnerable to anxiety or depression. Young people who have stopped working exhibit the highest risk of anxiety or depression. ILO, “[Preventing Exclusion from the Labour Market](#)”, 13. See also: UN, [Policy Brief: COVID-19 and the Need for Action on Mental Health](#), 13 May 2020, 13.

³⁷⁹ UNESCO and the International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC), “[TVET Peer Support in Response to COVID-19](#)”.

³⁸⁰ The [UNESCO COVID-19 Education Response](#) web page provides an overview of various forms of distance learning solutions including, for example, national learning platforms and tools.

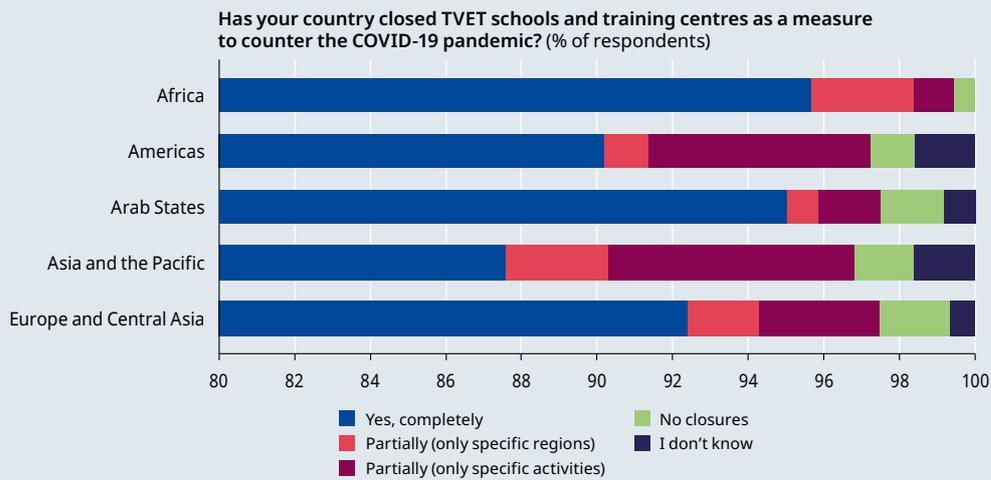
³⁸¹ ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work”, 4th ed., 9.

³⁸² According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), almost 71 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24 were using the internet in 2017, compared to 48 per cent of the total population, varying from 40.3 per cent in Africa to 95.7 per cent in Europe. See ILO, “[Preventing Exclusion from the Labour Market](#)”, 14.

³⁸³ ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work”, 4th ed., 10.

Figure 6.2

The closure of TVET schools and training centres has affected all regions, particularly Africa



Source: ILO–UNESCO–World Bank joint survey on the provision of TVET during the COVID-19 crisis.

239. Youth unemployment has continued to rise quickly and on a broad scale during the pandemic,³⁸⁴ although the increases in unemployment rates do not reveal the full extent of the crisis.³⁸⁵ Labour force participation rates have also fallen significantly around the world.³⁸⁶ The Committee notes that, according to a global survey carried out by the ILO and other partners of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, over one-in-six young people surveyed have stopped working since the onset of the crisis. Among those still in employment, working hours have fallen by 23 per cent.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁴ Sher Verick, “Who is Hit Hardest during a Financial Crisis? The Vulnerability of Young Men and Women to Unemployment in an Economic Downturn”, Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA), Discussion Paper No. 4359, Bonn, August 2009, 15.

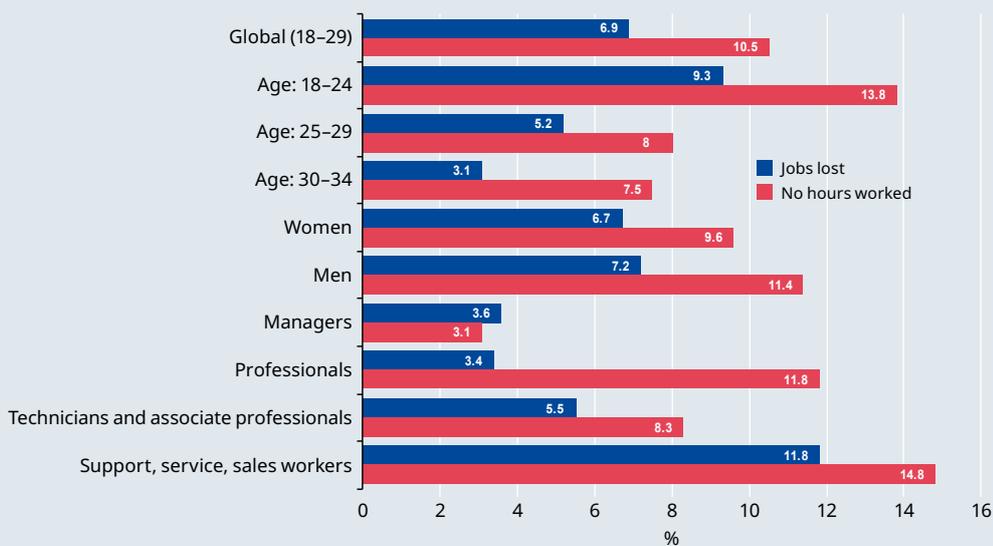
³⁸⁵ ILO, “Preventing Exclusion from the Labour Market”, 12.

³⁸⁶ ILO, “Preventing Exclusion from the Labour Market”, 12.

³⁸⁷ ILO, “The COVID-19 Response: Getting Gender Equality Right”.

Figure 6.3

Share of young people (aged 18–29) who stopped working following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Global Survey on COVID-19 and Youth)



Source: ILO. "Preventing Exclusion from the Labour Market", 13.

240. Entering the labour market during a recession can negatively affect young people's labour market outcomes for decades, as they are likely to suffer long-lasting and devastating effects of protracted unemployment.³⁸⁸ To avoid losing the productive potential of an entire generation, urgent and large-scale policy responses are required to ensure that young people are not left behind in both the immediate response and the longer-term recovery.

241. The Committee notes that policy responses in many countries promote youth employment and enhance the employability of young women and men.

Angola – The Government indicates in its report that one of the priorities of the National Development Program (2018-2022) focuses on improving school to work transitions for young persons.

Canada – The COVID-19 Economic Response Plan (2020) includes measures to help youth receive emergency income benefits, develop skills, gain professional experience and contribute to their communities through volunteering.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ Sher Verick, "Who is Hit Hardest during a Financial Crisis?", 4. These impacts are commonly referred to as "scarring effects".

³⁸⁹ Similarly, *Sweden* has extended the programme and set aside funds for jobs in municipalities. The aim is to improve young people's future opportunities to enter the labour market and contribute to employment.

Italy – The Government indicates in its report that the employment incentive IO LAVORO was established in 2020 for private employers throughout the territory, to encourage them to hire unemployed people with one of the following characteristics:

- (a) workers aged between 16 and 34 years;
- (b) workers aged 35 years or less, without paid employment for at least six months.

The types of contract incentives offered include:

- 1. permanent contract, also for administration purposes;
- 2. professionalizing apprenticeship contract;
- 3. permanent employment contract for cooperative members.

The economic value of the incentive is equal to the employer's social security contribution, for a period of 12 months from the date of hiring, up to a maximum of 8,062 euros per employee hired.

Myanmar – In its report, the Government refers to the trainings provided by the Youth Training Schools under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement which benefited 241 trainees on 11 different types of vocational trainings for the period going from 1 April to 30 June in 2019 and in 2020.

Republic of Korea – The Government indicates in its report that it has increased the number of recipients of the “Job search promotion allowances” and the “Employment success package program” from 50,000 to 100,000 and from 50,000 to 130,000 young persons, respectively. Furthermore, the budget for the Additional Youth Employment Subsidy Program has been increased.

United Kingdom – The Redundancy Support Service for Apprentices (ReSSA) helps apprentices access local and national services that can provide financial, legal, health and well-being support. It provides incentives to employers that provide quality apprenticeships. As part of the Government's Plan for Jobs, employers are being offered £2,000 (for each new apprentice under 25 that they hire and £1,500 for each new apprentice hired (aged 25 and over)).³⁹⁰

³⁹⁰ The Government of the *United Kingdom*, Coronavirus (COVID-19), “[Apprentices to get Jobs Boost](#)”, 1 August 2020. In its report, the Government also refers to the traineeship programme (£11 million to triple the number of traineeships and allocate additional funds in 2020–21 to support 30,000 new places. Furthermore, young persons from 18 to 24 year old will be able to access three elements: a structured 13-week programme – where they will receive careers advice, a sector-based work academy, a traineeship, work experience, mentoring circles, or an apprenticeship. Once they have completed this programme, participants will be encouraged to take up work-related training or an apprenticeship; the introduction of young people's hubs and for those who need a bit more support, expansion of the Youth Employability Coaches model. These will focus on young people with more complex needs. On 2 September 2020, the *United Kingdom* Government launched a new Kickstart Scheme for Great Britain – a £2 billion fund to create hundreds of thousands of high quality, six-month work placements aimed at those aged 16–24 who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment. Similar measures have been adopted by Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

242. Some countries have extended unemployment benefits to younger workers.

Israel – On 10 May 2020, restrictions were eased to make unemployment benefits available to young people under 25.³⁹¹

South Africa – The draft Disaster Management Tax Relief Administration Bill provides for the extension of Employment Tax Incentive (ETI) benefits from 1 April 2020 for any remuneration paid on or before 31 July 2020. The ETI is an incentive aimed at reducing youth unemployment by encouraging employers to hire young jobseekers aged 18 to 29 who receive monthly remuneration under ZAR 6,500. The maximum amount of the ETI that can be claimed during a four month period has also been increased.

243. The Committee further notes that some countries are implementing measures focused on promoting youth entrepreneurship and sustainable self-employment.

Canada – Funding of CAN\$20.1 has been allocated to Futurpreneur Canada to provide assistance to young entrepreneurs who are facing challenges due to the pandemic. The funding enables Futurpreneur Canada to provide support for up to 12 months.³⁹²

244. Measures have also been taken at regional level.

The Youth Guarantee in the European Union

The European Youth Guarantee (YG) was established in 2013 and national implementation began in all EU countries in 2014.³⁹³ The Youth Guarantee is a broad based youth employment programme which goes beyond traditional active labour market interventions. The Youth Guarantee involve a commitment by all Member States of the European Union to ensure that within four months of leaving school or becoming NEET, young people receive either a quality job offer suited to their education, skills and experience or the opportunity to acquire the education, skills and experience needed to find a job in future through an apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education.

The Guarantee element means that the YG acts as an automatic stabiliser; investment in the programme will automatically increase in response to an increase in the numbers of young people who cannot find work, as is the case during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

³⁹¹ KPMG, “[Israel: Government and Institution Measures in Response to COVID-19](#)”, updated on 22 July 2020.

³⁹² *Canada's* COVID-19 Economic Response Plan.

³⁹³ See ILO, General Survey on Promoting Employment and Decent Work in a Changing Landscape, paras 791 and 792.

The Youth Guarantee is aimed at systematically reaching all young people who are neither working nor are in education or training (NEET). A wide variety of measures and initiatives have been included in the Youth Guarantee: education and training for employment programmes; remedial education measures for school drop-outs; labour market intermediation services; and active labour market programmes (ALMPs) targeted at labour demand, such as direct employment creation, hiring subsidies and start-up incentives. Several achievements of the Youth Guarantee can be highlighted, including the development of specific measures targeting young people in situations of vulnerability and the initiatives undertaken by European Union Member States to modernize national public employment services and improve their efficiency.

On 1 July 2020, the EU launched a second round of the European Youth Guarantee under the title, “A Bridge to Jobs”, building on the experiences gained from the implementation of the YG during its first five years. The renewed programme includes the same basic commitment to offering young people an educational, training or employment offer within four months of becoming NEET, but aims to be more inclusive:

- ▶ The upper age range has been universally extended beyond 24, including all those aged between 15 and 29; and
- ▶ The new YG aims to extend outreach to explicitly include more groups in vulnerable situations, such as youth belonging to racial and ethnic minorities, young people with disabilities, as well as young people living in rural, remote or disadvantaged urban areas. On 30 October 2020, the EU Council adopted the Recommendation “A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee”. Its main objective is to better support youth employment across the EU, in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is increasing already high youth unemployment rates, as well as the number of young people not in employment, education or training.

245. The Committee welcomes the measures taken in a number of countries to strengthen the participation of young people in the design and implementation of youth-specific schemes so that they can bring their unique experience and insight to bear in the development of youth-responsive policy measures that meet both immediate and longer-term needs.

The African Union Youth Envoy has convened virtual consultations with youth leaders from 40 African countries to expand youth-led initiatives and consult young people on the recovery phase. The African Union has also launched the African Youth Front on Coronavirus to engage youth in decision-making for recovery.³⁹⁴

(c) Older workers: Contributing valuable experience in support of crisis response and recovery

246. COVID-19 poses a substantive threat to older persons, who have significantly higher fatality rates from coronavirus infection.³⁹⁵ The pandemic is also increasing poverty and unemployment among older persons, and is taking a toll on the well-being and mental health of many older persons due to physical distancing and social isolation, as well as stigma and discrimination.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ African Union Youth Envoy, [African Youth Front on Coronavirus](#), 6 May 2020.

³⁹⁵ The fatality rate for persons aged over 80 years is five times the global average.

³⁹⁶ UN, [Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Older Persons](#), May 2020, 2.

247. The pandemic has increased the unemployment rates of older workers (aged 55 and over). Many older persons rely on multiple income sources, including paid work, savings, financial support from families and pensions, all of which may be in jeopardy as a result of COVID-19.³⁹⁷ Moreover, in most countries, the risk of poverty increases with age, particularly in developing countries, where the percentage of older persons living in poverty is as high as 80 per cent.³⁹⁸ While social protection can provide a vital safety net, coverage gaps are enormous in some developing countries, where fewer than 20 per cent of older persons of retirement age are in receipt of a pension. The Committee emphasizes that, to ensure a sustainable longer-term recovery, measures are needed to ensure the income security of older persons through the provision of universal pension coverage and adequate benefit levels.³⁹⁹

Uruguay – A sickness subsidy for workers of 65+ years old was introduced by the Executive Branch Decree of 25 April 2020. People who are 65 years old or more – included in the subjective scope of the sickness subsidy established by Decree-Law No. 14.407 of 22 July 1975 – are able to isolate within a period of no more than 30 days, according to what companies determine and communicate to the Social Security Bank (BPS). Worker that perform or are able to perform their tasks from home are excluded. Those who are in isolation will be entitled to receive the monetary benefit corresponding to the sickness subsidy in the manner established by Decree-Law No. 14.407, for the isolation period. On 26 May 2020, the subsidy was extended until 30 July 2020.⁴⁰⁰

248. Measures have been taken in a number of countries to facilitate the access of older persons to adequate old-age and disability benefits during the pandemic. In some countries, with a view to preventing or alleviating poverty, the payment of old-age and disability benefits has been brought forward and/or their level increased.⁴⁰¹ In addition, measures have been taken in certain countries to minimize the risk of infection for older persons when they collect their pensions at pension pay points.⁴⁰²

Sri Lanka – has increased social pensions from LKR2,000 to LKR5,000 and extended pension coverage to persons on the waiting list for the old-age allowance.⁴⁰³

249. The Committee notes that the crisis has had a disproportionate impact on older women, who have less access than men to income, whether through employment, assets (such as land and property) or retirement pensions. It recalls that lack of access to adequate social protection benefits is closely linked to existing gender inequalities, primarily due to the lower labour force participation rates of women, the large numbers of women who are self-employed and their shorter and frequently interrupted working lives due to family responsibilities, which result in lower pensions (when they have a pension).⁴⁰⁴ Globally, women account for nearly 65 per cent of those above retirement age (60–65 years or older) who have no regular pension.⁴⁰⁵

³⁹⁷ UN, “Policy Brief”, 12.

³⁹⁸ UNDESA, “[Income Poverty in Old Age: An Emerging Development Priority](#)”.

³⁹⁹ Carla Henry, “[How to Ensure Older Workers Fully Participate in the Recovery after the Pandemic](#)”, ILO, 25 May 2020.

⁴⁰⁰ <https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-trabajo-seguridad-social/comunicacion/noticias/se-prorrogo-subsidio-enfermedad-para-trabajadores-65-anos>.

⁴⁰¹ For example, *Argentina, Peru* and *Ukraine*. See also: ILO, “Social Protection Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis”, 4.

⁴⁰² For example, *Peru*. See also ILO, “Social Protection Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis”, 4.

⁴⁰³ United Nations *Sri Lanka*, “[Tackling the COVID-19 Economic Crisis in Sri Lanka: Providing Universal, Lifecycle Social Protection Transfers to Protect Lives and Bolster Economic Recovery](#)”, Working Paper, United Nations Social Protection Working Group, June 2020, 11.

⁴⁰⁴ UNDESA, “Income Poverty in Old Age”.

⁴⁰⁵ ILO (2017). [World Social Protection Report 2017–19: Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals](#), Geneva, 78.

250. Older workers have accumulated a lifetime's experience of skills and knowledge and have made an invaluable contribution during the crisis in many different capacities. They have played essential roles on the frontline in the response to the pandemic, including as carers, volunteers and community leaders.⁴⁰⁶ Many governments have called on retired health workers to return to work to support overburdened health facilities. Recognizing the value of their contribution and the need to protect the health and well-being of older workers during the crisis, a number of countries have adopted special measures in this regard.⁴⁰⁷

Canada – has issued COVID-19 guidance for the health sector, including retired physicians and nurses. The guidance calls for the adoption of special measures for the protection of retirees, including the extension of insurance and liability coverage for retirees recruited to provide health-care services during the pandemic, and the provision of training for retirees.⁴⁰⁸

251. Other countries have introduced incentives to encourage employers to retain older workers, including exemption from the payment of pension contributions during lockdown. The Committee also notes that some countries have included older persons in life-long learning programmes and enhanced their access to information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Republic of Korea – The Government indicates in its report that it has established an “Employment Retention Incentive for Older People” in 2020 to support the extension and stabilization of employment for the “new middle aged” (people over 50). The Government provides support to companies that have extended the employment of these workers. Furthermore, the Law on the Prohibition of Age Discrimination in Employment and Elderly Employment Promotion”, which entered into force in May 2020, mandates enterprises to provide re-employment support to workers aged 50 and over who are facing involuntary turnover.

The *United Kingdom* has launched a website to provide guidance for employers on the employment of older workers and for older people (aged over 50) who want to return to work or stay in work longer. The guidance describes the various employment support measures available, including guidance on finding a job, training to improve English, mathematics and IT skills, apprenticeships, self-employment (access to benefits under the new enterprise allowance) and flexible working and retirement options.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ Michelle Bachelet, “[Human Rights of Older Persons in the Age of COVID-19 and Beyond](#)”, Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 May 2020.

⁴⁰⁷ UN, “Policy Brief”.

⁴⁰⁸ Government of *Canada*, “[COVID-19 Pandemic Guidance for the Health Sector](#)”. In its report, the Government further informs that the government of Quebec has published the Guide on Good Practices for the Employment of Experienced Workers. In November 2019, a communication campaign was launched inciting experienced workers to remain in the labour market.

⁴⁰⁹ Government of the *United Kingdom*, “[Guidance, Help and Support for Older Workers](#)”, updated on 29 July 2020.

(d) Workers living with HIV or affected by HIV or AIDS

252. The pandemic has adversely affected the over 37 million people living with HIV or affected by HIV or AIDS globally, who are already disadvantaged in the labour market due to stigma, discrimination and marginalization.⁴¹⁰ The increased strain on health-care systems has had a negative impact on HIV prevention and testing services. In some cases, the supply of life-saving anti-retroviral treatment (ART) has been disrupted, placing people living with HIV at greater risk.⁴¹¹

253. The majority of people living with HIV are of working age.⁴¹² They are over-represented in the informal economy, where they lack access to paid sick leave, unemployment benefits and other forms of social protection.⁴¹³ A high proportion of people living with HIV are unemployed, due to high rates of stigma and discrimination. The Committee recalls that HIV status often interacts with other personal characteristics, including gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and ethnicity, thereby compounding the impact of the pandemic on this group.⁴¹⁴

254. In a number of countries, targeted income-generation programmes have been implemented for persons living with HIV as part of COVID-19 response and recovery plans.

Nigeria – The Nigeria Business Coalition and the ILO are collaborating on the development of a toolkit to support income-generation activities for people living with HIV.⁴¹⁵

Zambia – The Zambia Federation of Employers and the Network of Zambian People Living with HIV are developing, with ILO support, an innovative income-generation project for people living with HIV involving the production of hand sanitizer to be sold at workplaces.⁴¹⁶

255. In some countries, the social partners are developing joint strategies and proposals for governments aimed at ensuring the inclusion of persons living with HIV in crisis response and recovery measures.⁴¹⁷

Uganda – A joint statement by the Federation of Uganda Employers and the National Organization of Trade Unions calls for a comprehensive response to the pandemic to ensure that no one is left behind, particularly people living with HIV, persons with disabilities, migrants and other vulnerable groups. The statement emphasizes the importance of protecting jobs for everyone, including people living with HIV and people with disabilities. It also calls for people living with HIV to have access to health services, including antiretroviral treatment.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁰ ILO, “[COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on People Living with HIV](#)”, Policy Brief, June 2020, 1.

⁴¹¹ The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health has expressed concern over the interruption of non-COVID-19 health services during the crisis, including anti-retrovirals for people living with HIV. See OHCHR, “[COVID-19 Measures must be Grounded First and Foremost on the Right to Health](#)”, 10 June 2020. See also ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work”, 3.

⁴¹² ILO, “[COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on People Living with HIV](#)”, 1.

⁴¹³ See Addendum, Part 3.

⁴¹⁴ For further information on how the interaction of different personal characteristics might exacerbate the impact of COVID-19, see: ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work”, 3.

⁴¹⁵ ILO, “[COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on People Living with HIV](#)”, 1.

⁴¹⁶ ILO, “[COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on People Living with HIV](#)”, 1.

⁴¹⁷ ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work”, 4.

⁴¹⁸ ILO, “[COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on People Living with HIV](#)”, 4.

(e) Migrant workers

256. The ILO estimates that there are around 164 million migrant workers globally,⁴¹⁹ making up 4.7 per cent of the global labour force. The Committee notes that a range of factors make migrant workers extremely vulnerable to the severe socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. First, migrant workers are employed under precarious conditions more frequently than nationals, often with temporary and non-standard contracts, and are concentrated in informal arrangements characterized by low wages and lack of social protection.⁴²⁰

The *FKTU* from the Republic of Korea indicates that, in principle, migrant workers are not allowed to change workplaces after the termination of their employment contracts. Moreover, only employers have the right to refuse renewal of employment contracts, creating situations that have led to forced labour and other serious human rights abuses. If migrant workers change their employment without providing a legitimate reason, they are considered to be migrants in an irregular situation.

257. Second, migrant workers are often exposed to xenophobia, which takes the form of stigma and discrimination in employment and in other settings. Third, in many countries, migrants are excluded in law and practice from labour protection and other basic rights, including in the context of public health and COVID-19 response measures.⁴²¹

258. The living and working conditions of migrant workers, and the migration process itself, also places them at higher risk of exposure to COVID-19. International and internal migrant workers in key sectors, such as agriculture, meat and poultry processing, mining and construction, are frequently placed in collective accommodation, such as dormitories provided by employers,⁴²² or are concentrated in temporary migrant reception or training centres, communal living conditions or camps. These group settings make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to observe health guidelines, such as handwashing and social distancing, to reduce their exposure to the virus.⁴²³ Others are employed as domestic workers, the vast majority of whom are women. They either live in their employer's household or work for multiple households, where social distancing and other containment measures are not feasible. Moreover, in an effort to contain the spread of COVID-19, many countries around the world have closed their borders or tightened border controls. The Committee notes that the restrictions on movement adopted during the pandemic have placed many migrants in a challenging situation.⁴²⁴ The forced return of migrant workers to their countries has been reported in many regions.⁴²⁵

⁴¹⁹ This figure refers to cross border migration and does not take into account internal migration which, in some cases, like in *India*, has been significant. Internal migrants are unable to work due to closure of workplaces and markets while also being unable to return home due to transportation restrictions due to the virus, placing them in an untenable situation.

⁴²⁰ Francesco Fasani, and Jacopo Mazza, "[A Vulnerable Workforce: Migrant Workers in the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)", Publications Office of the European Union (2020), 2.

⁴²¹ OHCHR, "[Covid-19 and the Human Rights of Migrants: Guidance](#)", 7 April 2020, 1.

⁴²² World Bank, "[Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak in Support of Migrant Workers](#)", Living Paper Version 10, 19 June 2020, 4.

⁴²³ ILO, "[Protecting Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Recommendations for Policy-Makers and Constituents](#)", Policy Brief, April 2020, 4.

⁴²⁴ For example, migrant workers who work or were planning to work in another country cannot gain access to their job (such as migrant workers from *Tajikistan* intending to work in the *Russian Federation*), who cannot travel home, even if they have lost their job (such as migrant workers in *Thailand* who are from *Cambodia*, *Lao People's Democratic Republic* and *Myanmar*) or are blocked in transit (for instance, certain internal migrants in *India*).

⁴²⁵ The United Nations Network on Migration has called on States "to suspend forced returns during the pandemic, in order to protect the health of migrants and communities, and uphold the human rights of all migrants, regardless of status." See UNICEF, "[Forced Returns of Migrants must be Suspended in Times of COVID-19](#)", Statement by the United Nations Network on Migration, 13 May 2020.

The *FNV* and the *CNV* from the Netherlands express their concern about the current health and safety precautions taken for migrant workers on worksites, in migrant housing facilities and in transportation to and from work. Safety measures are not enforced, workers work and live without the possibility to respect social distance, without hygiene precautions, and are pressed to work even with corona symptoms. Most labour migrants in the Netherlands work in vital sectors such as food supply, distribution, meat- and poultry processing, construction, agriculture and logistics.

259. Despite these challenges, migrant workers represent a large proportion of the essential workforce at the frontline of national responses in many countries, performing work that is crucial to keeping the population healthy, safe and fed during the pandemic. While these migrant workers may be at lower risk of losing their jobs than others, they in turn face a heightened risk of exposure to the virus.⁴²⁶ These challenges are compounded when migrant workers are in an irregular situation or on a temporary visa. The Committee notes the adoption of measures in some countries to extend work permits, grant amnesties or otherwise seek to alleviate the constraints faced by migrant workers and their families.⁴²⁷

Bahrain – The Labour Market Regulatory Authority has suspended monthly work fees and fees for issuing or renewing work permits for three months from 1 April 2020 and lowered fees for flexi work permits.⁴²⁸

France – In April 2020, residence permits were extended for three months to ensure that migrant workers have uninterrupted access to healthcare and social security.⁴²⁹ This period was subsequently increased.⁴³⁰

Kenya – The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has announced that regular migrant workers who lose their jobs due to the pandemic will not be regarded as migrants in an irregular situation and that their residence or work permits will remain valid for the period initially stipulated.⁴³¹

⁴²⁶ For instance, according to two recent studies, 19 per cent of key workers in the *United States* and 13 per cent in the European Union are migrant workers, or around 17 and 13 per cent of the employed workforce, respectively. See: Julia Gelatt, "[Immigrant Workers: Vital to the U.S. COVID-19 Response, Disproportionately Vulnerable](#)", Factsheet, Migration Policy Institute (MPI), March 2020; Francesco Fasani and Jacopo Mazza, "[Immigrant Key Workers: Their Contribution to Europe's COVID-19 Response](#)", IZA Policy Paper No. 155, Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), April 2020.

⁴²⁷ For example, *Bahrain, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, South Africa, Thailand and United Arab Emirates*. See Johanna Avato, Johannes Koettl, and Rachel Sabates-Wheeler (2010), "[Social Security Regimes, Global Estimates, and Good Practices: The Status of Social Protection for International Migrants](#)", *World Development*, 38(4), 455–466. See also ILO, "Protecting Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic", 2.

⁴²⁸ *Gulf Insider*, "[Bahrain: LMRA Monthly Work Fees to be Terminated](#)", 2 April 2020.

⁴²⁹ *France*, [Ordonnance n° 2020-460 du 22 avril 2020 portant diverses mesures prises pour faire face à l'épidémie de covid-19](#).

⁴³⁰ Migration Équité Interculturalité, "[Impact of COVID-19 on the Entry and Stay of Foreigners in France](#)", (updated 1 September 2020).

⁴³¹ ILO, "Protecting Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic", 4.

260. Migrant workers are often excluded from national COVID-19 policy responses, such as wage subsidies, unemployment benefits or social security and social protection measures.⁴³² However, a number of countries are including them in national responses, extending access to existing welfare programmes or creating specific new schemes for migrant workers.⁴³³

Republic of Moldova – The minimum unemployment benefit has been increased to MDL2,775 a month (US\$157) and the benefit was extended to cover returning migrant workers and other potentially ineligible categories of persons during the crisis, on condition that they purchase medical insurance (MDL4,056 or US\$229.5 a year).

Ukraine – The eligibility rules for the Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) Programme have been relaxed, making returning migrants eligible for the benefit.⁴³⁴

261. In some countries, migrant workers have been included in programmes created to alleviate the economic shocks of the pandemic.

Ireland – Migrant workers who have been laid off or have lost their jobs can apply for a €350 weekly COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment.⁴³⁵

Italy – Refugees, asylum-seekers and migrant workers with residence permits can apply for a €600 subsidy under the COVID-19 *CuraItalia* stimulus. Refugees and asylum-seekers who are employed can also apply for a babysitting voucher through the social security office. The voucher has a limit of €600 for each family unit with children under 12 years old and must be used exclusively for babysitting services.⁴³⁶

New Zealand – As part of the COVID-19 Economic Response Package, international seasonal migrant workers covered by the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme are eligible for the sick leave scheme that is part of the national COVID-19 Economic Response Package. RSE workers are also entitled to government funding of NZD585.50 a week if they cannot work during the lockdown because their employer's business is not operating or the employer cannot afford to pay them due to reduced business activity. If RSE workers are required to self-isolate while in New Zealand due to illness or close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, they are also eligible under the scheme. RSE employers apply for a subsidy on behalf of their workers, and provide accommodation and pastoral care facilities during the 14-day isolation period.⁴³⁷

Philippines – US\$200 cash assistance is provided to international migrant workers whose work has been affected by COVID-19, irrespective of whether they are abroad or in the Philippines.⁴³⁸

⁴³² ILO, "Protecting Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic", 2.

⁴³³ World Bank, "Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak", 7.

⁴³⁴ Ugo Gentilini, Mohamed Almenfi, Pamela Dale, et al., "[Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A Real-Time Review of Country Measures](#)", "Living paper" version 11, World Bank, 12 June 2020, 466.

⁴³⁵ Citizens Information, "[Migrant Workers and Unemployment](#)".

⁴³⁶ World Bank, "Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak", 31.

⁴³⁷ World Bank, "Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak", 35.

⁴³⁸ Philippines Department of Labor and Employment Order No. 212, Series of 2020, "[Prescribing Guidelines on the Provision of Financial Assistance for Displaced Landbased and Seabased Filipino Workers due to the Corona Virus Disease \(COVID-2019\) 'DOLE-AKAP for OFWs'](#)".

262. A number of countries have taken measures to promote the retention in employment of national and migrant workers. Some measures entail changes to migration regulations, particularly in sectors facing labour shortages, such as healthcare and agriculture.⁴³⁹

Australia – is matching temporary migrant workers participating in the Pacific Labour Scheme with new employers where their current employment has been lost a result of the crisis.

Republic of Korea – Migrant workers covered by the Employment Permit System are eligible for employment retention and paid leave subsidies.

263. The income lost by migrant workers has led to a corresponding decline in the amounts of money they can send home to their families, with remittances expected to fall by almost US\$ 110 billion in 2020.⁴⁴⁰ The pandemic is also affecting the operations of remittance service providers due to health and financial risks related to the lack of liquidity. Some countries have responded to the expected fall in remittances by, for example, exempting remittance flows from abroad,⁴⁴¹ and the authorization of operations by money transfer agencies from certain regulations and taxes.⁴⁴²

Greece – A Temporary Aliens Provisional Insurance and Health Care Number (PAAYPA) will be issued to all asylum-seekers who are fully registered and hold a valid asylum-seeker card to ensure access to healthcare. If the application for asylum is rejected, the PAAYPA is automatically deactivated, but if the application is accepted it becomes a social security (AMKA) number.⁴⁴³

Portugal – has announced that all foreign nationals with pending residence applications will be treated as permanent residents to ensure that migrants have access to public services during the crisis. Persons applying for residence permits, including asylum-seekers, need only provide proof of a current application to qualify for access to the national health service and welfare benefits, to be able to open bank accounts and conclude work and rental contracts.⁴⁴⁴

⁴³⁹ Extensions to work permits have been introduced, for example, in *Australia, Bahrain, China – Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Spain and United Kingdom*.

⁴⁴⁰ Based on estimates of numbers of migrant workers and remittances, before the pandemic around 270 million people lived outside their country of birth and sent nearly US\$620 billion in remittances to their home countries. As of mid-May, the 20 countries with the most cases of COVID-19 were hosting 55 per cent of the world's migrants, who were sent 54 per cent of the world's remittances. See World Bank. "Potential responses to the COVID-19 outbreak", 1; IOM. "[COVID-19 Analytical Snapshot No. 46: Economic Impacts on Migrants UPDATE: Understanding the Migration and Mobility Implications of COVID-19](#)", 1.

⁴⁴¹ For example, *Thailand*. See IOM, "COVID-19 Analytical Snapshot 16", 2.

⁴⁴² For example, *Zimbabwe*. See: IOM, "COVID-19 Analytical Snapshot 16", 2.

⁴⁴³ World Bank. "Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak", 28.

⁴⁴⁴ OHCHR, "[COVID-19 and Minority Rights: Overview and Promising Practices](#)", 4 June 2020, 4.

264. The protection and promotion of migrant workers' rights during and after the pandemic can be effectively addressed through bilateral and multilateral cooperation.⁴⁴⁵

Philippines – is providing financial subsidies to migrant workers abroad, as well assistance, in collaboration with *China – Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*, to ensure that Filipino migrant workers are still able to travel to take up jobs as long as they have valid employment contracts and are supported by recruitment agencies and fair recruitment processes at both ends of the migration corridor.⁴⁴⁶

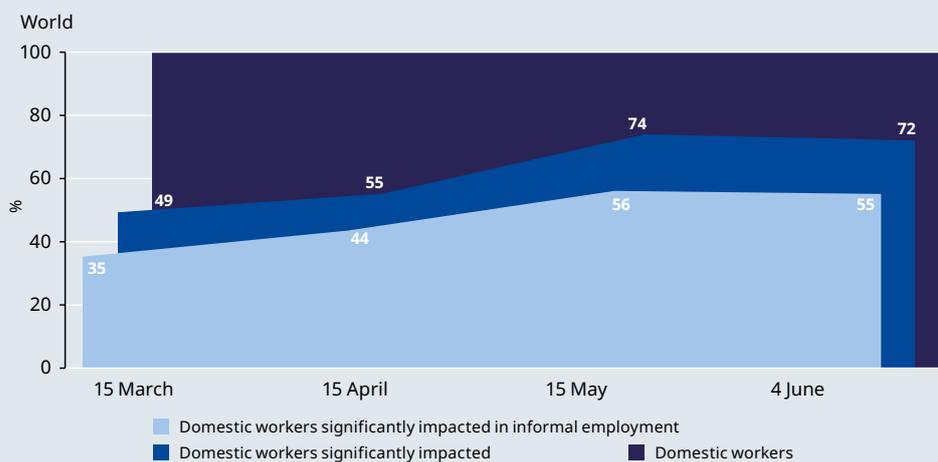
265. The Committee considers that the inclusion of migrant workers in crisis response and recovery measures is the most effective way of protecting their fundamental rights and those of their families, and of avoiding xenophobia and stigmatization which, by deterring migrants from seeking testing and treatment, impedes health response efforts.

(f) Domestic workers

266. The ILO estimates that, as of June 2020, at least 72.3 per cent of domestic workers had been significantly affected by the pandemic.⁴⁴⁷

Figure 6.4

Percentage of domestic workers significantly impacted by lockdown measures adopted to prevent the propagation of COVID-19 (% , 2020)



Note: ILO calculation based on national labour force or similar household surveys from 137 countries representing 91 per cent of global employment. Absolute numbers expressed in thousands extrapolated for 2020. "Significantly impacted" refers to a reduction in the number of hours of work, reduction in earnings and job losses.

⁴⁴⁵ ILO, "Protecting Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic", 5.

⁴⁴⁶ ILO, "Protecting Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic", 5.

⁴⁴⁷ ILO, "[Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on Loss of Jobs and Hours among Domestic Workers](#)", 15 June 2020.

267. The vast majority of those affected are in informal employment (76 per cent), and do not have access to social security benefits, such as unemployment insurance, if they lose their jobs. Moreover, if they fall sick, most domestic workers, particularly migrant domestic workers, are not guaranteed access to medical care or to sickness or employment injury benefit.⁴⁴⁸ Although income support has been extended to informal workers during the pandemic in a few countries, in most cases this is not available to domestic workers. Loss of income, lack of access to social security and lack of income support has pushed many domestic workers and their families even further into poverty.⁴⁴⁹ Consequently, workers' organizations, including domestic workers' organizations, have joined forces in some countries to provide needed support.

In Brazil, the *National Federation of Domestic Workers (Fenatrad)* and *Themis (Gender, Justice and Human Rights)* have launched a campaign so that domestic workers suspended from work may continue to receive their salaries during the pandemic and be provided with protective equipment, such as masks and hand-sanitizing gel.⁴⁵⁰

The *National Domestic Workers Alliance* (United States) has launched a Coronavirus Care Fund to provide emergency relief for domestic workers facing hardship.⁴⁵¹

268. Domestic workers in formal employment are facing job losses and reduced hours of work. The Committee notes that comprehensive measures have been adopted in a number of countries in response to losses of jobs and incomes, and have extended access to coverage to domestic workers, often for the first time.

Italy – introduced an income replacement scheme through two emergency decrees covering all sectors except for domestic work. The scheme has now been extended to protect and support domestic work, considered as an “essential service”, following pressure from the social partners. As a result, income support initiatives have been extended to cover domestic workers who, if they have one or more contracts totalling more than ten hours of work a week, are entitled to a monthly allowance of €500.

Spain – To cover certain categories of workers excluded from the “social shield” established by Royal Legislative Decrees Nos 8/2020 and 9/2020, two extraordinary subsidies have been introduced by Royal Legislative Decree No. 11/2020: one for domestic workers and another for temporary workers not covered by temporary employment measures (ERTEs). The subsidy for domestic workers is very important, as they do not have access to unemployment benefit. The only domestic workers that can claim the subsidy are those covered by the special social security system for domestic workers (it does not therefore cover those in informal work). It can be claimed by domestic workers who have lost their jobs because of the termination of their contract or whose hours of work have decreased due to the pandemic.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁸ ILO, “COVID-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy: Immediate Responses and Policy Challenges”, Brief, May 2020, 2.

⁴⁴⁹ ILO, “Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis”.

⁴⁵⁰ Fenatrad, “*Trabalhadoras domésticas têm o direito de se proteger do coronavírus*”, 16 March 2020.

⁴⁵¹ National Domestic Workers Alliance, “*Coronavirus Care Fund*”.

⁴⁵² Manuel Antonio García-Muñoz Alhambra, “*COVID-19 and Labour Law in Spain*”, *European Labour Law Journal*, 2020, 11(3), 319–323.

269. Live-in domestic workers who have remained in employment have been impacted in different ways. Increased demand for care work due to lockdowns and school closures have led to longer hours of work and uncompensated overtime.⁴⁵³ In other cases, employers have stopped paying live-in domestic workers due to their own financial constraints caused by the virus. In certain cases, migrant domestic workers have been placed in a catastrophic situation by employers who have turned them out of the household, forcing them to live on the streets in their host country with no income or social protection, and no way of returning to their home countries.⁴⁵⁴

270. Domestic workers who are still employed are also frontline workers, who may be called upon to care for ill members of their employer's household, but who themselves are not provided with PPE.⁴⁵⁵

On 18 May 2020, the *International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)* issued a Statement on Protecting Domestic Workers Rights and Fighting the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Statement calls upon governments to take immediate steps to protect the rights of domestic workers, particularly their rights to a safe workplace, to paid sick leave and access to healthcare, including for those who are in quarantine and infected with COVID-19.⁴⁵⁶

(g) Workers in rural areas and subsistence farmers

271. Emergency measures have been taken in a number of countries to address the impact of the pandemic on the agriculture sector by stimulating agriculture production and ensuring income protection. In most cases, these measures include financial support for agricultural businesses.

Myanmar – The Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) is providing farmers nationwide with loans of MMK50,000 an acre from a special COVID-19 relief fund of MMK600 billion. The loans have been provided to farmers since 22 June 2020 and are in addition to the monsoon loan of MMK150,000 an acre. Agricultural, rural development and livestock loans are also available at 1 to 1.5 per cent below normal interest rates.⁴⁵⁷

Namibia – The economic stimulus and relief package includes NAD200 million in guarantees for low-interest loans for farmers and agricultural businesses, including cash-flow-constrained farmers and agricultural SMEs experiencing significant lost revenues.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵³ United Nations and European Union, "[Protecting the Rights of Domestic Workers in Malaysia during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond](#)", 16 June 2020, Spotlight Initiative, 4.

⁴⁵⁴ Bahar Makooi and Sam Ball, "[Abandoned by Employers, Ethiopian Domestic Workers are Dumped on Lebanon's Streets](#)", France24 (video), 25 June 2020.

⁴⁵⁵ UN and EU, "Protecting the Rights of Domestic Workers in Malaysia", 3.

⁴⁵⁶ IDWF, "[Statement on Protecting Domestic Workers Rights and Fighting the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)", 18 March 2020.

⁴⁵⁷ AgriProFocus Myanmar, [Making Agribusiness Work for Development](#).

⁴⁵⁸ Ministry of Finance, "[Economic Stimulus and Relief Package: Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy and Households](#)", Media statement, 1 April 2020.

272. Short-term protection measures have also been introduced to support agricultural workers.⁴⁵⁹

China – has adopted local policies to support agricultural workers, such as temporary living allowance subsidies of CNY300 for rural workers in Hubei province and a CNY300 cash transfer to retain the migrant population in Wuhan.⁴⁶⁰

273. Some countries are taking special measures to support seasonal agricultural workers in view of the dramatic labour shortages during the harvest period due to the cross-border and domestic restrictions on movement imposed to contain the virus.⁴⁶¹ These restrictions are expected to have a long-term impact on the sector.⁴⁶² In most cases, the measures allow workers with permits of limited duration to remain longer in the host country to work.⁴⁶³ In some countries, the measures are mostly administrative, allowing employers to delay recruitment or offer longer contracts.⁴⁶⁴ In a few countries, categories of migrants who were previously prohibited from working have been allowed to work in agriculture.⁴⁶⁵

Austria – Seasonal workers in the agricultural and forestry sectors have not been subject to entry restrictions and can enter the country on the bus or train, but must self-isolate for 14 days. If they have nowhere to self-isolate, they are provided with a place to stay.⁴⁶⁶

Greece – A fast-track procedure has been adopted allowing employers, under certain conditions, to hire third country nationals in an irregular situation who are already in the country to help address its urgent agricultural labour needs. On 1 May 2020, the entry of seasonal workers was authorized from non-European Union countries, such as *Albania*, without entry visa requirements.⁴⁶⁷

274. The Committee notes that the responses adopted in some countries seek to ensure the application of labour standards in the sector, including the promotion of social dialogue for the development of policy responses to the crisis. This is especially relevant in the case of seasonal agricultural workers, who in many countries are not covered by national labour protection

⁴⁵⁹ ILO, “COVID-19 and the Impact on Agriculture and Food Security”, Sectoral brief, 17 April 2020, 5.

⁴⁶⁰ ILO, “COVID-19 and the Impact on Agriculture and Food Security”, 6.

⁴⁶¹ Travel restrictions have made it difficult for migrant workers from Eastern Europe to access the agricultural sector in *France, Germany, Spain* and the *United Kingdom*. Farmers have warned that, without these workers, they will struggle to harvest spring and summer crops. The potential for labour shortages in the agricultural sector is also apparent in: *Poland*, where Ukrainian migrants have returned home; the *United States*, which relies on seasonal workers, primarily from *Mexico*; and *India*, where the agricultural sector of some states is reliant on migrant workers from elsewhere in the country. See World Bank, “Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak in Support of Migrant Workers”, 19 June 2020, 3.

⁴⁶² ILO, “COVID-19 and the Impact on Agriculture and Food Security”, 2.

⁴⁶³ For example, seasonal agricultural workers in *Greece* and *Israel*, as well as in *Czechia, Italy, Norway* and the *United States*. See OECD, “Managing International Migration under COVID-19”, updated on 10 June 2020, 4.

⁴⁶⁴ For example, *Belgium* and *Canada*. See OECD, “Managing International Migration under COVID-19”, 4.

⁴⁶⁵ This is the case, for example, in: *Belgium* for asylum-seekers during the first four months of their application process (they may also work in other sectors); in *Ireland* for international students; and in *Spain* for youths aged 18 to 21 without the right to work. In *Austria*, foreign nationals who are already resident in the country, but who do not have the appropriate right to work, are entitled under certain conditions to submit an application for a visa to engage in a seasonal or harvest activity.

⁴⁶⁶ World Bank, “Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak”, 22.

⁴⁶⁷ World Bank, “Potential Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak”, 22.

laws, such as those on minimum wages, maximum hours of work, paid sick leave and social security.⁴⁶⁸ The Committee wishes to emphasize the need to take measures to ensure income security for agricultural workers; guarantee their access to social security, including health-care; and ensure their safety and health at work. Measures are also required to strengthen labour inspection and promote social dialogue for the development and implementation of response and recovery measures in the agricultural sector.⁴⁶⁹

(h) Indigenous and tribal peoples

275. The pandemic has exacerbated the existing structural inequalities, pervasive discrimination and inadequate access to health and social protection faced by indigenous communities.⁴⁷⁰ Moreover, a number of specific risk factors make indigenous and tribal communities, especially indigenous women, particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 and its socio-economic consequences.⁴⁷¹

276. Existing economic inequalities are compounded by health and environmental vulnerabilities.⁴⁷² Contributing factors that increase the potential for high mortality rates from COVID-19 in indigenous communities include mal- and under-nutrition, poor access to sanitation, lack of clean water and inadequate medical services.⁴⁷³ Indigenous peoples also often suffer from widespread stigma and discrimination that impedes their access to healthcare.⁴⁷⁴

277. Indigenous and tribal communities already affected by food insecurity are now also faced with the loss of their livelihoods.⁴⁷⁵ Lockdowns and supply chain disruptions have interfered with cultivation and harvesting cycles, resulting in a lack of seeds and equipment. Indigenous and tribal peoples are also particularly vulnerable to environmental degradation and biodiversity loss.⁴⁷⁶

278. Integrated and culturally appropriate responses to the pandemic are urgently required.⁴⁷⁷ Targeted measures to address the rights and needs of indigenous peoples have already been adopted in some countries. Most such measures focus on prevention, including the “community closures” adopted by indigenous peoples themselves in coordination with governments.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁶⁸ ILO, “COVID-19 and the Impact on Agriculture and Food Security”, 5.

⁴⁶⁹ For further information on the ILO standards and tools that can provide a valuable framework for emergency response measures and the long-term development of the agricultural sector on a sustainable basis, see ILO, “COVID-19 and the Impact on Agriculture and Food Security”, 7.

⁴⁷⁰ Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) on Indigenous Issues. “[Indigenous Peoples and COVID-19: A Guidance Note for the UN System Prepared by the UN Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues](#)”, 23 April 2020, 1.

⁴⁷¹ ILO, “[ILO Standards and COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): FAQ – Key Provisions of International Labour Standards Relevant to the Evolving COVID-19 Outbreak](#)”, Version 2.1, 29 May 2020, 37.

⁴⁷² ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples”, 2.

⁴⁷³ For example, according to recent reports, the infection rate among the Navajo Nation of North America is ten times higher than in the general population in Arizona. Similar situations have been reported in *Panama* and *Peru*. Inadequate housing and lack of running water are reported to be contributory factors. See United Nations DESA, “[The Impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples](#)”, Policy Brief No. 70, 8 May 2020, 1.

⁴⁷⁴ See UNDESA, “The Impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples”, 8 May 2020, 1. However, data on infection rates among indigenous peoples is not available, as infections are not recorded by ethnicity.

⁴⁷⁵ See UNDESA, “The Impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples”, 8 May 2020, 1.

⁴⁷⁶ ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples”, 2.

⁴⁷⁷ ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples”, 3.

⁴⁷⁸ For example, based on indigenous peoples’ customary norms and traditional methods of decision-making, indigenous communities in *Australia*, *Brazil*, *Canada*, *Colombia*, *Ecuador*, *France-New Caledonia*, *Mexico*, *New Zealand*, *Paraguay* and *Peru* are developing and implementing their own community protocols in response to the pandemic. See OHCHR, “[COVID-19 and Indigenous Peoples’ Rights: What is the Impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples’ Rights?](#)”, 29 June 2020, 5. See also *Australia*, [Access to remote areas: coronavirus \(COVID\) update](#) and Sunday Morning Herald, “[When it came to COVID-19, Indigenous Australians sent it packing](#)”, November 2020.

279. Some countries have taken measures to ensure the access of indigenous peoples to health services, including for those living in remote areas.

The *Russian Federation* is providing medical services for indigenous nomadic groups in remote and inaccessible areas through the use of telemedical technologies and the development of a monitoring system for the provision of medical assistance to persons in emergency situations.⁴⁷⁹

280. Measures are also being adopted to ensure the access of indigenous persons to social assistance, cash transfers, in-kind benefits and income support during illness and self-isolation.

Chile – The Government is providing economic support to indigenous families in need, including subsidies covering costs of basic services, an emergency family income and a minimum guaranteed income.⁴⁸⁰

281. A number of countries have also allocated funding targeted to indigenous and tribal communities.

Canada – Has earmarked specific medical support and economic stimulus funding for indigenous communities, including transfers to Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut to support the preparation and response of health and social services to the pandemic. The Government has also provided funding for northern air carriers to ensure the continued supply of food and other essential goods and services to remote and fly-in communities. Additional funding has also been provided to Nutrition North Canada to increase subsidies so that families can afford much-needed nutritious food and personal hygiene products. Moreover, Indigenous Services Canada have provided support to the Government of the Northwest Territories and to the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation to help indigenous families.⁴⁸¹

282. In response to the lack of information available in local indigenous languages,⁴⁸² measures have been adopted in some countries to ensure the availability of timely and accurate information on the pandemic in indigenous languages in culturally sensitive formats.⁴⁸³

Chile – Information in indigenous languages (Aymara, Mapudungun and Rapa Nui) on health safety measures is disseminated by radio and through social networks and printed documentation.

⁴⁷⁹ See OHCHR, “COVID-19 and Indigenous Peoples’ Rights”, 29 June 2020, 2.

⁴⁸⁰ See OHCHR, “COVID-19 and Indigenous Peoples’ Rights”, 29 June 2020, 8.

⁴⁸¹ Government of *Canada*, Indigenous Services Canada, “[Update on COVID-19 and Indigenous Communities](#)”, Press release, 7 July 2020.

⁴⁸² International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), [Indigenous Realities in a COVID-19 World: Around the Globe](#), 16 June 2020.

⁴⁸³ For instance, *Australia, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Guatemala, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway and Peru*. See OHCHR, “COVID-19 and Indigenous Peoples’ Rights”, 5.

France–New Caledonia – Public institutions have launched a communication campaign on the pandemic in Nâa Kwenyii, one of the 28 indigenous languages.⁴⁸⁴

Guatemala – In its supplementary information related to the measures taken in the context of the pandemic, the Government indicates that, since March 2020, the Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages has translated 21 presidential provisions into the 22 Mayan languages. For their dissemination, extracts were contextualized and have been converted into radio and audiovisual materials. In addition, nine communication campaigns were carried out in relation to containment and mitigation of COVID-19. The communication campaigns have been broadcasted on 94 radio stations (community radio stations), 37 cable companies and on different platforms and social networks. The Indigenous Peoples' Section of the General Directorate of Social Security of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security has provided special advice within the framework of the Program of Economic Contribution of the Elderly in the context of COVID-19. It has also conducted workshops and provided advice on labour rights and the suspension of contracts under Ministerial Agreement 140-2020, which creates an "Electronic Procedure for Registration, Control and Authorization of Suspensions of Labor Contracts", a measure adopted in the context of the current crisis.

Mexico – The National Indigenous Peoples Institute has disseminated information on COVID-19 in 35 indigenous languages. The National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED) has also requested the State public broadcasting system and the Network of Educational Radio and Television Broadcasters of Mexico to produce accessible content for indigenous groups to ensure that news coverage of the pandemic is accurate, timely and accessible.⁴⁸⁵

283. Support has also been provided in some countries for small enterprises and cooperatives run by indigenous and tribal peoples, focusing on local and rural communities and on facilitating the transition to formality and access to markets.

Australia – The Indigenous Business Relief Package provides support for all indigenous businesses affected by the pandemic. The relief package has been designed in collaboration with the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) to respond to the immediate challenges faced by indigenous businesses and includes: access to specialist advice on dealing with the crisis, including a rapid assessment of business positioning and cash flow management and assistance in accessing Federal, State and Territory stimulus measures, such as the Job Keeper Payment. Assistance is also provided to support cash flow and working capital through a loan/grant package of up to AUD100,000.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ OHCHR, "COVID-19 and Indigenous Peoples' Rights", 5.

⁴⁸⁵ OHCHR, "COVID-19 and Indigenous Peoples' Rights", 5.

⁴⁸⁶ Government of *Australia*, Business, "[Support for Indigenous Businesses to Recover from COVID-19](#)", updated on 8 May 2020.

284. It is important to ensure that measures taken to control the pandemic which may affect indigenous peoples are determined and implemented in consultation and agreement with indigenous leaders and in a culturally appropriate manner.⁴⁸⁷ When considering response measures, emphasis should be given to ensuring that the cultural, spiritual, and religious rights and responsibilities of indigenous peoples are acknowledged and accommodated.⁴⁸⁸ In this respect, Recommendation No. 205 provides that “when taking measures for promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery and building resilience, Members should ... ensure that persons belonging to ... indigenous and tribal peoples are consulted, in particular through their representative institutions, where they exist, and participate directly in the decision-making process, especially if the territories inhabited or used by indigenous and tribal peoples and their environment are affected by a crisis and related recovery and stability measures.”⁴⁸⁹

285. Some countries have taken steps to ensure the active and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in crisis response.

Australia – has established a National Indigenous Taskforce to develop an emergency response plan to the pandemic for Aboriginal communities. The Government is working in conjunction with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop and implement tailored, culturally appropriate evidence-based responses to COVID-19. The Management Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Populations was developed by an advisory group co-chaired by the Department of Health and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation to ensure integration of indigenous perspectives based on the principles of shared decision-making, co-design and a two-way flow of information.⁴⁹⁰

New Zealand – The Ministry of Health has developed a COVID-19 Māori response action plan that takes into consideration indigenous health inequities and identifies specific Māori health action. The action plan emphasizes that “Māori are key decision-makers in the design, delivery, and monitoring of health and disability services and the response to COVID-19”.⁴⁹¹

286. A meaningful response built on enhanced resilience will need to engage with indigenous peoples in their critical role as workers, employers and custodians of the natural resources that are vital for the food security of their societies and countries.⁴⁹² Indigenous peoples have traditional governance institutions and knowledge for the protection of biodiversity, including their own health and food systems, which can make an essential contribution to successful emergency response and recovery.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁷ UNDESA, “The Impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples”, 3.

⁴⁸⁸ United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), “[COVID-19 yet another Challenge for Indigenous Peoples](#)”, 6 April 2020.

⁴⁸⁹ Para. 15(g).

⁴⁹⁰ OHCHR, “COVID-19 and Indigenous Peoples’ Rights”, 4.

⁴⁹¹ Ministry of Health, “[Updated COVID-19 Māori Health Response Plan](#)”, July 2020.

⁴⁹² ILO, “COVID-19 and the World of Work: A Focus on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples”, 4.

⁴⁹³ Indigenous Peoples and COVID-19: A Guidance Note for the UN System prepared by the UN InterAgency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, 23 April 2020, 1.