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# PORTUGAL AND THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN TIMES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

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JULY 2020



This document was prepared by the Executive Secretariat of the National Human Rights Committee, the interministerial coordination body on Human Rights, from contributions provided by different Ministries.

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## **Foreword by the President of the National Human Rights Committee**

The COVID-19 pandemic, as an unprecedented public health crisis, has raised enormous challenges to the protection of citizens' well-being and human rights. It revealed and accentuated inequalities, significantly affecting vulnerable groups of the population.

To ensure a robust response to challenges triggered by the epidemiological situation of the new coronavirus / COVID-19 and to the different phases of its evolution in our country, a set of extraordinary and urgent measures has been approved over the past few months, including at legislative level.

This document seeks to bring together, in a systematic manner, the main measures taken in the context of the pandemic, from the perspective of the promotion and protection of human rights, serving as reference information on this matter.

The following document was produced by the Executive Secretariat of the Portuguese National Human Rights Committee (CNDH), with the invaluable input of the Committee's various representatives.

However, it is important to underline that, in addition to the government action, the fight waged daily and constantly in Portugal against the impact of COVID-19 relied on the decisive and committed action of civil society organizations, as well as the responsible behaviour of citizens.

Teresa Ribeiro  
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation



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## RIGHT TO HEALTH

### 1. COVID-19 healthcare response

- Publication of various guidelines and recommendations by the National Directorate-General for Health (DGS), in different formats (leaflets, posters and presentations), aimed at different sectors, taking into account their specificities and risks: health professionals, schools, civil protection, embassies, hotels, media, social institutions, private social solidarity institutions and tourism industry. It was intended to support the response and the adequacy of preventive measures by adapting the functioning of public services and economic activities;
- Publication of DGS Guidance 09/2020, updated on April 7, addressing the cases of shelter for children at risk, the elderly and other vulnerable people, with a view to ensuring that specific, adequate and accessible information on COVID-19 was given to the groups at greatest risk, promoting their safety and well-being, through the following measures:
  - Definition of procedures for Residential Structures for the Elderly (ERPI), Long-Term Integrated Care Units (UCCI) of the National Network of Long-Term Integrated Care (RNCCI), as well as structures dedicated to the elderly, people with disabilities and institutions for the care of children and young people at risk;
  - Implementation of rules with the objective of non-contamination of children and teams of professionals, without disturbing, however, the affective links to the named adults.
- Dissemination of information on visits to long-term care units and social support infrastructures for children, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities (DGS Information 11/2020, 11 May);
- Preparation of specific recommendations for pregnant women, people with diabetes, delivery service workers and public transport users;
- Publication of specific guidelines on COVID-19 for health professionals, regarding prevention, approach and measures to be adopted regarding the exposure to COVID-19 cases (DGS Guideline 13/2020, of 21 March);
- Preparation of the “Family Manual” about isolation in the domestic environment, addressing issues related to family life, emotions, stressful situations, rules, separation, routines, anxiety in young people and online safety. With this manual, it was intended to guarantee assistance in managing the multidimensional impact of COVID-19 in the family context;
- Publication of recommendations regarding isolation at home and subsequent deconfinement, through various materials and manuals. Above all, issues related to periods of greatest isolation and related problems were addressed: the Easter period, nourishment, physical activity, children and the elderly and behaviours to be adopted to alleviate confinement measures;
- Development of performance indicators related to COVID-19, namely regarding its impact on the performance of the National Health Service (SNS). By reporting weekly on this matter, it was

possible to ensure that updated information was made available, thus enabling prompter and more assertive action, as well as guaranteeing access to health care;

- Publication of Direct Line No. 1/2020, promoting the definition of procedures in the Integrated Management System for Surgery Subscribers (SIGIC) for hospitals of origin and destination, to guarantee access to care and response capacity of the National Health Services;
- Creation of the Trace COVID-19 tool to support doctors in Public Health and Primary Health Care to monitor COVID-19 patients, in surveillance and self-care, as well as for effective contact tracking;
- Provision of a teleconsultation service in real time, through the SER-Live platform, in the Health Professional - User and Professional module, active in 91 public hospitals;
- Decision by *Movijovem* – Youth Mobility, a multisectoral cooperative of public interest with operations in the field of social and solidarity services – to make available 30 out of 42 Youth Hostels to be used by City Councils, Civil Protection Services and Health Centres in order to host civil protection and fire brigades staff in prophylactic isolation, as well as elderly people and health professionals, in situations of prophylactic isolation or that could not remain in their respective family homes.

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## 2. Mental health

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- Creation of a microsite (<https://saudemental.covid19.min-saude.pt/>) with information on mental health and COVID-19, as well as recommendations and relevant contacts;
- Development of the guide CASA + “Working at home and taking care of mental health”, to provide resources to support people who may experience moments of greater fragility and who need to maintain a level of psychological and emotional balance compatible with an autonomous and normal professional practice.

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## 3. Sexual and reproductive health

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- Reinforcement of the priority of surveillance of pregnancy, by guaranteeing measures that reduce the risk of contamination by COVID-19 (Guideline 18/2020 of the DGS, updated on 26 May);
- Dissemination of information regarding care during pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium, during the pandemic;
- Issuance of information on maternity and new-born infant care in the perinatal period, including the mother-child dyad, to help preventing the transmission of the virus;
- Publication by DGS of specific guidelines on pregnancy and childbirth, which include measures on pre-hospital care for pregnant women infected or suspected of being infected with COVID-19 and assistance in childbirth;

- Support to civil society actions in order to guarantee the purchase of intimate hygiene products, such as sanitary towels, for girls and women from the most vulnerable groups and contexts, such as Roma and migrant communities;
- Co-sponsorship by Portugal of the joint Declaration "Protecting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Promoting the Response to Gender Issues in the COVID-19 Crisis", signed by 59 United Nations member states. Portuguese was one of the official languages in which this Declaration was drafted and issued.

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## 4. Addictive behaviours and dependencies

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- Temporary suspension, by the Commissions for the Deterrence of Drug Addiction (CDT), of face-to-face service to individuals indicted in misdemeanours due to the consumption of illicit psychoactive substances. As such, procedures were developed (<http://www.sicad.pt/PT/Dissuasao/SitePages/Home%20Page.aspx>) to guarantee the continuity of the intervention in the CDT;
- Development of the "COVID-19 Guide", aimed at citizens being monitored (temporarily suspended) in the CSTs, to contribute to the prevention of increases in the socio-sanitary risk among the population consuming psychoactive substances, as well as of possible increases in risky behaviour normally associated with these consumptions;
- Reinforcement of the *Linha Vida* service team (SOS Droga 1414), in order to respond to questions related to addictive behaviours, linked or not to the use/consumption of certain substances, dependencies and associated topics. This service is also available to answer questions about COVID-19 and addictive behaviour and dependencies (CAD);
- Creation of the "COVID and CAD" microsite with the objective of disseminating knowledge and information, which guarantees the provision of care to citizens in situations of vulnerability, with specific information about COVID-19 and CADs, aimed at citizens with problems of consumption of drugs and alcohol, gambling and videogame/internet/TV addiction. Also included were guidelines for intervention, providing professionals in the area with tools that guarantee the provision of necessary care, namely with groups of citizens with problematic drug and alcohol consumption, in situations of homelessness and exclusion. The bulk of the information contained therein refers to the need to continue and adjust the provision of healthcare in the area of addiction and grant social support to citizens, particularly when they are not close to the health systems and find themselves in situations of great vulnerability (<http://www.sicad.pt/PT/COVID19/SitePages/Home%20Page.aspx>);
- Publication of guidelines for the Therapeutic Communities (with regular updates), contained in the document "Recommendations for Intervention with Citizens with CAD inserted in Assistance Programs: Treatment and Risk Reduction and Harm Minimization". This document presents the measures to be implemented to ensure compliance with the rules and guidelines of the DGS in its assistance to citizens with CAD;

- Implementation of the supplementary funding allocation program, to strengthen the project budget in order to guarantee the necessary measures to mitigate the transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

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## 5. Support to the National Health Service and Civil Protection

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- Support by the National Defence to multiple requests by the SNS, the National Emergency and Civil Protection Authority (ANEPC), as well as the municipalities. This centralized process was co-driven by the Armed Forces General Staff and the Secretary of State of Civil Protection, in order to avoid redundancies and dispersions and give prioritized responses;
- Adoption by the Armed Forces of the following measures:
  - Reorganization of the Military Laboratory to increase the production of disinfectant gel distributed to the National Health Service, almost tripling its production, which covers the total needs of this Service;
  - Processing, by the Military Laboratory Unit for Biological and Chemical Defence of the Portuguese Army, of tests in order to diagnose COVID-19, 24 hours a day;
  - Reception and treatment, at the Oporto Unit of the Armed Forces Hospital, of elderly people from different nursing homes affected by COVID-19 outbreaks, namely Famalicão, Vila Real, Albergaria-a-Velha and Matosinhos;
  - Rehabilitation of the Military Support Center at the old Military Hospital of Belém, with capacity to accommodate up to 150 patients, with medical staff provided by the Portuguese Army;
  - Ensuring land transportation, throughout the country, in support of the ANEPC and the SNS, of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), beds, hygiene and cleaning material, tents, as well as air transportation of tons of cargo to the Archipelagos of Azores and Madeira. Passengers were also transported in medical evacuations by air, including patients infected with COVID-19, and Portuguese citizens evacuated from China;
  - Decontamination of nursing homes, supply and distribution of food to homeless people, as well as daily inspection of beaches and boats.
- Monitoring the action of the Social Support Centers of the Armed Forces Social Action Public Institute (IASFA) and its 438 users, with a very high average age;
- Coordination, between the central services of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Portuguese diplomatic network, for the procurement and distribution of medical equipment to support and allocate to the National Health Service in Portugal, namely PPE and ventilators.

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## 6. Healthy eating

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- Preparation of healthy eating manuals for the elderly, ill persons and people in recovery, including information on recommended foods, care to be taken, measures to strengthen hygiene and prevent COVID-19 contamination;



- Production of a shopping and nourishment guide, containing information on food preparation in situations of isolation, planning and rationed purchase of goods, and clarification of myths regarding COVID-19 and food. It also includes information on breastfeeding, feeding the elderly and the promotion of responsible food and consumption, avoiding the scarcity of foodstuffs on the market, through responsible behaviour.

## RIGHT TO INFORMATION

- Permanent and transparent monitoring of the evolution of COVID-19 in Portugal, namely through daily press conferences of the health authorities, since 9 March, with the dissemination of data, information and updates on the pandemic. It was intended in order to guarantee access to reliable and credible information and data for all citizens;
- Creation of the platform [Estamos On \(https://covid19estamoson.gov.pt/\)](https://covid19estamoson.gov.pt/). This website is intended to be a practical guide to support citizens, families and businesses in combating the effects of COVID-19. For this purpose, it gathers all information related to good practices and recommendations from health authorities, advice for working from home, access to public services, as well as exceptional measures adopted by the Government and approved legislation;
- Development by the National Institute of Statistics of Portugal (INE), as the main national authority producing official statistics, of a specific microsite ([https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpgid=ine\\_covid\\_dossier&xpid=INE](https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpgid=ine_covid_dossier&xpid=INE)), where can be consulted the most relevant statistical results for monitoring the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Its main objective is to enable more in-depth knowledge of the present situation, seeking to contribute to informed decision-making;
- Establishment of a partnership between the DGS and the SIC television channel for the scientific validation of contents presented in the “Polígrafo” program, which addresses news and rumours on social networks, in order to combat disinformation about COVID-19;
- Organization by the Executive Secretariat of the National Human Rights Committee of a cycle of five webinars on “Human Rights and the COVID-19 Pandemic” open to civil society, focused on the following themes: i) “Freedom and confinement”; ii) “The right to privacy in the digital age and disinformation in times of pandemic”; iii) “The importance of mental health”; iv) “Children’s Rights” and v) “Safeguarding the rights of immigrants and refugees” (<https://www.direitoshumanos.mne.pt/pt/noticias/ciclo-de-conferencias-virtuais-conversas-em-pandemic-time-dedicated-to-the-theme-human-rights-and-covid-19>);
- Regular dissemination, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of updated information to foreign diplomatic missions accredited to Lisbon on the immediate measures adopted by Portugal in the context of the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the organization of an information session in coordination with the Government, in the areas of Health and Internal Affairs;
- Provision, by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, throughout period in which the state of emergency was in force, of a dedicated call service in Chinese (Mandarin), answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## RIGHT TO EDUCATION

- Adoption of a set of measures of broad scope, by the governmental area of Education, aiming to guarantee, in view of the closure of educational establishments, the continuity of the right to education, namely with regard to quality and inclusive education, to students of all national educational establishments. The measures adopted are convergent with the respect for the “best interests of the child”, within the framework of Article 3 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), with the preservation of the right to life, survival and development of the child (Article 6. Of the CRC), and with the promotion of the child's right to education (Articles 28 and 29 of the CRC);
- Organization of remote learning and related support resources. In pre-school, basic, secondary and vocational education, schools remained open to ensure basic, social and administrative functions and to support remote learning practices. However, all face-to-face classes were suspended from 16 March;
- Implementation of various solutions, through different channels, such as websites, special educational platforms for remote learning, TV / radio, e-mails, among others:
  - Provision, through the project "#Estudoemcasa", based on cooperation between the Directorate-General for Education, some schools, RTP (Public Television) channel and the Gulbenkian Foundation, with television content for the various educational cycles, in different subjects, daily, from 9 am to 6 pm, from 20 March to 19 June.
- Assessment of needs in all public schools and implementation of a set of partnerships for the appropriate distribution of equipment, considering that remote learning is a learning method to be gradually developed and carried out with the necessary technological means:
  - Collaboration with local authorities and civil society, which has already made it possible to distribute IT equipment to thousands of students who did not have it;
  - Preparation of a plan to ensure computer equipment and Internet access for all students, for the next school year.
- Some schools were kept open in order to provide daily meals to students in need (thus contributing to the right to food), to support students with special educational needs and to welcome children / dependents of essential service workers up to 12 years old;
- Definition, on April 9, by education authorities, of procedures for adapting basic and secondary education (including vocational programs) to the impacts of the pandemic:
  - Extension of the school year until 26 June, suspension of basic education exams and postponement of secondary school exams until July. These exams were limited to the purpose of enrolment in higher education, whose national access competition was also postponed;
  - Maintenance of national exams as evidence of entry into higher education, allowing to maintain credibility and the principle of equal opportunities in the process under consideration;
  - Return, as of 18 May, of students from the 11th and 12th years of secondary education, to educational establishments for face-to-face classes, exclusively for subjects with a final exam;

- Adjustment of the continuous assessment procedures of primary and secondary schools to a distance learning context. Government education services provided guidelines to teachers, based on tested methodologies, and online training opportunities in remote learning were reinforced;
  - Assignment in schools of the student's final grade and the decision of retention according to the usual procedures, including the assessment of learning standards during the face-to-face part of the year (until March), as well as the subsequent distance education period;
  - Issuance of a general guideline so that compensation measures are provided in the next academic year, in the sense of which concrete decisions will be taken in the coming months.
- Approval, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April, based on the epidemiological evolution, namely in the reduction of the pattern of spread of the virus in Portuguese territory, of a global plan for the progressive reduction of containment measures, including the return to face-to-face classes in secondary schools:
    - Conducting exams only in subjects with a national exam: four subjects in the 11th year; two subjects in the 12th year and a variable number in the Vocational Education and Training (EFP) programs;
    - Possibility of enrolling in national exams entirely through digital means;
    - Resumption of practical activities in VET, when possible and in cases where its realization could not take place in remote learning mode;
    - Reopening of day care centers (from 0 to 2 years old), on 18 May, and of pre-school (from 3 to 5 years old), on 1 June;
    - Mandatory return to schools for teaching staff (except groups at risk), in the cases provided for;
    - Students' optional return to face-to-face education, in the cases provided for. However, students could remain at home if their respective guardians did not wish them to return to school, thus ensuring the respect for the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents, legal representatives, family and community members (CDC, article 5);
    - Decision to maintain distance learning for primary school students in this school year;
    - Extension of the deadline for enrolment in preschool, basic and secondary education and simplification of procedures, promoting the use of digital devices to complete enrolment.
- Regarding learning in the workplace and in apprenticeship programs, suspension of part of that training (replaced by the anticipation of theoretical classes), which will now be compensated intensively with the realisation of activities. The practical classes will be held later, at the scheduled time for the theoretical classes:
    - Carrying out, in the context of remote working, various components of internship and training in the work context. When possible, they will be replaced by practical work or compensated;
    - Presentation of theses and public evidence by videoconference, whenever appropriate for the work in question, or postponement when not appropriate (for example, evidence from musical areas). The granting of qualifications will not be affected;
    - In relation to students in the last year of VET programs, substitution by schools of "practical" training by "simulated practices", in the remote learning mode, and the possibility of approving students, even if they have not completed the necessary number of hours of education and training.

- In response to the pandemic crisis, schools define strategies for the non-discrimination of children in disadvantaged situations, migrants, of different ethnicities or from vulnerable communities, motivating them to interact with the community and explore different ways of learning. In this context, school psychologists were also called upon to intervene;
- Regarding the inclusion of children from Roma communities, availability of material dedicated to work with Roma students was made available on the website of the Directorate-General for Education;
- Additionally, and in order to reinforce the identification of risk situations in the context of distance learning, coordination with the Commission for the Protection of Children and Youth (CPCJ);
- Conducting the entire process related to the External Teacher Competition by digital means, namely the delivery of documents by upload, thus avoiding the attendance in person at schools. The same system was applied to the exceptional regime for the renewal of placement of teachers, under the regime of mobility due to illness.

## RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

- To ensure that households could remain in their homes during the pandemic and to assist households struggling to cover rent or mortgage payments due to loss of income, the following measures were taken:
  - Suspension of forfeiture, deadlines and opposition to the renewal of rental contracts;
  - Suspension of the execution of mortgages on properties that constitute permanent housing;
  - Temporary deferments of mortgage payments;
  - Temporary deferments of rent payments for tenants who have a proven loss of income;
  - Financial support, in the form of interest-free loans, for tenants who have a proven loss of income and in a situation of housing cost overburden and for low-income landlords. It is anticipated that part of the loans granted for the payment of rents will be converted into a non-refundable subsidy.
- Approval of a legislative framework for the adoption of the aforementioned measures and construction of a support system by the Institute of Housing and Urban Rehabilitation (IHRU), contributing to contain non-compliance and housing costs overburden;
- The reforms and investments undertaken by the government with the aim of mitigating the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic include the promotion of new affordable housing and new responses to urgent housing needs.

## RIGHT TO CULTURE

- Safeguarding cultural rights, both in maintaining access, fruition and participation and in supporting artists, creators and technicians, bearing in mind that the arts and culture sector was among the first to stop and see all its activity cancelled as a result of the pandemic;

- On the one hand, the creation of support mechanisms that allow mitigating the effects of stopping ongoing and scheduled work. In this regard, the following measures have been implemented:
  - Launching on the 27 March of the Emergency Support Line for the Arts Sector, with a value of one million euros, reinforced by 700,000 euros, to support creative artistic projects in the areas of performing arts, visual arts and disciplinary crossings, with a total of 311 projects;
  - Launching on the 29 April of the Support Line for Publishers and Bookstores, for agents linked to book production, in order to contribute to the safeguarding of the publishing and book market in Portugal, in return for the delivery of copies of works from the respective catalogues and bibliographical funds;
  - Financial support to media, through the allocation of 15 million euros for early purchase of spaces for institutional advertising. 25% of this sum was allocated to the regional and local press;
  - Allowing the cancellation of the implementation of artistic projects and activities included in the contracts under the arts support program, during the pandemic period, maintaining the scheduled payments during the suspension period.
  
- On the other hand, reorganization of agendas and creation of alternative mechanisms that allow citizens to continue to have access to art and culture. Cultural entities have made available, in their digital platforms, information on artistic and cultural initiatives and projects developed in a digital context. In addition, they have reorganised their programming and regular agenda, adapting it to the current circumstances and implementing a series of initiatives aimed at cultural fruition by all, through digital means:
  - Free availability for viewing, enabled by the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage (DGPC) on its digital platforms, of videos on different aspects of conservation and cultural heritage, namely regarding Portuguese museums, monuments, palaces and other cultural sites. This material encompasses virtual visits, works of collection and integrated heritage; architectural, archaeological, material and immaterial heritage; games and educational challenges for children, families, young people and adults; exhibition catalogues and magazines edited by the DGPC;
  - Celebration, during the state of emergency, of the International Day of Monuments and Sites, on 18 April, under the theme of Shared Heritage. The DGPC created a new digital platform so that the entities invited to the celebration could download links with virtual content. There were 586 activities available, comprising 17 districts of mainland Portugal, the Autonomous Regions of Madeira and the Azores, in a total of 150 municipalities and 196 public and private entities involved. These proposed activities took the form of videos, documentaries, films, research, musical shows, theatre, online games and pastimes, virtual visits and presentations and open channel programmes;
  - Development, by the National Plan for the Arts (PNA), of an online page dedicated to transdisciplinary pedagogical resources, which aggregates the best examples that cross the different scientific curricular areas with art, heritage and culture, in order to be useful to teachers, parents and students. This webpage has anticipated the implementation of one of the measures foreseen in the PNA, due to the fact that it became essential to rethink the school in the period of confinement, and will be later continued, through the application in the classroom – bringing culture into the school, as a resource for different subjects. These are resources to promote learning associated with pleasure, play, experimentation and creativity, and to ensure the centrality of the arts and cultural heritage in the training of students – because it is argued that education will only be complete if it integrates the cultural and artistic

- dimension. Thus, *Recursos Pedagógicos* (<https://www.dge.mec.pt/recursos-pedagogicos>) (Pedagogical Resources) and the #DesafioPNA (PNA Challenge) are available;
- Proposal by the National Film Plan to the educational communities, during the period of school closures and confinement, of a set of suggestions made available on free public platforms, aimed at making it possible for students to enjoy the cinema, while respecting the legal framework of Copyright and Related Rights. The main objective was to collaborate with schools and families, valuing a fundamental right of integral formation of children and young people: cultural and artistic enjoyment. Thus, in the month of March, priority was given to ensure more general contents, and in the following months of April and May there was a focus on the viewing of cinema that addresses human rights and personal development (in the context of the commemorations of the Freedom Day, which celebrates the revolution of 25 April 1974), namely the themes of oppression and freedom, the situation of women and inclusion.

## SUPPORT TO VULNERABLE GROUPS

- Notwithstanding the lockdown and the travel restrictions imposed nationwide, exceptions were allowed for travelling to assist or provide emergency care to victims of domestic violence and human trafficking, or for the purposes of aiding the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities, older population, or to accompany minors.

### 1. Elderly

- Launch by the Government, in cooperation with Portuguese Red Cross, health, social security services and municipalities, of a national plan for testing all elderly people in nursing homes and their staff. Those who are infected will be separated and moved to another building, provided by the municipalities. Procedures were also to be adopted (<https://www.sns.gov.pt/noticias/2020/04/03/covid-19-medidas-ladres-para-idosos/>) in residential homes for the elderly;
- Implementation of the Program “65 Far yet Closer” (*65 Longe + Perto* – [https://www.gnr.pt/ProgEsp\\_idososSeguranca.aspx](https://www.gnr.pt/ProgEsp_idososSeguranca.aspx)) by the National Republican Guard (GNR) to reinforce the support provided to the elderly population and help combat their social isolation and associated challenges. Within the context of this program, the GNR maintained close contact with identified seniors and made psychologists of the Clinical Centre of GNR available and accessible. This program also promoted communication between isolated elderly people and their respective families by setting up video calls;
- Launching of the national campaign of the portal #cuidadetodos ([www.cuidadetodos.com](http://www.cuidadetodos.com)), by the “António Sérgio Cooperative for the Social Economy” (CASES), in order to attract volunteers to support social responses for the elderly;
- Introduction of the extraordinary support measure for the reinforcement of workers from social and health institutions by integrating: the unemployed (regardless of whether they are registered or not in the Public Employment Service), workers with suspended contracts or reduced working

hours, workers with part-time contracts, people receiving the minimum guaranteed social income, students and trainees over 18 years old.

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## 2. Victims of domestic violence

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- Adoption of measures to ensure safety and support for victims of domestic violence, due to the increased risk of violence during the confinement necessary to contain COVID-19;
- On the one hand, widespread dissemination of the information (<https://www.cig.gov.pt/aco-es-no-terreno/protocolos/violencia-domestica/>) about the available support services and helplines, advice and security alerts.
  - Campaign *#SegurançaEmIsolamento*, on social media, television, radio and press – to remind victims that they can always ask for help, to inform them of support services and to alert the community to be vigilant, to help and to report. These materials are also available in different languages (Arabic, Bengali, French, Hindi, Chinese/Mandarin, Nepalese and Russian) as well as in sign language;
  - Telephone contacts of existing services in each district and municipality;
  - Safety advice for victims of domestic violence during confinement;
  - Advice for neighbours to be vigilant and to provide help;
  - Display and distribution of the above information in areas that remain open to the public, in partnership with distribution companies, transport, gas stations, pharmacies, as well as in cooperation with municipalities and public services, etc.;
  - Dissemination of this information on the *Estamos ON* (“We are ON”) website
  - The Security Forces and Services have used their official social networks and regular collaboration with the media outlets, to disseminate preventive guidelines, raise public awareness and emphasise the importance of reporting domestic violence crimes
- Strengthening and diversifying channels to facilitate victim’s requests:
  - National helpline - 800 202 148. It is a free line, available 24/7;
  - Availability of a new e-mail address [violencia.covid@cig.gov.pt](mailto:violencia.covid@cig.gov.pt) accessible to victims and professionals;
  - Launching of the new SMS 3060 line by the Vodafone Foundation, free and confidential, so that victims can send written requests for help;
  - For a quick response to requests received through these channels, the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) established a contact procedure with the security forces to ensure immediate verification, on-site, of all high-risk cases;
  - The Public Security Police (PSP) set in motion the operation “Solidariedade não tem Idade” (Solidarity has no age) to improve the detection of cases of social fragility, greater physical or mental health vulnerability, as well as suspected cases of domestic violence, people at risk of being harmed or life-threatening situations;
  - In order to strengthen prevention and combat domestic violence during the pandemic, the PSP created an institutional email address ([violenciadomestica@psp.pt](mailto:violenciadomestica@psp.pt)) to facilitate the reporting of cases of domestic violence and situations of abuse. This measure also concurs to reinforcing the prevention and combat to these types of crime, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Production of publications, posters and infographics published on DGS social networks, addressed to the population in general, with messages on how to promote healthy relationships in the context of COVID-19 and how to ask for help. These initiatives fall within the intervention areas of the National Program for Child and Youth Health and the National Program for the Prevention of Violence in the Life Cycle, which includes the Health Action for Children and Youth at Risk and the Health Action on Gender, Violence and Life Cycle. The following thematic messages stand out;
  - Promotion of parenting and healthy relationships;
  - Protection of children and most vulnerable people;
  - How can the victim seek assistance?
  
- Strengthening support structures and services for existing victims:
  - Maintenance of the activity of all services responsible for supporting, sheltering and transporting victims, provided by the National Support Network for Victims of Domestic Violence, which were considered essential services. In addition, recommendations / clarifications were issued in the emergency context (especially in the areas of education and health); needs and responses were identified during the pandemic and in the post-pandemic; and monitoring instruments were improved to allow close and regular monitoring of cases in the Network;
  - Opening of two temporary emergency reception facilities, with vacancies for 100 people;
  - Extension of the reception period in shelters and in the emergency responses of the Network;
  - Definition of a flowchart of action and articulation between CIG and INEM for suspected cases of COVID-19 in the care and reception structures of the Network;
  - Adoption of contingency plans (including isolation rooms) and action plans in the Network's structures with urgent measures such as:
    - Creation / reinforcement of means of distance communication / service-provision, such as video call, SMS, Messenger, WhatsApp and email, maintaining face-to-face service in urgent situations, with rotating teams;
    - Monitoring of situations under consideration with increased regularity and appointment of a team for urgent situations and requests;
    - Close articulation with other services and municipalities to respond to urgent needs for reception.
  - Establishing partnerships with various entities and companies to guarantee the supply of essential goods and resources to the services of the network during the emergency period and to ensure that the children received attend classes and activities in virtual schools;
  - Intensification of the performance of the security forces in matters of domestic violence, in order to verify possible situations of high risk and to initiate measures to protect victims, this being a priority investigation crime;
  - Strengthening cooperation between the National Mental Health Program and the National Support Network for Victims of Domestic Violence, to ensure that regional and local mental health services provide rapid support to victims of domestic violence;
  - Provision of specific guidance on procedures in cases of domestic violence during the pandemic to all Child and Youth Protection Commissions;
  - Overall mobilization of social economy partners, involving all professionals in the identification and referral of situations of domestic violence, namely in relation to victims in situations of vulnerability, the elderly, children and young people;



- Decision, in the context of the release of funds from PT2020 refunds and in order to help, exceptionally, the liquidity of the entities, to make payments in advance of the refund requests made by the beneficiaries (this payment decision is issued immediately after 30 working days);
- In May 2020, a meeting was held with organizations that intervene in the area of female genital mutilation, with the objective of reflecting on the reality in the context of the pandemic and identifying needs and responses in the short and medium term.

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### 3. Prisoners

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- Publication by the DGS, in collaboration with the Directorate-General for Reinsertion and Prison Services (DGRSP), of an orientation on COVID-19 infection in prison services, with the list of measures to be implemented (Guideline 016/2020, 23 March);
- Approval by the DGRSP of a COVID-19 Contingency Plan and creation of a “Crisis Group” in permanent contact with the Director-General;
- Adoption of a set of measures and best practices to minimise risks and protect the health of the inmates and of the prison guards, which includes:
  - Reallocation (accommodation in the same prison sector) and differentiation of the daily routines of the inmates, in order to try to separate and protect as much as possible those considered to be most vulnerable (over 60 years old, with immunosuppression or with chronic diseases, in particular respiratory, hypertension and diabetes) from the other prisoners;
  - Intensifying the cleaning and disinfection of the different prison spaces, as recommended by the DGS;
  - The end of visits to all prisons and educational centres in the country as of 16 March;
  - Facilitating contact with the inmates’ relatives and friends, allowing three daily telephone calls lasting five minutes each, thereby minimising the impact of the suspension of visits;
  - Definition, for each region of the country, of the establishments where the inmates and young people who were at liberty are allowed to enter, and in which they will remain in prophylactic isolation, with due clinical monitoring, for a period of 14 days;
  - Suspension of the transfers of inmates between establishments, except where security reasons so determine;
  - Suspension of work activities with external entities, as well as school, training and leisure activities involving the concentration of people;
  - Suspension of short-term leaves under the Directors’ responsibility, as well as the judicial leaves granted by the Court for the Enforcement of Sentences, whenever it is possible to defer them.
- Evaluation of the “Exceptional regime designed to make the enforcement of sentences and pardon measures more flexible in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic”. It establishes the exceptional regime of pardon foreseen therein for vulnerable people, that is, aged 65 and over, with a physical or psychological illness or a degree of autonomy incompatible with the normal stay in prison in the context of the pandemic. This regime does not apply to inmates convicted of the crimes identified in Article 2(6) thereof. The Law No 9/2020 also provides for the partial pardon of prison sentences for inmates convicted to two or less years, by final decision, and a pardon for the remaining periods of the prison sentences that are longer than those referred to before and based on a final decision, if the time remaining for its full compliance is equal to or less than two years (Article 2, paragraphs

1 and 2). The Law further provides for the granting of an extraordinary administrative leave for a period of 45 days that can be granted to inmates under an open regime who have already successfully benefited from a judicial leave or to those under a common system who have successfully benefited from two judicial leaves (Article 4). The release of inmates, the granting of pardons and the authorisation of extraordinary administrative leaves have made it easier to create separation spaces, allowing therefore for a greater social distance between the inmates, whether in the cafeterias or in the recreational grounds;

- Adaptation of the visiting rooms and of the visits to inmates and young people confined in educational centres. The reorganization of the space for visits, admission procedures and proceedings for the visitors and visited persons, in accordance with the guidelines received from the DGS (Information 012/2020), in order to ensure the necessary safety and preserve the health of the workers, inmates and visitors.

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## 4. Immigrants and refugees

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- Exemption from user fees in cases of diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 (Decree-Law No. 12-A / 2020, of 6 April), also applicable to foreign citizens, with permanent residence or in a situation of permanence or temporary residence in Portugal, who are nationals of Member States of the European Union or equivalent, third countries nationals or stateless people, applicants for international protection and migrants with or without their legal status;
- Guarantee of validity of documents and visas to expire until 30 October 2020, and after that date, provided that the holder proves the scheduling for the purpose of renewal (Decree-Law No. 10-A / 2020, of 13 March, in its current wording);
- Guarantee that foreign citizens with pending regularization processes in the Foreigners and Border Service (SEF) would temporarily be, on 18 March, at the time of the declaration of the state of national emergency, in a regular situation in Portuguese territory, being able to exercise and access their rights under equal circumstances. This allowed them to access all public services (namely to obtain the health user number, use the National Health Service and other health care rights), social support benefits, lease contracts, employment contracts, opening bank accounts and contracting essential services (Order No. 3863-B / 2020, of 27 March);
- Dissemination of specific, appropriate and accessible information and measures on COVID-19 to migrant and refugee populations, strengthening the right to health protection and access to health care. In addition, elimination of administrative barriers to access to the National Health Service, regardless of status, with these communities enjoying the same conditions as Portuguese citizens (Information 10/2020, of 8 May);
- Implementation of a simplified procedure for processing Residence Permit requests, except for the Residence Permit for Investment Activity (Order 5793-A 2020, of 26 May);
- Maintenance of face-to-face service at the National Support Centres for the Integration of Migrants (CNAIM), by prior appointment, for urgent situations, and reinforcement of online service, with the creation of specific email addresses and telephone support;

- Maintenance of face-to-face follow-up by the High Commission for Migration's translators (ACM), who contributed to the dissemination of information related to public health and social support, and were also involved in direct actions on the ground, with various communities, supporting other government areas such as health services;
- Mapping of existing responses to support migrants, promoted by ACM and its partners in all Portuguese municipalities;
- National level needs assessment survey with the support of the Network of Local Support Centers for the Integration of Migrants (CLAIM) and Associations of Immigrants, refugees and Roma communities, in order to adapt the responses to the needs, in articulation with other entities;
- Identification and mobilization of focal points (CNAIM directors with the support of a technician) for emergency situations, for the North and Center regions; Lisbon; and Alentejo and Algarve (South region);
- Development and communication of recommendations for the functioning of the Local Refugee Accommodation Centres to prevent contamination by COVID-19;
- Recommendations about Ramadan, care and adaptation of habits due to COVID-19;
- Identification of the impacts of COVID-19 on the process of receiving resettled refugees and applicants for international protection placed in ad-hoc processes resulting from the rescue by humanitarian boats;
- Awareness-raising actions on protection and security measures in times of COVID-19, in the regions of Alentejo and Algarve;
- Issuance of recommendations from the DGS, in the form of posters, leaflets and videos, aimed at the migrant and foreign population and related to protective measures and behaviours to be adopted. This information was made available in different languages: Spanish, French, English, Italian, Chinese/Mandarin, Russian, Arabic, Bengali, Creole, Nepalese and Romanian.

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## 5. Disabled people

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- Preparation by the DGS of recommendations in Portuguese sign language on prevention, symptoms and care to be taken during COVID-19, thus ensuring adequate and accessible information for citizens with hearing impairment;
- Creation, on the portal of the National Institute for Rehabilitation, of a [webpage](http://www.inr.pt/covid-19) on COVID-19 to support people with disabilities (<http://www.inr.pt/covid-19>), which includes, besides recommendations and explanatory guides, several videos in sign language. It covers: measures for deconfinement, frequently asked questions, protection and surveillance measures, specific information and useful contacts;

- Creation of a video call service channel on the SNS 24 line with easy access for citizens with hearing impairment.

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## 6. Homeless people

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- Creation, in cooperation with municipalities and NGOs, of emergency shelters from the beginning of the state of emergency, including those envisaged only for protection during the winter. Creation of more than 21 emergency shelters all over the country, ensuring health care, food and clothing, where more than 500 people were welcomed;
- Definition of guidelines for all Planning and Intervention Centres with homeless people (NPISA) to strengthen and ensure the continuity of pre-existing pandemic care/services;
- Implementation of the plan to accompany and integrate homeless people (584 people) through *Housing First* projects (13 projects with capacity for 324 people) and shared apartments (52 apartments for 260 people).

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## 7. Children

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- Adoption of the measures listed below, within the scope of the National Child and Youth Health Program and COVID-19:
  - Reinforce the priority of child health surveillance, support for parenthood and family risk assessment for any type of abuse, considering the potential risk posed by situations of social confinement;
  - Identification of the most vulnerable children, to be monitored by face-to-face mechanisms or teleconsultation by family teams and Support Groups for Children and Youth at Risk in the National Health Service;
  - Awareness raising for the “heel prick test” for the screening of neonatal diseases between the third and sixth days of life in Primary Health Care. In this context, data on Primary Health Care indicators related to child health consultation rates in this period are expected, compared to the same period last year.
- Awareness-raising, through a statement from the DGS, of 25 March, about the fulfilment of the National Vaccination Program, during the COVID-19 pandemic, to prevent outbreaks of other vaccine-preventable diseases;
- Establishment of a partnership with *End Violence Against Children*, a WHO / UNICEF partner organization, for the Portuguese translation of messages on promotion and support for parenting and COVID-19, available online ([www.covid19parenting.com](http://www.covid19parenting.com));
- The National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People (NCRPCYP) developed several actions contributing to the implementation of child protection responses during and in the aftermath of the pandemic, among which:

- The launching of a national campaign under the slogan “Proteger crianças compete a tod@s” (Child protection falls to @ll of us), aimed at preventing violence against children through a reinforced involvement of the civil society;
  - Creation of a new feature on the National Commission website and the helpline “Children in danger” (+351 96 123 11 11) to ensure the protection of children and young people and to allow reporting of abuse and/or mistreatment to children and young people. This line is managed by the National Commission and guarantees the referral of situations to Local Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People territorially competent;
  - The elaboration of a form, released by the Ministry of Education, directed at teachers for reporting situations of children in danger potentially perceived within the scope of online teaching/learning contexts;
  - Production and dissemination of a digital document on preventing sexual abuse and sexual exploitation within the context of the pandemic, in Portuguese and English;
  - Production of resources directed at children and their families, containing guidelines on how to cope with the pandemic crisis;
  - Releasing news and relevant information from international bodies and committees of international organisations on good practices, recommendations and international standards on how to deal with COVID-19, while promoting children's rights in the context of the pandemic, including the prevention of violence against children.
- The Public Security Police (PSP) set in motion a nationwide operation “Escola (Ainda Mais) Segura” (Even Safer School), carrying out awareness raising sessions among children and young people, aimed at providing knowledge about the current public health situation and the recommendations issued by the DGS .
  - Creation, by the DGS in partnership with the publisher “Ideias com História” (Ideas with History), of a children's website (<https://www.coronakids.pt/>), containing free materials, games and activities for children about COVID-19, to develop informed behaviour of children;
  - Preparation, by the DGS, of a set of activities for children and young people on different topics (body, language, relationships, emotions, autonomy and creativity), to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce the impact of isolation and absence of school activities.

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## 8. Youth

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- Guarantee of the essential aspects of working with and for youth in the online space and providing adequate support to the associative movement. In this context, an intersectoral process regarding youth policies is underway, also reflected in the recently approved Economic and Social Stabilization Plan;
- Postponement of the Youth Associations Roadmap, with the intention of resuming it as soon as the pandemic situation allows;
- Postponement of Youth Commitments to the 2nd semester of the current year, developed with the Intermunicipal Communities, in order to make the territories closer to young people and create environments conducive to their emancipation;

- Organization, by the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations, together with the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka, UNESCO, the International Labour Organization and the Office of the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for Youth, of the online event entitled “Competencies for a Resilient Youth”, on the occasion of World Youth Competence Day, celebrated on 15 July;
- Verification of the fulfilment of all the commitments of the Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth (IPDJ) with the youth associative fabric (at the time, and with respect to the first round of financing within the Support Programs for the Youth Associative Fabric, there was a 95% execution rate);
- Launch, on social networks, of the #SERJOVEMEMCASA (BEYOUNGATHOME) campaign, on 17 April, whose contents relate to the various programs of IPDJ, as well as activities, workshops, webinars and moments for sharing information for the young population, such as workshops linked to the arts, content creation or more ecological lifestyles. The initiative “Jamor, Música e Juventude” (*Jamor*, Music and Youth) was also carried out at the Tribune of Honour of the National Stadium and broadcasted through the Internet using streaming technology;
- Adaptation of Youth programs to the context of confinement, namely:
  - Volunteer Programs (*Agora Nós / Nos us; Namorar com Fairplay / Flirt with Fairplay; 70 Já!*): face-to-face volunteering activities were adapted to online context, through the creation of videos for social networks, dynamization of webinars and online awareness sessions;
  - Take care + (*Cuida-te +*): In order to ensure continuity of consultations and other responses in the area of youth health, online contact channels were opened to provide advice and make urgent appointments, and awareness and information materials were disseminated;
  - Train + (*Formar +*): Conducting online training.
- Realization, by IPDJ, of 5 projects to help the communities most affected by COVID-19, 4 projects called “Apoio Maior” (Bigger Support) (directed to the regions of Alentejo, Algarve, Lisbon and Tagus Valley and North of Portugal) and one called “Youth Support - Online Study- North”. The “Apoio Maior” was developed in partnership with the National Association of Parishes (ANAFRE) and included young volunteers to support population at-risk (especially the elderly). The project “Youth Support - Online Study-North” has been promoting youth volunteer work among peers, to support remote learning, which poses challenges to many young people and children;
- Launch of the “Dá um Tempo” (Give a Break) campaign, with the objective of raising awareness of young people regarding the importance of complying with the guidelines of the DGS and to contain gatherings, taking into account the increasing spread of the virus among the younger population, which did not occur at the beginning of the pandemic. This campaign comprises street actions and a set of communication materials that is being disseminated using social networks.

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## 9. ROMA communities

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- Awareness campaign aimed at Roma communities “For you, for everyone, stay at home”, on 8 April, available on several online platforms.

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## 10. LGBTI People

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- Issuance, by DGS, of specific guidelines addressed to the Regional Health Administrations to guarantee the access of Trans people to clinical follow-up and drugs associated with specific hormonal therapy;
- Creation, through a partnership between the Secretary of State for Citizenship and Equality and the National Pharmacy Association (ANF), of a direct and privileged communication channel between ANF and LGBTI associations and groups to identify and respond to needs related to access to pharmacies and the administration of injectables associated with specific hormonal therapy;
- Holding of a virtual meeting of the Secretary of State for Citizenship and Equality with various associations and LGBTI groups to identify needs and responses, during the pandemic and post-pandemic, and to disseminate resources and services. In addition, new focal points were established between formal and informal support networks;
- Launch, on 17 May, International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, of the #LGBTIRightsAreHumanRights campaign to raise awareness and reinforce zero tolerance towards all forms of violence against LGBTI people. This campaign was developed in conjunction with civil society organizations and involved public figures. At the same time, the Government produced a guide with resources and support services available to LGBTI people, which was widely disseminated ([https://www.cig.gov.pt/2020/05/dia-internacional-luta-homofobia-transphobia-biphobia-campaign-rights-lgbtisaodhuman rights /](https://www.cig.gov.pt/2020/05/dia-internacional-luta-homofobia-transphobia-biphobia-campaign-rights-lgbtisaodhuman%20rights/)).

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## 11. Victims of Human Trafficking

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- Maintenance of the activity of all support services for Victims of Human Trafficking, with Specialized Multidisciplinary Teams (EME), in cooperation with the security forces, as well as with the Shelter and Protection Centers (CAP), that function normally, with the necessary sanitary precautions;
- Development of a set of Guidelines based on the recommendations of the DGS and with clarification regarding EME and CAP in terms of technical personnel;
- Adoption of protective measures in accordance with DGS instructions and creation of specific rooms for quarantine situations;
- Execution of a protocol between the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) and the National Institute of Medical Emergency (INEM) to respond to suspect cases of COVID-19 in EME and CAP;
- Definition of a mechanism for monitoring situations in CAP and EME, which allows weekly reporting to the CIG;
- Establishing partnerships with various entities and companies to ensure that all PACs continue to have access to essential goods and resources during the state of emergency and disaster periods;

- The Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings (OTSH) started daily monitoring work, in open sources, on the (in)direct impact of COVID-19 on human trafficking, with a view to offering medium and long-term analysis that may inform public policies and the action of professionals;
- Additionally, the OTSH, in partnership with the 5 Specialized Multidisciplinary Teams for the Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Persons (EME) / Association for Family Planning is organizing a series of 5 webinars that bring different perspectives together to reflect about the impacts of the COVID-19 in the multiple dimensions of Human Trafficking;
- The Focal Point of the Ministry of Health for the IV National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combat of Human Trafficking established contact with the OTSH, following suspicions that some COVID-19 patients in the Algarve Region (in April) could be victims of human trafficking. The objective was for the OTSH to support health professionals with information materials on flagging and referral procedures. The OTSH developed a kit, the app “Act against THS” and a digital format of the “Flagging Card”, widely disseminated among health professionals, hospitals, clinics, local health administrators, and specialised teams working with children and young people at risks and specialized teams for the prevention of adult violence, among others.

## SUPPORT TO THE LABOUR MARKET

- Creation of the COVID-19 “Dúvidas Laborais” Line (telephone and e-mail), to clarify doubts regarding the impact of the pandemic at work, both for employers and workers;
- Adoption of a set of extraordinary and temporary measures (<https://covid19estamoson.gov.pt/medidas-de-apoio-emprego-empresas/>), implemented with a significant social impact. They were aimed to supporting workers, families and employers affected by the pandemic, guaranteeing household incomes and reducing the risks of job losses;
- Regarding prophylactic isolation, determination of measures to safeguard the social protection of workers who are temporarily prevented from exercising their professional activity as ordered by the Health Authority, due to COVID-19, with the worker having the right to the payment of an allowance corresponding to 100% of the reference remuneration;
- Sickness benefit is not subject to a waiting period, meaning that, exceptionally, it applies from day one;
- Establishment of an exceptional regime of justified absences: i) assistance to a child or other dependents under 12 years of age or, regardless of age, with a disability or a chronic illness; ii) during school holidays, assistance to a grandchild of which one of the parents is under the age of 16, both living with the worker; iii) assistance to a spouse or person living in a de facto union or common economy with the worker, relative or similar in the descendent direct line in charge of the worker and who attend social facilities whose activity is suspended by order of the health authority or by the Government, as long as there is no other alternative; iv) within the scope of COVID-19, provision of assistance or transport by volunteer firefighters with an employment contract with an employer from the private or social sector, duly called upon by the corresponding fire department;



- Creation, for employees, of an exceptional financial support corresponding to 2/3 of the basic remuneration of the parent who needs to provide assistance to a child under the age of 12 or, regardless of age, with disability or chronic illness. This measure is linked to the closure of schools or social facilities and services to support early childhood or disability;
- Extraordinary extension of unemployment benefits, as well as of all social benefits guaranteeing minimum subsistence, when the concession period or renewal term ends before 30 June 2020;
- Extraordinary simplification in the access provided to the beneficiaries of social insertion income (RSI) and its attribution according to the current remuneration and not that of the last 3 months;
- Extension of the exceptional conditions for the granting of social unemployment benefit;
- Extraordinary support for maintaining employment contracts (simplified lay-off): this measure is temporary and aims at responding to the urgent needs to support the maintenance of employment in companies especially affected by COVID-19, as a result of a total or partial stop of the activity, or a decrease of at least 40% of billing revenues. The financial support is 2/3 of the gross remuneration of the employee, up to a limit of 1,095 euros per employee, 70% of which is covered by Social Security and 30% by the employer, and requires the maintenance of jobs. This support lasts one month, extendable for equal periods of time up to a maximum of 3 months and may be extended up to 4 months for those who requested this support in April, May and June. Companies that shall be kept closed by law are entitled to financial support for as long as that obligation lasts;
- Creation of extraordinary training for situations in which a company is covered by a decision of the Health Authority that makes it impossible for its activity to function normally;
- Creation of an extraordinary financial incentive to support the normalization of the company activity for those who have benefited from the simplified lay-off scheme, choosing one of the two modalities: one-off National Minimum Wage or two Minimum Wages, over 6 months, per worker;
- Temporary exemption from paying taxes and contributions to companies and self-employed workers;
- Suspension, until 30 June 2020, of tax enforcement proceedings in progress or to be initiated by the Tax and Customs Authority and Social Security;
- Reinforcement of the inspection activity of the Authority for Working Conditions (ACT) enabling it to act in favour of strengthening the workers' rights and guarantees, namely by giving the possibility to suspend unlawful dismissals;
- Consideration of individual entrepreneurs with income resulting from the exclusive exercise of any commercial or industrial activity as self-employed workers, to be covered by all the exceptional and temporary COVID-19 response measures intended for self-employed workers and be able to access social support;
- Attribution of financial support for persons who are not necessarily covered by a national or foreign Social Security System and who declare the start or resumption of independent activity to the tax authorities. The support, aimed at avoiding situations of social vulnerability, is granted for

a maximum period of two months in an amount corresponding to half of the amount of Social Support Index per month (219.41 euros).

- Application of credit moratoriums on individuals, owners, public institutions of solidarity and social security, small and medium-sized companies, and companies of the non-financial sector. These moratorium cover loans and other credit operations, and they are available until 30 September 2020. During this period, credit agreements are suspended;
- Creation of a teleworking portal that offers a set of free digital tools, with a view to supporting the adoption of the teleworking regime by citizens, public and private organizations, and schools;
- Review of the priorities within the Portugal 2020 Framework (EU funds), ensuring that the COVID-19 pandemic is considered a reason of *force majeure* not attributable to the promoters, thus allowing adjustments to projects in terms of calendar, financial programming, planned activities and contracted goals;
- Permission for managing partners of companies without dependent workers to request access to extraordinary support for the reduction of economic activity, provided for self-employed workers or for companies;
- Administrative extension of the maritime certificates of professionals working in this area who were on board, with no possibility of disembarking, in order to avoid non-compliance during the confinement period. In the same way, requests for extension of seafarers' periods on board ships were facilitated and digitized, whenever there were no conditions for going to port to proceed with crew surrender. The movement of seafarers and associated professionals was also simplified, through a digital declaration of the request and justification for the cross-border movement of the crew, from their residence to the embarkation place and vice versa, as well as from the shipowner or owner of the vessel to the place of sale of fish. Whenever the minimum safety crew of the vessels was ensured, authorization for seafarers to perform higher category functions was simplified.

## PUBLIC SERVICES

- Preparation of contingency plans, given the importance of the continued provision of public services, in which every public employer identified remote working jobs and the workers that could work from home, the available and necessary equipment, as well as their preparation and programming, so that, safely, they could be used from home. The use of telework has thus ensured the normal functioning of public services;
- Elaboration of a Collaborative Work Plan in Public Administration, under the coordinating team of the System of Incentives to Innovation in Public Management, bringing together a vast universe of partners in a common purpose. This plan aimed to provide support to public organizations and their workers in new work environments, developing a set of actions adapted to the current context focused in six areas of work: guides and practical support instruments; safety and health at work; promoting innovation; dissemination of information and communication; quality of information; and distance training;

- Significant changes were made concerning onsite public services (to citizens and companies), and extraordinary, temporary and transitional measures were adopted, thus obviating unnecessary visits to the public services, such as the need for pre-booking;
- Development of guidelines to promote a coordinated decision of action between central and local authorities, especially regarding “Citizen Shops” (*Lojas do Cidadão*) and “Citizen spaces”, defining the procedures and recommendations considered appropriate so that onsite public services to citizens and companies progressively resume ideal levels of service, and, simultaneously, ensure safety conditions for workers and public;
- Scheduling public services through the Portuguese single digital gateway ePortugal Portal, the contact lines created and reinforced to support by telephone the use of digital public services, dedicated lines of public entities or through online bookings, from portals and websites of public administration organizations;
- Reinforcement, during confinement period and the closure of most of onsite public services, including Citizen Shops, of the digital, electronic and telephone response channels, as well as encouragement to use these channels through communication campaigns. Onsite public services were reevaluated and adapted, in coordination with local authorities, in order to disperse attendance throughout the territory and thus get closer to citizens;
- Legal guarantee of acceptance of documents to expire until 30 October 2020, also accepted after that date, provided that the holder proves the scheduling of their renewal. This legal measure applies to several documents, such as Citizen's card (national identification card), certificates issued by the registration and civil identification services, the driving license, documents and visas relating to the stay in national territory, as well as licenses and authorizations that may be renewed;
- Installation of alternative counters – “Citizen Kiosks” – in the municipalities with the highest volume of requests related to the collection of Citizen Cards. In the context of the exceptional and temporary measures implemented to obviate COVID-19, the opening of these temporary counters ensures a swiftly response to the high number of pending requests and withdrawals. The location of Citizen Kiosks corresponds to the study of the needs carried out by the competent services.

## SUPPORT TO THE SOCIAL SECTOR

- Provision of social inclusion measures in a wide number of Regional Operational Programs (POR). Although the typologies related to the defence of human rights are especially concentrated in POR in Lisbon and Algarve, the others can be adapted in situations that require a more targeted action. Most of the support availabilities are concentrated in the Operational Social Inclusion and Employment Program (POISE);
- Promotion of extraordinary funding for initiatives from various sectors that facilitate the promotion of strategies appropriate to the current public health crisis. Namely, initiatives aimed at supporting nursing homes, jobs aimed at ensuring the safety, health care and sanitary conditions of elderly and / or disabled people;

- In response to the various situations that have arisen, through the municipalities, the Portuguese Red Cross or other entities, there was a need to reprogram the PORs, in order to accommodate the new support needs;
- Maintenance and strengthening of jobs in this sector, to ensure that essential services continued to be provided, especially in nursing homes and other facilities of the social economy that host vulnerable groups. In addition to financial support programs for the sector, the number of participants in the public policy measures “Employment-insertion contract” (CEI) and “Employment-insertion contract +” (CEI +) integrated into projects in healthcare provision activities and social support was increased, in order to cope with situations of growing employment needs in nursing homes (Ordinance No. 82-C / 2020, of 31 March);
- Articulation of different actors, such as municipalities, Social Security, the Academy, residential institutions, among others, in an integrated network to respond to social and health problems in the context of the pandemic, which aims to reinforce the mitigation of contagion and spread of the disease in institutions of the social and solidarity sector. For this purpose, diagnostic and screening tests are carried out, the promotion of logistics services, including transportation, and the collection of crops and special waste. An amount of 20 million euros is planned to support this measure.
- Creation of extraordinary support for the social and solidarity sector in order to support private social solidarity institutions, social solidarity cooperatives and non-governmental organisations for people with disabilities;
- Approval of temporary and exceptional support to public or private non-profit collective entities that carry out health care or social support activities, with short-term needs to reinforce people. The scholarship is 90% reimbursed by the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP). The support lasts for one month and can be extended monthly up to a maximum of three months;
- An increase in the amount of the social security contribution corresponding to the difference in the contribution of the day care response to the 100% home support service, in situations where it is necessary to home the social support provided, due to the suspension of the activity consequence of the epidemiological situation of COVID-19;
- Maintenance of the IEFP trainees' rights to financial support, during the suspension of training activities or active employment measures due to the risk of contagion;
- The reinforcement of the Operational Programme for Food support from the European Aid Fund for the Most Deprived (PO FEAC). In July, the program became available to support 120,000 people, instead of the previous 60,000;
- Granting of financial support, for a maximum period of two months, in situations of social vulnerability of persons who are not necessarily covered by a national or foreign social security system and who declare the start or resumption of independent activity with the tax administration;
- Payment of a stabilization complement, in August 2020, to all workers who had a reduction in income as a result of the pandemic, with the aim of mitigating this loss. The maximum amount of

this complement will be 80% of the Social Support Index (351.0 euros), intended for all workers with an income of up to two National Minimum Wages who have been lay-off;

- Increasing child benefit by changing the income reference period to allow the value to be updated according to the most recent household income. One-off allocation, in September, of a supplementary amount corresponding to the basic amount of child benefit to all children in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd tier.

## SUPPORT TO THE SPORTS SECTOR

- Adoption, throughout the confinement period, of measures for the sports sector, with a view to mitigating the economic and sporting impact caused by COVID-19;
- Publication of Decree-Law 18-A / 2020, of 23 April, which introduces a series of specific, exceptional and temporary measures, with a view to providing a framework of stability and predictability to Sports Federations, namely:
  - Extension of the sporting public utility status of sports federations, until 31 December 2021, ensuring ownership of the status until the year of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the year in which the respective renewal may be requested;
  - Amendments to the regulations of sports federations, allowing them to take effect in the current sports seasons, so that the federations can adopt measures to respond to the public health emergency caused by COVID-19;
  - Extension of the mandates of the members of the bodies of the sports federations, professional leagues or territorial associations of clubs until the year 2021, to guarantee the organizational stability of the sports federations;
  - Equalization of distance training to face-to-face training (sports coaches, technical directors and physical exercise technicians);
  - Application, in 2020, of the duodecimal regime of sports development program contracts;
  - Suspension of the renewal of registration in the register of high-performance sports agents (sportsmen, coaches and referees), ensuring continuity of support for these agents, as long as there is no international competition;
  - Suspension of the renewal of medical-sports examinations (athletes, coaches and referees), taking into account the restrictions resulting from the pandemic.
- Continuity, after the postponement of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, of support for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Preparation Programs;
- Continuity in financing of sports movement (namely from sports federations), with the possibility of reallocating funds not implemented due to the breakdown of activity, in order to be able to support clubs and sports agents in difficulty;
- Access by all entities of the sports movement to the framework of measures implemented by the Government to deal with the pandemic (simplified lay-off, credit default, extension of deadlines for compliance with tax and social obligations), in addition to the extension of deadlines for presentation reports and accounts by sports federations;

- Publication of Decree-Law no. 20-F / 2020, of 12 May, which establishes an exceptional and temporary regime for insurance contracts;
- With regards to resuming Sports Practice, progressive relief from measures to restrict sports practice, always in conjunction with sector entities and DGS.

## JUSTICE SERVICES

- Maintaining in a permanent session, during the state of emergency, the services of the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Ombudsman's Office, with a view to the full exercise of their powers to defend democratic legality and the rights of citizens;
- Maintaining the activity of the General Inspectorate of the Justice Services, in particular with regards to complaints lodged by citizens deprived of liberty, among others, and to the monitoring of the conditions of imprisonment. In relation to the other users of the public services in the justice area, the telephone lines were strengthened, a new number was made available, and all assistance was provided through consultation with service scale inspectors. Working methods have also been developed to streamline communication with complainants and the entities targeted in their complaints, to be maintained from now on;
- Temporary suspension of judicial deadlines and postponement of procedural diligences with the application, in essence, of the judicial holiday regime, without prejudice to the practice, when technically feasible, of procedural acts and proceedings by appropriate remote means of communication, such as teleconferencing or video call (until 2 June 2020);
- Suspension, during the period of the exceptional and transitional regime, of the time limit for submitting the debtor to insolvency and of the acts to be carried out, in particular in the context of enforcement or insolvency proceedings related to the execution of judicial due diligence of the family residence, in proceedings for the delivery of rented immovable property in situations of the tenant's vulnerability (as of 3 June 2020);
- Limiting the urgent acts and diligences in person to those in which fundamental rights are at stake, such as those relating to minors at risk, urgent educational guardianship procedures and the diligence and trial of imprisoned defendants, provided that they do not involve the presence of more persons than those recommended by the health authorities (until 2 June 2020);
- Carrying out, during the period of the exceptional and transitional regime, discussion and trial hearings, as well as other measures which entail inquiries of witnesses, by remote means of communication, when they cannot be done in person or when this is not considered adequate, in compliance with the recommendations of the health authorities (as of 3 June);
- Carrying out, during the period of the exceptional and transitional regime, other measures that require the physical presence of the intervening parties, through remote means of communication (as of 3 June);
- Waiver of the obligation to go to court for parties, legal agents or other procedural actors who prove to be over 70 years of age, are immunosuppressed or have chronic illness and who, in

accordance with the guidelines of the health authorities, should be considered at risk, allowing their inquiry or participation by remote means of communication;

- Suspension of the limitation and expiry periods for all types of proceedings (until 2 June 2020);
- Suspension, during the period of the exceptional and transitional regime, of certain limitation and expiry periods relating in particular to procedures for the delivery of rented property in situations of the tenant's vulnerability (as of 3 June);
- The adoption of an exceptional and temporary regime for formalities related to the receipt of registered mail, including citations and postal notifications, suspending the collection of the subscription;
- To continue the in-person provision of registration and notary services deemed urgent, such as death registrations or marriages and wills, whenever there is an imminent danger of death;
- Possibility of receiving birth certificates online of those that took place less than a year ago, in Portuguese territory, in a public or private health unit;
- Approval of several exceptional and temporary measures aimed at enabling and promoting the practice of acts by remote means of communication, within the scope of procedures that run under the terms of the justices of the peace, proceedings and registration acts and the procedures conducted by the National Institute of Industrial Property;
- Provision of public mediation services exclusively by remote means of communication, until 2 June 2020;
- Creation, by each of the entities and services of the Ministry of Justice, of Contingency Plans for the COVID-19 pandemic, for internal adoption and also for use in the services they provide, especially those involving contact with the public. Thus, the areas of the Registries and of the Courts have adopted special measures to reduce human contact and have made protective equipment available.

## SECURITY AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

- National Defence and the Armed Forces are in high state of readiness and active throughout the national territory. COVID-19 Contingency Plans continue to be implemented, with the primary objective of protecting, in the first line, the regular functioning of the Armed Forces and their strategic assets, taking particular care of their military, militarized and civilian staffs;
- Reduction, by the Armed Forces, of non-essential military activities and, conversely, of the military units. The Quick Reaction Force Staff was activated, with two companies (one Marines Force and one Army Manoeuvre Company). The Chemical and Radiological Biological Nuclear Module was also activated, particularly important in these circumstances;
- Adoption, by National Military Forces Abroad, of prophylactic measures to protect against the disease, to reduce the risk of infection of the forces, but also of local populations, maintaining the

willingness to support where possible the authorities of those countries where they operate to better cope with the pandemic;

- Evaluation of the Defence Cooperation programmes with the Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP) and Timor Leste, maintaining some staff in these partner countries, with prior knowledge of counterparties, in order to ensure the continuity of contacts on the ground and support to the entities responsible for the Projects, especially to combat the pandemic;
- Close cooperation of the Ministry of National Defence with NATO and the European Union on information sharing. This was a Portuguese initiative, of the General Directorate of Defence Policy, based on the development of an information sharing model, which has been welcomed and is now being generalized as a very useful tool;
- Redirection of the activity, in the context of the defence industry, by companies associated with the Defence Technology and Industrial Base (BTID) and Aeronautics, Space and Defence (EDA), to combat COVID-19. It is also noted the role that “Europe of Defence”, including the respective financial instruments, can play in strengthening the European business and in responding to the economic crisis caused by the pandemic, namely enhancing investment in Defence as a driving force and recovery;
- Production of knowledge and promotion of public debate around this crisis, developed by the National Defence Institute. Publications dedicated to the theme are already available, as well as online session cycles, which can be found in <https://www.idn.gov.pt/>.

## IMPACTS ON GENDER EQUALITY

- Launching of a contest by the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) – Gender Research 4 COVID-19 – to support new studies on the gender impacts of the current pandemic, with a total allocation of 500 thousand euros, which was opened between 15 May and 2 June 2020. This is an initiative of the Government, bringing together the areas of Citizenship and Equality and Science, Technology and Higher Education, with the aim of stimulating new research on the constraints posed by social gender relations in individual, family, economic and health responses in the context of the pandemic, in order to facilitate informed strategies to combat gender inequality, violence against women and domestic violence. Three lines of investigation are considered:
  - Gender and the labour market;
  - Everyday life, stereotypes and gender roles;
  - Violence against women and domestic violence.

## PORTUGUESE ABROAD

- Establishment, on 16 March, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of the COVID-19 Emergency Line, with the objective of providing information to the Portuguese nationals who were transiently traveling and faced difficulties in returning to Portugal when several countries closed their borders and airspace, leaving thousands of Portuguese citizens stranded abroad. This line started its activity with business hours from 9 am to 5 pm, on working days, and was later extended non-stop



until 10 pm. Outside these hours, service continued to be provided by the Consular Emergency Office (GEC), which guarantees permanent and constant monitoring of extraordinary occurrences related to Portuguese citizens and operates 24/7, in 8-hour shifts;

- Reception, in the period from 16 March to 31 May, by both the COVID-19 and the GEC lines, of a total of 38 935 communications (23 555 calls and 15 380 e-mails). The COVID-19 line, in particular, received 26 114 communications (67% of the total), having received 12 258 emails (80%) and 13 856 calls (59%). For comparison, in the whole of 2019, the GEC received 13 076 communications (5 361 telephone calls and 7 715 e-mails). In order to better understand the exceptionality of the moment, in the space of two and a half months, three times the communications registered throughout 2019 were received. The COVID-19 line managed a workload corresponding to two years communications related to crisis or emergency situations;
- Discontinuation, on 29 May, of the COVID-19 line, due to the sharp decrease in demand. After that date, the GEC started receiving telephone calls and e-mails previously directed to the COVID-19 line, benefiting from a reinforcement of means made possible by the discontinuity of this line;
- Support provided within the scope of operations to facilitate the return of Portuguese citizens to the national territory, which made it possible to find solutions for 5 600 people, representing 95% of the requests submitted. Of this group, it will be important to highlight the 2 800 Portuguese who were in Africa and have benefited from the 28 special flights carried out between Portugal and the African Portuguese-speaking Countries (PALOP). An answer was also given to the request for support from 441 Erasmus students. Through European cooperation, hundreds of Portuguese nationals stranded in 37 countries were able to return to Portugal. This support was made possible with the continuous assistance of the Portuguese consular network.

## INTERNACIONAL COOPERATION

- Portugal, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, actively participated in several fronts of action in terms of external support for development, starting from the exhaustive inventory of the support requests made by the most diverse countries, in order to enable the evaluation and effectiveness of responding to such requests, all of them framed in the respect for the fundamental human rights to life, health and education. Among the measures adopted, the following stand out:
  - Support for the transportation of material from national Non-Governmental Development Organizations (NGDOs) and international organizations to the PALOP and Timor Leste, namely through extraordinary flights. Orders for the export of individual protection material related to humanitarian needs and Portuguese cooperation projects were also treated with special attention and speed;
  - Detailed survey, within the scope of the various Strategic Cooperation Programs (PEC) signed with the PALOP and Timor Leste, of the programs, projects and actions in progress, with a view to assessing the effective possibility of redirecting activities to help partner countries face the challenging impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include cooperation actions that satisfy needs in the health and social sectors, covering the areas of work, social security, energy and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene);

- Analysis, in the context of EU Delegated Cooperation, of the programs implemented by Portugal, with the objective of making the relevant adjustments in face of the situations generated by COVID-19, seeking to redirect funds to help partner countries in fighting the disease, either in the area of health itself, either in support of mitigating the social and economic impacts of this pandemic;
  - Creation of a new line of financing directed to Portuguese NGOs, for proposals and implementation of cooperation projects in PALOP and Timor Leste, in the health sector and other socio-economic areas that can contribute to support the efforts of these countries in fighting the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic. An approach to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women was taken as a basis, namely in terms of Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health. This financing line has an extraordinary allocation of 750 thousand euros and will favour projects based on consortia between Portuguese NGOs and in partnership with national public entities in the recipient countries, as well as with local civil society organizations and international institutions operating in the field. Based on the proposals presented by the competing NGO, seven projects were selected that will contemplate the set of PALOP and Timor Leste, focusing on the health and socioeconomic sectors;
  - Adaptation of the tender procedure to co-finance development projects, with a financial envelope of 1.8 million euros, in order to include an eligibility factor for projects submitted by national NGOs in the fight against COVID-19;
  - Presentation, on an aggregate basis, on 19 June, of the “Plan of Action in the Sanitary Response to the Pandemic COVID-19 between Portugal and the PALOP and Timor Leste”, with the objective of contributing to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 in the countries, with a budget of 3 million euros. With an expected duration of one year, the work will take place at two levels, namely in terms of the availability of resources and in terms of training and research;
- The Plan now under consideration will be developed in two priority axes. A first one dedicated to making resources available, with the allocation of more than 800 thousand medical items, and the second one dedicated to training, with more than 95 training actions planned;
  - Extraordinary national contributions to international organizations, aimed at fighting COVID-19 in the strategic partner countries of Portuguese Cooperation (Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, Timor Leste) and Venezuela – competing for the Plan United Nations Global Humanitarian Response to COVID-19. This amount will be distributed by multilateral agencies, namely the World Health Organization (WHO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Program (WFP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Red Cross (ICRC);
  - Organization, by Portugal, of a humanitarian flight to São Tomé and Príncipe (STP), carried out on 15 May, becoming the second EU member state to facilitate a humanitarian operation, within the framework of the newly created EU Humanitarian Airline mechanism. Fully supported by the European Commission, this operation made it possible to deliver 20 tons of medical and hospital supplies to STP, including a WHO laboratory, in order to provide that country with the means to carry out local tests to detect the virus responsible for the current pandemic. It also enabled the projection of a specialized team from the National Institute of Medical Emergency (INEM);

- Also within the framework of the EU's humanitarian airlift, Portugal is organizing a set of four flights to Guinea-Bissau, with departures scheduled between the 23 and 26 of July, to deliver 45 tonnes of medical supplies to that country to support the combat to COVID-19, which were offered by several multilateral organizations, such as UNDP and UNICEF, and Portuguese and other European NGOs.