

Description of topical updates for the EU PolicyWatch database

Background of the database

Since 2020, Eurofound's COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch database has collected responses from governments and social partners, as well as company practices aiming to mitigate the social and economic impacts of the crisis unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Information is gathered for 27 EU Member States, Norway and EU-wide measures. The database collects relevant information on the social partner involvement in designing, implementing and monitoring the measure, as well as any views or reactions to it. The database is updated regularly throughout the year with input from the Network of Eurofound Correspondents.

The updates usually consist of revisions to figures and studies on the use and effectiveness of selected measures and adding further information on social partner views and involvement, as it becomes available; but they may also prioritise certain issues or provide a topical focus.

Since early 2022, the database has been expanded to include policies that have become more relevant as the COVID-19 emergency passes, such as those supporting the digital transformation and the green transition. The focus shifted towards emergency policies adopted in response to the war in Ukraine and towards preventing and addressing energy poverty. Another additional feature is the integration of the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) restructuring support instruments into the existing PolicyWatch database.

This document provides information on the topical updates arising from the EU PolicyWatch database.

2020: quarterly updates

Q2, Q3

Where there any changes to the policies? To update existing policies, priority was given to short-time work schemes including income protection for self-employed, mortgage and rent deferrals, and social hardship funds.

For new measures, priority was given to employment retention, income protection measures and those addressing social hardship.

This update specifically requested correspondents to include social partner initiatives and collective bargaining. Social partner initiatives included:

- unilateral social partner initiatives (e.g. support for their members)
- joint bipartite social partner initiatives at any level (e.g. devising training programmes, agreeing on the return to work schemes)
- tripartite initiatives (which are neither a tripartite agreement, nor require legislation)

Collective agreements included those that addressed issues related to COVID-19 and its economic and social implications. They were classified as bipartite collective agreement or tripartite agreement.

Q4

New cases focus on and prioritise:

- measures that promote the economic and social recovery and help businesses return to normal
- cases related to the SURE programme with EU funding
- policy cases which promote 'a green' recovery or help to advance the digital agenda or those that promote youth employment

Updates to and amendment of existing cases should focus on the core measures to support people's incomes and companies' further existence. Priority should be given to 'the most important/substantial schemes', e.g. short-time work, direct support for businesses, support for parents and carers, larger active labour market schemes.

2021: quarterly updates

Q1

New cases focus on and prioritise:

- measures that promote the economic and social recovery and help businesses return to normal
- cases related to the SURE programme with EU funding
- policy cases which promote 'a green' recovery or help to advance the digital agenda or those that promote youth employment

Updates to and amendment of existing cases should:

- prioritise 'the most important/substantial schemes', e.g. short-time work, direct support for businesses, support for parents and carers, larger active labour market schemes
- focus on the core measures to support people's incomes and companies' further existence

Q2

New cases focus on and prioritise:

- measures that promote the economic and social recovery and help businesses return to normal
- cases related to the SURE programme with EU funding
- policy cases which promote 'a green' recovery or help to advance the digital agenda or those that promote youth employment

Updates to and amendment of existing cases should:

- prioritise ‘the most important/substantial schemes’, e.g. short-time work, direct support for businesses, support for parents and carers, larger active labour market schemes
- focus on the core measures to support people’s incomes and companies’ further existence

Q3

New cases focus on and prioritise:

- measures that promote the economic and social recovery and help businesses return to normal
- cases related to the SURE programme with EU funding
- policy cases which promote ‘a green’ recovery or help to advance the digital agenda or those that promote youth employment

Updates to and amendment of existing cases should:

- focus on the oldest cases in the database, in order to have all dates correct for database users and to have the most up-to-date information available. Update of more substantial schemes if an important update is available.

Q4

New cases focus on and prioritise:

- measures that promote the economic and social recovery and help businesses return to normal
- policy cases which promote a ‘green’ recovery
- other reintegration and recovery measures
- updates to and amendment of existing cases:

(1) How to prioritise:

focus on ‘the most important/substantial schemes’, e.g. short-time work, direct support for businesses, support for parents and carers, larger active labour market schemes

(2) What to update:

- focus on the core measures to support people’s incomes and companies’ further existence

2022: triannual updates

T1

The 2022 T1 update seeks to capture support measures in reaction to the social and economic fallout of the war in Ukraine, such as:

- direct support for refugees (housing, schooling and childcare, psychological support, ...)
- active labour market policies, specifically aimed at refugees
- support for companies hit by economic restrictions or changes in supply chains
- support for workers/citizens to deal with increased energy or food prices

While the main focus and priority of this (and possibly the next) update(s) of the database will be on responses to the impacts of the war in Ukraine, correspondents are also asked to 'keep an eye' on the most important COVID-19-related policy measures. This would include mainly the short-time working schemes which are likely to be amended in the new crisis context anyway, but also other nationwide large-scale stimulus or recovery packages.

T2

The 2022 T2 update seeks to capture support measures in reaction to the social and economic fallout of the war in Ukraine, such as:

- direct support for refugees (housing, schooling and childcare, psychological support, ...) (continuation from T1)
- active labour market policies, specifically aimed at refugees (continuation from T1)
- support for companies hit by economic restrictions or changes in supply chains (continuation from T1)
- support for workers/citizens to deal with increased energy or food prices (main focus)
- policies that facilitate the green transition, targeted at businesses, workers and citizens (light start)

For COVID-19-related measures promoting the recovery there should be a light update focusing on the closing of cases.