



**SIGMA**

Creating Change Together



A joint initiative of the OECD and the EU,  
principally financed by the EU

## Public Administration: Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

*Mapping the EU member states' public administration responses to the COVID-19 pandemic  
(for EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries)*

**ROMANIA**

**4 April 2020**

2 Rue André Pascal  
75775 Paris Cedex 16  
France

<mailto:sigmaweb@oecd.org>  
Tel: +33 (0) 1 45 24 82 00

[www.sigmaweb.org](http://www.sigmaweb.org)

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union (EU). It should not be reported as representing the official views of the EU, the OECD or its member countries, or of partners participating in the SIGMA Programme. The opinions expressed and arguments employed are those of the authors.

This document, as well as any data and any map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

© OECD 2020 – The use of this material, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found on the OECD website page <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.

## Table of Contents

Centre of Government, policy co-ordination and decision-making process.....	3
1. How is the Government (Council of Ministers) functioning (organisation of virtual meetings, remote sessions etc.)?.....	3
2. How are the crisis management and external communications co-ordinated within the Government? What is the role of the CoG in this? Is there a central strategy/guidance?.....	3
3. Any arrangements (rules, working procedures) which aim to streamline and accelerate the Government decision-making process (as regards deadlines, public consultations, transparency, impact analysis)?.....	3
Public service and human resource management.....	4
1. What arrangements regarding teleworking? What is the share of civil servants teleworking? What is the share of civil servants still coming to the office?.....	4
2. What other flexible working arrangement (part-time work, distribution of working hours over 7 days...)?	4
3. If civil servants cannot telework, how are they paid? .....	4
4. Are civil servants being sent on mandatory annual leave? If not, is use of annual leave recommended? Any other special arrangement on absence management?.....	4
5. Any new, special regulations for working overtime (removing limitations to overtime work e.g. for medical staff)? .....	4
6. Arrangement for paying for extra workload (health care)?.....	4
7. What measures have been introduced to create fiscal space to fund health care, economic measures etc. against COVID-19 (salary cuts, freeze of recruitment, promotions...)?.....	4
Accountability .....	5
1. How did you keep the national Parliament operational? Any simplification of parliamentary procedures?	5
2. How about the Ombudsman (e.g. overseeing the situation in prisons).....	5
3. Does administrative justice work? Have deadlines changed? .....	5
4. Any public debates on respect of principles of good administration (legality, proportionality, predictability) of protective measures?.....	5
Service delivery .....	5
1. Which services are being delivered (all, some, only the essential)?.....	5
2. Are there any modifications done to the obligations of:.....	6
3. Has the crisis initiated any simplifications or enhanced the use of alternative tools:.....	6
Public financial management.....	6
1. Are COVID-19 response measures being introduced within the framework of or with reference to existing fiscal rules (budget deficit or public debt ratio limits etc.).....	6
2. Are the costs of these measures being published? .....	6
3. Have budget users been asked to identify cost-saving measures to partially offset the cost of the response measures? .....	7
4. Are internal controls continuing to operate smoothly (electronic signatures)?.....	7
5. Does each budget user or at least ministry have a risk management strategy that envisaged emergency measures in response to a sudden crisis? How is staff and customer safety balanced against the need to deliver required services?.....	7

# ROMANIA

## **Centre of Government, policy co-ordination and decision-making process**

### **1. How is the Government (Council of Ministers) functioning (organisation of virtual meetings, remote sessions etc.)?**

*Government meetings are possible both in remote sessions and with the presence of the members. Between 13 and 27 March, when the Prime Minister and some members of the Government were suspected of coronavirus, only remote sessions were organised.*

*The Government is currently holding the sessions in presence of its members, after all of the members of the Government were tested with negative results.*

### **2. How are the crisis management and external communications co-ordinated within the Government? What is the role of the CoG in this? Is there a central strategy/guidance?**

*In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the Romanian President issued Presidential Decree no. 195/16/03/2020 and declared the state of emergency for 30 days in response to the growing number of COVID-19 cases. The Decree was countersigned by the Prime Minister and approved by the Parliament.*

*Based on the Presidential Decree and taking into consideration the evaluations of the National Committee for Emergency Situations, the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued seven military ordinances regulating different aspects in relation to the evolution of the COVID-19 crisis.*

*Integrated co-ordination of the medical response and civil protection measures for the emergency situation generated by COVID-19 is carried out by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (through the Department for Emergency Situations), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, under the supervision of the Prime Minister.*

*A special unit - the Strategic Communication Group (made up of communication experts from several institutions) - was established for public information regarding the evolution of the COVID-19 crisis.*

### **3. Any arrangements (rules, working procedures) which aim to streamline and accelerate the Government decision-making process (as regards deadlines, public consultations, transparency, impact analysis)?**

*The Government holds consultations with the representatives of the National Tripartite Council for Social Dialogue, the trade unions and employers, as a permanent mechanism to mitigate the economic and social effects of COVID-19 epidemic.*

*The Government has issued an Emergency Ordinance for adopting measures that will allow the use of documents in electronic form for communication in digital format between the state authorities and institutions, as well as between the Government and natural and legal persons. The documents issued in this format will be signed with a qualified electronic signature and will be assimilated to official documents.*

*The new regulations will also allow digital processes for procedures vital to state functioning, such as the legislative process exercised by the Parliament and the executive process exercised by the Government.*

## **Public service and human resource management**

- 1. What arrangements regarding teleworking? What is the share of civil servants teleworking? What is the share of civil servants still coming to the office?**

*All staff are encouraged to work from home if possible, but all offices remain open.*

*There are no official figures on how many officials have opted for teleworking. Some do not want to lose extra-wage benefits, and continue to go to the office.*

- 2. What other flexible working arrangement (part-time work, distribution of working hours over 7 days...)?**

*In some institutions, a system of rotation was introduced (one week in the office/one week teleworking).*

*Institutions within the National Defence System, Public Order and National Security may hire personnel from external sources without competition, for a fixed period of six months.*

*Health units and social assistance services may hire medical and auxiliary staff, pharmacists, laboratory staff and other needed personnel without competition, for a fixed period of six months.*

- 3. If civil servants cannot telework, how are they paid?**

*This issue is not regulated as teleworking is optional and there are no restrictions on officials working in the office.*

- 4. Are civil servants being sent on mandatory annual leave? If not, is use of annual leave recommended? Any other special arrangement on absence management?**

*For the time being, the staff are not obliged to take annual leave.*

- 5. Any new, special regulations for working overtime (removing limitations to overtime work e.g. for medical staff)?**

*There are no special regulations in this respect.*

- 6. Arrangement for paying for extra workload (health care)?**

*There were discussions on possible measures to award a fixed bonus of EUR 500 for all doctors and nurses who deal with COVID-19 patients, but no official decisions have been adopted so far.*

- 7. What measures have been introduced to create fiscal space to fund health care, economic measures etc. against COVID-19 (salary cuts, freeze of recruitment, promotions...)?**

*The Ministry of Finance will perform all of the required budget amendments, but there are no other decisions in this regard.*

## **Accountability**

### **1. How did you keep the national Parliament operational? Any simplification of parliamentary procedures?**

*The Parliament is operational. All activities - in the Parliamentary commissions, plenary meetings, including voting - are performed online.*

### **2. How about the Ombudsman (e.g. overseeing the situation in prisons)**

*The Ombudsman institution is operational and actively following the Government's actions related to the COVID crisis as well as other issues not directly related to the crisis.*

*Almost the entire Ombudsman's staff are working from home during this period, although a permanence is ensured both at the headquarters and at the territorial offices. On the website, there is an announcement mentioning that people are kindly requested to send their complaints exclusively by e-mail, by fax or by post.*

### **3. Does administrative justice work? Have deadlines changed?**

*The Presidential Decree provided general measures in the field of justice, aimed at reducing the activity carried out by the judicial bodies, during the period of emergency.*

*During the state of emergency, trials continue only in cases of special emergency. In such cases, where possible, the courts take the necessary steps to conduct the hearing by video-conference and carry out communication of procedural documents by fax, mail or other means providing transmission of documents and confirmation of their receipt.*

*All civil trials are suspended during a state of emergency, without the need to perform any act of procedure for this purpose.*

*Foreclosure procedures shall continue only in cases where it is possible to comply with the special rules of health discipline established during the state of emergency.*

*The limitation periods and any other deadlines are suspended during the state of emergency.*

### **4. Any public debates on respect of principles of good administration (legality, proportionality, predictability) of protective measures?**

*There are no specific public debates on this issue.*

*Some of the media is rather of the opinion that the protective measures are not sufficient.*

## **Service delivery**

### **1. Which services are being delivered (all, some, only the essential)?**

*All public services continue within the confines of the measures introduced.*

*ID cards, driving licenses, passports, which will expire during the state of emergency, shall be considered valid throughout the territory of Romania, until the state of emergency ceases. The requests for exchange may be submitted within 90 days from the date of termination of the emergency status. The same rules are applied for accreditation certificates of social service providers and licenses for operating social services.*

*The activity of the National Trade Register Office is carried out only by electronic means.*

**2. Are there any modifications done to the obligations of:**

- i. the administrations towards citizens/businesses (e.g. freezing of deadlines)?

*Deadlines for submission of fiscal declarations have been postponed.*

*Other measures include faster reimbursement of VAT, suspending foreclosures on overdue debtors, suspending tax authorities' control, except for checks that can be performed remotely, as well as tax evasion cases where there are serious indications in this regard*

- ii. citizens/businesses towards public administration (reporting, payments of taxes, contributions, fees...)?

*Payments of local taxes are postponed by three months.*

*The salaries of employees who are categorised as technically unemployed due to the COVID-19 crisis shall be covered at 75% by the state.*

**3. Has the crisis initiated any simplifications or enhanced the use of alternative tools:**

- i. in the internal procedures of the Government (e.g. acceptance of formal approvals over e-mail)?

*No specific rules.*

- ii. in the administrative procedures with citizens and businesses (e.g. replacement of handwritten signature with scanned copies or simple exchange of mails)?

*Applications and supporting documents submitted for social assistance benefits such as the state allowances for children and unemployment cover may be submitted in letter format or by e-mail.*

**Public financial management**

**1. Are COVID-19 response measures being introduced within the framework of or with reference to existing fiscal rules (budget deficit or public debt ratio limits etc.)**

*No specific reference can be identified so far to fiscal rules as regards budget deficit and public debt ratio.*

*The Presidential Decree provides for two particular cases:*

- *During the state of emergency, transfers can be made between the budgets of the Ministry of Health and the National Fund for Health Insurance (in both directions), as well as between the different budget lines of the Ministry of Health or the National Fund for Health Insurance, depending on needs.*
- *For medical services, medicines, paraclinical investigations provided during the period of emergency, the amounts committed will not be limited to those approved for the first quarter of 2020.*

**2. Are the costs of these measures being published?**

*No systematic information*

*RON 42 million (~ EUR 8.5 million) allocated from the Government Reserve Fund to the Health Ministry to support the quarantine activities.*

*The Government put forward a package estimated at approximately 3% of GDP for sustaining the companies, in particular SMEs, affected by coronavirus crisis.*

- 3. Have budget users been asked to identify cost-saving measures to partially offset the cost of the response measures?**

*No information*

- 4. Are internal controls continuing to operate smoothly (electronic signatures)?**

*No information*

- 5. Does each budget user or at least ministry have a risk management strategy that envisaged emergency measures in response to a sudden crisis? How is staff and customer safety balanced against the need to deliver required services?**

*Yes, in accordance with the provisions of the Government Decision no. 557/2016 on specific risks management, regulating measures that have to be adopted, management crisis, responsibilities of all state authorities and co-ordination mechanisms in case of earthquakes, epidemics, floods, nuclear and / or radiological accidents and forest fires.*