

## Effects of COVID-19 on building construction and construction economists in European countries (according to members/ delegates of CEEC)

### How is the global situation in your country (transportation, public services, stores, schools...)?

Ireland	3 Apr 2020	Virtual lock down -all workers to stay at home and work from their unless their work is essential - essential is civil service, health, poilce, army , grocery retail and transport - period of notice - Friday 27th March to Easter Sunday -anticipated - will last at least 4 to 6 weeks minimum unless by some miracle they get this under control earlier than predicted.
Netherlands	3 Apr 2020	All schools, restaurants, bars, hair salons (contact-based jobs) etc. are closed. Supermarkets and shops remain open but limit the total amount of clients indoors. They also took hygiene measures for cashiers and internal distances. All gatherings are forbidden (e.g. sports and music events) till 1st of June for events subject to licensing. Government requested to work from home and stay at home as much as possible. It is allowed to be outside in groups smaller than 3 persons and at a minimum distance of 1,5 m and one can go out for a walk or some fresh air. All measures till 28th of April.
UK	3 Apr 2020	Transportation is being run on a weekend schedule to maintain key workers' (front line) transport to work. The roads are very quiet, only essential journey are allowed, which include going to buy food. Shops and wine/ beer shops are open with restriction generally that one person from each household attends. Schools and universities are all closed. Social distancing; 2 m rule.
Estonia	3 Apr 2020	Public transport is running locally; no any international transport (airplanes, ferries, busses, trains); even intercity transport has been reduced. Everybody (public and private sector) is working in home offices. Only major supermarkets and chemist's shops are open, also shop for construction materials and IT services are open. No schools and universities, kindergartens still function, but not in full power. There is the 2 + 2 rule introduced that people have to follow in public space: This means no more than 2 people together and no closer than 2 m. Emergency situation declared till 1st of May.
Hungary	14 Apr 2020	Partial lockdown. Shops open until 3 pm. Groceries, supermarkets, drugstures and pharmacies open later, but from 9am to 12am people from 65 years old can enter only. Restaurants, pubs closed. Some public parks had been closed during Easter, many remains closed on. People are discouraged to go out in groups. Depending on the sector works are going on.
Belgium	14 Apr 2020	Shops are closed; only food, pet food and newspapers shops are open. Online shopping no problem. Schools are closed, working from home required as much as possible. In companies that are still working (especially the food industry), a distance of 1.5 meters is mandatory. There is public transport, trips to work only, for groceries or other urgent matters. Otherwise fines are given. Two people or more in one car, who do not live at one address is forbidden(fine € 250 per person). Same fine at border crossing or driving in another city for no valid reason. All measures till 3th of May.
France	15 Apr 2020	About 70% of the activity has stopped and will be until May 11th. (The worst is still to come, when the deep economical consequences will emerge after a few months.)
Spain	21 Apr 2020	Alarm State declaration due to COVID-19. Lockdown and curfew since 14-03-2020. GDP estimation has been revised for 2020. The decrease might reach 6.6% (best-case scenario) and 13,6% 6.6% (worst-case scenario).
Switzerland	26 Apr 2020	Borders closed to all travelers (except from Liechtenstein). One may not leave the house, except for groceries or medical reasons. Schools and universities are closed. All public facilities, shops and services are kept to an absolute minimum. From 27th of April measures will begradually eased (3 phases).

Czech Rep	28 Apr 2020	<p>Everything except 'essentials for life' is closed down, i.e. all schools, universities, sport places, zoo, cinemas, exhibitions, restaurants, hotels, shops, service companies [barbers, cosmetics, cleaning, car services etc.] and all borders are closed. Open are only food stores, doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, petrol stations. Offices open only 2x a week for 3 hours and only with online reservation for exact time is possible to deal with them. Companies generally went over to home office, manufactures work but not all of them. Skoda Auto company closed their works totally. People are not allowed to travel even within the country, just for serious reasons [to work, to doctor, to buy food or medicals or to help older family members]. In public places must be worn mouth protection at any time / nose and mouth must be covered.</p> <p>From the end of April and during May 2020 will be opened in steps smaller shops, repair services, sport places, in the end of May universities and primary schools [but with special rules], all other shops, hotels, neighbors may visit each other, from 4.5.2020 many offices cancel home office and go back to work, borders will be opened [but after return is 2 weeks quarantine necessary], restaurants with outdoor seating. Secondary and high schools remain closed until summer holiday. However, the government changes the decisions often, it may proceed differently.</p>
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### How is the situation in the building construction area ?

Ireland	3 Apr 2020	<p>Works were already being affected over the last 2 weeks. Story of one contractor who got Covid-19 two weeks ago and was at a meeting with his general management -effectively all their management had to go into isolation and they had to shut their sites down -needless to say Employers were not happy and threatened termination and breach of contract. From Monday 30th all sites apart from those working on emergency health projects and road and housing maintenance are shut down. Government reluctant to say who is going to pay for delays - Under their contracts they can give a contractor an extension of time for a Government order affecting the works but no payment - in reality if they try to apply this clause they will put the industry out of business!!</p>
Netherlands	3 Apr 2020	<p>The government intended to continue projects as much as possible. So decision making shouldn't be delayed by the government. Currently office work continues as much as possible. The government requested (local) authorities to speed up projects and tenders as much as they can in order to avoid a huge economical crash. On 3rd of April the Economische Instituut voor de Bouw (EIB, The Economic Institute for the Building Industry) predicts that some 40,000 jobs will disappear in the next two years as a result of the corona crisis and the industry will face a shrinkage of more than 15 percent of the total construction production.</p>
UK	3 Apr 2020	<p>The UK Government has said you must work from home if you can. Whilst at work you must maintain a 2m distance from others. Construction sites are to remain open whilst maintaining the 2m rule. This has resulted in many construction sites closing, but this is generally viewed as being a breach of contract as the government has not mandated their closure. Scotland said a couple of weeks ago that all construction sites should be closed.</p>
Estonia	3 Apr 2020	They are working.
Hungary	14 Apr 2020	Sites not closed, many constructions go on without interruption. Supply of materials can be a problem.
Belgium	14 Apr 2020	Some building sites are still running, especially where there are earthworks. When delivery of materials will no longer be possible, most building sites will halt/ stand still.
France	15 Apr 2020	The construction fields have stopped on March 17th and are slightly restarting this week
Spain	21 Apr 2019	All non-essential industries were closed (included construction projects) from 30-03 till 13-04.2020. Currently, 30% of the projects remain on hold. Neighbor communities' sites are not allowed yet.
Switzerland	26 Apr 2020	<p>In Romandie (cantons of Geneva, Vaud, Wallis, Friborg, Neuchâtel, Jura) the large projects have been stopped and the small projects are trying to work, but the materials are missing. Estimate in % compared to a normal situation = 20 to 25%. We are waiting for the government to allow the gradual resumption of construction site work by May 15/30, 2020. Transport personnel must wear gloves and masks.</p>

Czech Rep	28 Apr 2020	Some building sites keep going, some of them are closed down. Many foreign workers are at their homes and are not allowed to come or must be in quarantine. Some building sites have no workers.
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### **And more specifically, what does it mean for Construction Economists ?**

Ireland	3 Apr 2020	For period of shut down -we have set up office to work remotely - all staff at home but linked into IT and phone - virtual meetings the norm now - we can focus on prep of tender documents and estimates ( though in the current climate predicting future costs is probably not sensible) - we are advising no issue of tender documents until the lockdown is over - ON sites we are working on paying contractors for work complete and advising clients as to potential claims /costs - differing scenarios - 2, 4, 6 and even 3 month shut downs -all of this will be guesswork.
Netherlands	3 Apr 2020	At short notice we don't see a decline in activities. However there is a potential risk of less work however when longer term economical effects kick-in.
UK	3 Apr 2020	We are very busy advising clients about site closure and sites remaining open. Those that are shut are potentially a breach of contract, those remaining open are potentially resulting in contractors working in a way which is different to how they priced the work in the first place.
Estonia	3 Apr 2020	If not today then need for their services will increase during the forthcoming half year, for sure. There will be problems with payments from the (especially private sector) clients. Prices for flats on sale are falling (for some of them already up to 20% already, but the reductions will be greater.
Hungary	14 Apr 2020	Difficult to get new clients and assignments.
Belgium	14 Apr 2020	As long as one can work from home, it is still oke.
France	15 Apr 2020	It means no more work for the economists following/ managing construction fields. It means more time to do the back office work for the others.
Spain	21 Apr 2020	All non-essential industries were closed (included construction projects) from 30-03 till 13-04.2020. Currently, 30% of the projects remain on hold. Neighbor communities' sites are not allowed yet.
Switzerland	26 Apr 2020	Difficulty working via video conference. 40% delay in activity.
Czech Rep	28 Apr 2020	Some projects in the beginning of planning [studies, planning permission] are temporarily stopped, some clients wait what is going to happen, the local authorities do not work, so there are no permissions issued, negotiations are not possible. Projects at later stages keep going. We work from home, connecting with architects and planners via Skype etc. and the current situation has just minor impact on our works.

### **Do you have any help from your government (tax breaks, material/masks/gloves for self-protection...) ?**

Ireland	3 Apr 2020	Government assisting by way of payments to those out of work and will pay 70% of salaries up to 40 k for those who are kept on - any one paid over 40 k and the firm will not receive assistance - all protection equipment is going to health - they have said to businesses that have closed down that provided they can demonstrate their accounts - that there may be assistance at the end of this period.
Netherlands	3 Apr 2020	The government compensates entrepreneurs (based on all kind of rules). For example: measures for sustained employment, credits and Tax breaks and € 4,000 compensation.
UK	3 Apr 2020	The Government is not providing any self-protection for construction workers. The Government is providing some tax 'holidays', but this is just postponing when the tax will be payable. The Government has provided a scheme for payment of 80% of wages for salaried staff up to a maximum gross payment of £2,500 per month, and the same for self employed based on 80% of declared profit based on previous tax submissions.
Estonia	3 Apr 2020	Probably several excise duties will fall. There are support programmes for small businesses, for those people who are going to loose their jobs and for those whose salaries have fallen. Government supported procurement schemes for self-protection stuff is today mainly going to healthcare sector.

Hungary	14 Apr 2020	Not much. Nothing for the construction sector.
Belgium	14 Apr 2020	Technical unemployment' is possible for companies and is increasingly used. Many assignments are postponed. Self-employed persons receive a payment of € 1,600. In some cases deferment of payment for VAT and contributions are possible.
France	15 Apr 2020	Yes, the government offers simplified procedures and indemnities for short-time work – and a lump-sum indemnity for the independent workers.
Spain	21 Apr 2020	Companies which incomes decreased by 75% could laid-off (furlough) temporarily their employees.
Switzerland	26 Apr 2020	The government has set up bridging loans at 0% interest and partial unemployment assistance. We wait for taxes, tax benefits.
Czech Rep	28 Apr 2020	We must provide protective equipment ourselves (example: the 50 masks for 35 CHF at Lidl). The dates for issuing of income assessment for 2019 and VAT tax assessment are postponed. Nothing else.