

3.2.1. Contents of this activity

The outcome is to arrive at a series of positions, of which the employers' organisation is convinced that these positions are the correct answer the state authorities -which decide upon legislation and rulemaking- should give to reply to the concerns of the private sector employers and companies.

The themes to be covered by these policy positions can have a very varying coverage.

In countries where the employers' organisations mainly cover social and labour issues, the employers' organisation will concentrate on policy positions regarding:

- safety rules for staff and customers (protective gear, osh rules, responsibilities, discipline, safety rules for allowing return to activity in non-essential sectors)
- labour law-social security rules concerning remuneration and organization of work (overtime, premiums, sickness leave rules, flexibility to social security contributions)
- labour law and social security rules concerning income during imposed closures or periods of inactivity due to COVID-19 restrictions (unemployment benefits, leave pay)
- labour regulations concerning employment- retrenchment and the use of alternatives for retrenchment
- measures to support companies for companies in difficulties (social security contributions, temporary layoffs)

The precise in-depth contents of the themes will also vary according to the COVID-19 phase in which the country is. This will regard different issues at different periods. In quite some countries, we see similar issues per phase.

- In phase 1 (inactivity and lock down for most companies) probably the most urgent issues on how to deal with safe work in companies where work continues. How to deal with income and secondary working conditions (leave, sickness) for workers who do not work but are not dismissed.
- In phase 2 (restart out of the lock down) urgent issues such as the safety conditions of the restarting workers, stimulus for restarting companies like social security contributions exemptions, work flexibility for restarting companies.
- In phase 3, other issues will appear. Unfortunately we still have to wait to define them better.

In countries where employers' organisations cover a wider array of issues, the policy positions will also touch upon broader themes, like:

- fiscal mitigation for companies. During the periods of inactivity, restart and full recovery
- financial mitigation. Credit arrangements with banks
- legal mitigation: Impact of COVID-19 on commercial contracts, rental contracts, legal procedures
- export support
- mobilization of capital
- measures to stimulate demand
- monetary policies
- social protection policies

Again, the themes will be even broader and will also be varying with the stage of the COVID-19 virus development.