

ConsultA

ACEI Newsletter - 26 March 2020

Information and Advice for ACEI Members

ACEI continues to encourage members to access the updated materials and information on the [HSE](#) and the [Institute of Public Health](#) websites and also the [Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection](#) [Revenue](#) and the [Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government](#)

Other Online Resources

- [The Health & Safety Authority](#)
- [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#)
- [Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [Health Protection Surveillance Centre \(HPSC\)](#) The HPSC provides advice for the general public and for specific groups and settings, including employers, healthcare professionals, education settings and religious settings
- [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) provides travel advice.

ACEI working arrangements

Following the government announcement of 24th March, ACEI has temporarily closed its office and staff are working remotely. Email is being monitored at info@acei.ie. ACEI Secretary General also welcomes communications to sarah.ingle@acei.ie. Planned events have been postponed and in most cases rescheduled until later in the year. All internal and external meetings are being undertaken using a variety of technologies.

ACEI Statement on the current Covid-19 Crisis

The Covid-19 crisis clearly demonstrates that business as usual has been deferred; a new situation has occurred with a completely changed environment. A tabular summary of the [ACEI position](#) in relation to employment, projects, payments, project continuity, site management and related topics has been provided on the ACEI website.

Revenue updates

Updated advice information for taxpayers and agents has been published by [Revenue](#). The new measures announced by the government to provide financial support to workers affected by the crisis are particularly welcome. As part of these measures, Revenue will operate a Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme. This scheme enables employees whose employers are affected by the pandemic, to receive significant supports directly from their employer through the payroll system.

Planning System Stays Open

The Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government confirmed today that the [planning and building control systems remain open for business](#). Measures being brought through the Dáil today will only be activated if necessary and do not halt the planning system when passed. They are precautionary in nature and require a further Government decision before they can take effect.

Covid-19 Public Information Booklet

A [Covid-19 Public Information Booklet](#) was published on 25 March. The booklet has been produced by the government and the HSE and will be distributed to all households by An Post.

Webinar 30 March: Mitigating Impacts on Construction Projects

Solicitor firm Beale & Co is developing a series of Webinars addressing current concerns in the built environment sector. An upcoming [Webinar for UK firms](#) will take place at 12.30pm on Monday 30 March. This webinar will consider the impact that Covid-19 is likely to have on businesses and live projects. It will also provide information on the rights / remedies of consultants, and the steps that they should take to safeguard their positions, both contractually and from a practical perspective.

Another Beale & Co Webinar addressing firms' contracts and related concerns of ACEI members will take place on Wed 1 April. An invitation to register will be sent soon.

Innovations and inventions to support health care

A UCD PhD student has designed an [innovative faceshield](#) using common office materials to assist in blocking the coronavirus. No glue, screws or cutting are needed. He and his colleagues in the [I-Form Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre](#) are also working on open source designs for products/parts that can help in the pandemic. Another innovation device developed by innovators in Spain is a design that turns [windscreen wiper motors into emergency ventilators](#). The devices can be made in four hours using basic materials. A podcast has also been made about about an Italian based engineering team which is attempting to design and build a ["battlefield ventilator"](#) in a matter of weeks.

GOAL working to assist the most vulnerable

The reality of the current crisis will soon hit vulnerable children and adults very hard. GOAL has been rapidly identifying how its existing life-saving humanitarian programmes may be affected, and how it can best respond to and mitigate the negative impacts of the coronavirus. Cases of Covid-19 has been confirmed in 10 of its 13 countries of operation, including Niger and Syria, two countries already rocked by conflict. [Donations](#) can be provided to ACEI for direct transfer to GOAL.

Resilient Leadership

According to a recent publication from Deloitte, there are five fundamental qualities of [Resilient Leadership](#) that distinguish successful Managing Directors and CEOs as they guide their firms through the COVID-19 crisis. Understanding some specific steps that can help blunt the impact of the current crisis will enable organisations to emerge stronger.

Recent Covid-19 Good News

- The EU welcomes applications from startups and SMEs with [innovative solutions](#) to tackle the coronavirus outbreak.
- India's air quality has improved under the coronavirus lockdown. Since 5 March, nitrogen oxide levels have fallen by 45% in Mumbai and Pune, and by 50% in Ahmedabad. The air quality ranking is now 'satisfactory'.
- In the UK, Coronavirus patients will be treated with an HIV drug or steroid as part of a trial to see if existing medications are effective. University of Oxford researchers enrolled the first patient recently, and want hospitals to sign up many more people in the coming weeks.
- In Italy the person with the first known case of local transmission has left the hospital.
- [Irish made hand sanitiser](#) is now back in stock at the Kilkenny online shop.

Post-Crisis Predictions

Theories are already being developed about what the world will look like when the current crisis has abated. Some leading global thinkers believe that seismic shifts in [political and economic power](#) could occur from a number of perspectives. One commentator believes that history will be written by the "victors" of the Covid-19 crisis.

On a more sombre note, analysis from one aid organisation, [CARE](#), is indicating that outbreaks in humanitarian contexts could disproportionately affect women and girls in a number of ways, including adverse effects on their education, food security and nutrition, health, livelihoods, and protection. Even after the current health crisis has been contained, females may continue to suffer from ill-effects for years to come.