Online city dialogue on social services in times of coronavirus

Wednesday 29 April, 11h00 CET, via Skype for Business

Register [here](#) and will get the link to connect to the city dialogue

Participants

This city dialogue is for city officers who work in, coordinate and/or deliver social services.

Objective

We wish to bring together city experts from social services in direct dialogue with OECD to discuss common challenges related to COVID-19 crisis, exchange on social measures to respond to this crisis and share know-how, good practices and lessons learned so far.

Join our city dialogue to discuss:

- emergency social measures to respond to COVID-19 crisis
- targeted support to the most vulnerable groups
- how to continue and adapt mainstream social services during coronavirus
- how to prepare social services for 're-opening' in safe environment
- lessons learned from COVID-19 so far and how to build resilience in social services

Agenda

11.00 – 11.05   Welcome and introduction by **Bianca Faragau,** senior policy advisor, **EUROCITIES**

11.05 – 11.20   OECD analysis of the impact of COVID-19 at subnational level by **Dorothee Allain Dupre,** Deputy Head of Division, and **Varinia Michalun**, Senior Analyst, **OECD**

11.20 – 11.40   Q & A with OECD and city representatives - moderated by **EUROCITIES**

11.40 – 12.40   Online dialogue between city representatives – moderated by **EUROCITIES**

12.40 – 12.50   Final remarks by **OECD**

12.50 – 13.00   Concluding remarks by **EUROCITIES**

Questions for discussion

1. Which emergency social measures did your city take to respond to COVID-19? Which targeted support did your city provide to vulnerable groups such as:

   - Homeless
   - Elderly
   - People with disabilities
   - Victims of domestic violence
   - Other groups at risk

2. How has your city adapted essential social services to ensure continuity while protecting the staff, volunteers and beneficiaries?

3. What challenges are you facing due to COVID-19 in your social services of your city? What lessons have you learned so far?

4. How are you coordinating on social services in times of COVID-19 with the (regional or) national authorities? What support did you receive so far? What support would you need?

5. How is your city preparing the social services to face the 'exit' from containment while ensuring a safe environment for everyone (staff, volunteers, beneficiaries etc.)?

For any questions about this webinar, contact Bianca.Faragau@eurocities.eu , tel: +32 2 552 08 52

Background

Cities have been at the frontline of managing the COVID-19 crisis. City governments have been quick to act by taking a wide range of emergency measures to respond with targeted action to the public health crisis. Cities are responsible for delivering short-term containment measures, implementing social distancing measures, as well as mobilising healthcare and social services, while stepping up information services to citizens about the health crisis and the measures in place.

Social services in cities have been among the most affected by the crisis, besides the healthcare services. Cities have had to stretch their social services to provide urgent, targeted support to the groups most at risk, such as the elderly, migrants and homeless. Meeting the increasing demand for social services is challenging due to the shortage of staff and volunteers (either already sick or in the risk group) to deliver assistance on the ground. This requires strong coordination with other services in the city administration and support from higher levels of government to help cover the emerging social needs in cities.

At the same time, cities need to continue essential social services and adapt them to contain virus spread. Cities have key responsibilities in education, childcare, elderly care, care for people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups as well as managing homeless shelters, centres for asylum-seekers and centres for victims of domestic violence. As most cities share such responsibilities with the national government, coordination is essential for crisis management, as shown by a recent OECD analysis on the territorial impact of COVID-19.

In a rapidly evolving context, after over six weeks of containment and social distancing, European cities are now planning the 'exit' strategies and are preparing how to deliver social services to ensure the 'return' in a safe environment and avoid new waves of virus spread both among beneficiaries and among staff or volunteers delivering the aid.

Context

This event is part of a series of online city dialogues organised by EUROCITIES to inform, connect cities and facilitate city-to-city dialogue on responses to fight COVID-19 crisis and its impact. Our city dialogues enable the exchange of experiences and inspire mutual learning between cities. Indeed, mutual learning is essential for cities to face the current challenges and to inform the EU and member states how to calibrate their support.

Useful links:

- EUROCITIES platform for live updates from cities: https://covidnews.eurocities.eu
- EUROCITIES overview of social and healthcare measures in cities to respond to COVID-19: https://bit.ly/2W8x8ZI
- Milan note on recommendations and suggestions on how to incorporate COVID-19 containment and prevention practices into social services: https://bit.ly/3bIUvzw
- OECD analysis – 'Territorial impact of COVID-19: managing the crisis across levels of government'. In English here: http://oe.cd/il/2X6, in French here: http://oe.cd/il/2YQ
- OECD analysis – Cities policy responses

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