

Restart of the schools - sharing of experiences among ESHA members



Country	Urgent child care solutions	If your country is also opening schools to the children of key workers (and vulnerable children), have you had any guidance from your Health department/ministry about the best approach to staff rotas to support the control of infection?	restart of the schools
Bulgaria	<p>After the introduction of the state of emergency in Bulgaria on March 13, all schools are closed.</p> <p>Concerning the care of children of parents in the healthcare sector or other essential professions: It is usually taken by relatives to the family, grandparents, sometimes even outside the parents' settlement and it is always at their discretion. It is not possible to carry out such care in schools, since movement between settlements as well as for reasons other than shopping in a shop, in a pharmacy and access to workplace is restricted. Even outdoor playgrounds are not accessible. The good news is that Bulgarian teachers and Headteachers organized distance learning by creating virtual classrooms and every day the children work on assignments, there is continuous feedback with each child. In my view this is an exceptional transformation of Bulgarian education.</p>	<p>Movement between settlements for reasons other than shopping some food, shopping in a pharmacy and access to workplace is restricted. Even outdoor playgrounds and parks are not accessible.</p> <p>We teach the children using distance learning for the first time in Bulgarian education. We use Office 365 and Google classrooms in the whole country - huge work has been done for a week only.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Headteachers have a duty to have safety rules in schools where in each we have 2 or 3 people available for administrative work only. Bulgarian Health Ministry recommendations include posters on hygiene, how and how long to wash our hands, how to reduce the risk of infection (upon World Health Organization advice) and the interim guidelines of the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control, Stockholm, 2020.</p> <p>Headteachers organized a schedule for two employees to do administrative work only once a week at schools, but to be available when needed. What can be done remotely is done.</p>	<p>The schools in Bulgaria are closed till 13 of May for now. But we are learning by distance using Google classroom or Office 365 We are planning the national exams on 30 of May and 1st of June and preparing safety environment in the schools including new rules and buying the special cleaning materials. At the same time the National e-library has started as an initiative to support the teachers who made the lessons every day themselves.</p>
Catalonia/Spain	<p>In Catalonia children of parents who work in healthcare and other essential professions are looked after by their families. Schools are closed since Friday 13th March.</p>		<p>No plans for Catalonia or Spain yet. I think it is unlikely to open schools before June. Waiting for instructions after Easter holidays, which are supposed to be about how to assess students to finish the current year.</p>

<p>Croatia</p>	<p>Answer 1: In Croatia, last few days, we are struggling not only with corona virus but with earthquake too (Zagreb) . Generally, schools and kindergartens have to organise day care for children of parents who work and don't have any other solution. In reality, there is a very small number of children who are in schools/kindergartens. Answer 2: Our kindergarten Vladimir Nazor Kastav is officially closed 16th this month until the further notice. Schools are closed in whole state and children are having online classes. There is a one daycare group in kindergarten Rijeka that is still working mostly for the children whose parents works in the shops and medical care. It is one group for the whole County. The last news I have got was that so far they are taking care of 5 children. People are trying to stay at their homes in order to prevent COVID-19. World has to unite and we have to reacts together. Sending you warm greeting from Croatia.</p>		<p>Schools in Croatia are closed through March 16th and for students is provided online and distance learning. Preeschools and Kindergartens also closed by the recommendation of the Minister for Education.</p> <p>There are 2 Kindergarten classrooms working on duty in our County in City of Rijeka since than (one in private Kindergarten, one in State Kindergarten). As I am informed no more than 8 children present per day. Parents call the Kindergarten day before and leave the notice if the child is coming the next day.</p> <p>Mostly for the children whose parents work on the urgent positions as medical staff, salesperson, police,etc.</p> <p>Our Kindergarten in Kastav is not working during the crisis. The good thing is that the number of new infected Covid-19 cases slow down in Croatia so that give us a hope that in the optimal short-term prognosis we might open 1 classroom in the May/ 2020 for the parents that do not have any other options and have to go back to work.</p> <p>Our plan is to open 1 classroom with the Teachers provided with safety masks, gloves and glasses. Children will get the breakfast in the school, but they would have to bring the lunch boxes with themselves as we are still not in the position to open our Kindergarten kitchen for cooking the meals. Safe distance will be reccomended (as much as it is possible with a small children) and stonger hygiene of the enviroment will be secure during the day.</p> <p>In this challenging times schools will become an essential part of the effort to respond to the huge challenge of COVID-19. Wishing You all the best and we will continue to provide updates to you.</p> <p>Answer 2: In this moment there are no plans for reopening the schools in Croatia. We are still closed. Students are studying from home - organised distant learning (primary and secondary schools). It seems spreading the virus is slowing.</p>
<p>Cyprus</p>	<p>Although your question refers to a really serious aspect of the changes we experience, in our country schools do not provide day care for any child from any family background. Actually, this is prohibited for even a limited number of students at any kind of organisations that provide services of caring.</p> <p>In Cyprus, many private "reading rooms" provide caring and educational services, during after school hours, for students whose parents cannot provide home caring due to their work. According to the protecting measures against COVID-19 even these 'reading rooms' are not allowed to provide caring. Everything is done through internet</p> <p>I wish everything to change the soonest. Following my previous message for the same subject, please consider that the government has proceeded to an another more radical solution regarding the provision of care.</p> <p>All parents who have kids of the age under 15, are allowed to choose who will stay at home for all this period of crisis at which schools remain closed.</p> <p>So, parents are providing care for their children by taking advantage of the 'right' one parent can stay at home.</p>	<p>in Cyprus the government facilitated parents to look after their children and no school or service is allowed to offer caring.</p> <p>According to this arrangement, all parents with children under 15 are allowed to choose (father or mother) to stay at home. For the implementation of this measure, the government has given the right to "WORK FROM HOME" or to "TAKE A SPECIAL LEAVE". In the second case, part of the family income is compensated by government.</p>	<p>n Cyprus all schools (pre- primary, - primary education and secondary education) are remaining closed (public and private) until 10 of April when officially Easter holidays begin. That means that schools are actually remain closed until 26th of April. The government follows a practice of systematic revising of the measures based on the data gathered each week.</p> <p>For the moment, the government promotes the idea of Distance Learning activities and has provided free Microsoft Office 365 Accounts for all teachers and students in order to use synchronous and asynchronous activities through TEAMS platform.</p> <p>Furthermore, all schools where asked to proceed with Action Plan including all the activities that might take place in order to provide PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT to all students. Most of the schools are proceeding with communication with all families and with posting of educational material on their websites.</p> <p>In order to secure the success of the effort online training is provided to teachers and provision for families with difficulties to respond (infrastructure and connection) is on progress.</p> <p>A huge effort is ongoing and many unexpected difficulties have arisen (teachers readiness, families responsiveness, ethical issues, pedagogical issues). The government is encouraging initiatives based on the philosophy of providing pedagogical support to all children. Specific car and concern is given to student at the last year in upper - secondary education.</p> <p>We are all waiting for the continuity strategy as we are not sure what new decisions and measures shall include.</p> <p>I wish health and optimism for all of us and courage to respond to our part of duty in order to support society and families.</p>

Denmark	<p>In Denmark, all schools are closed. We have the care of the students whose parents work in vital positions. The teaching takes place on digital learning platforms as well as digital teaching materials. We have used this for the past 5 years in the Danish schools. The new thing is that teacher and student are not together. Windows 365 has opened for their Teams to create digital conferences. It is made available to the schools free of charge. In Denmark, almost every home has a PC and a network connection. Otherwise, the school will provide a PC for the families.</p>		
England	<p>In England all schools are closed until further notice. However schools are remaining open for the children of what are deemed to be key workers (nurses doctors emergency services and those supplying food)The activities provided are more child care than formal education Today the first day of schools being closed has worked well with only those who should attending Schools in many areas are providing homework via learning platforms I believe the situation in England is similar in Wales and Northern Ireland. In Scotland I believe it also to be similar but the government is not run from Westminster.</p>		<p>As Greg says for Scotland I do not believe there are any clear plans for schools in England. I expect something will be said after Easter when schools were due to return, however I think it highly unlikely that schools will be reopening. Schools will continue to open for the children of key workers as they are currently</p>
Estonia			<p>All students are learning from home and all staff working remotely until the end of April. Exams have been postponed indefinitely. Further decisions will be made depending on the situation with Covid19.</p>

<p>Finland</p>	<p>The Finnish Government recommends that all children stay at home during this corona-virus pandemia. If this is not possible, children may participate in early childhood education (at age 1 to 5) pre-primary (at age 6) or primary education in grades 1-3 (at age 7 to 9).</p>		<p>In lack of national official restart protocols, I try to figure out more generally, what might be the general effects of the closing and restarting of schools.</p> <p>The Corona crisis is putting education on trial in many ways. The current and forthcoming months mean a vast change in our European – as well as global – mindset concerning teaching and learning.</p> <p>In Finland the main strategy in fighting against the spreading of the virus is to minimize all gatherings. Meetings of over 10 persons are prohibited. Contact teaching of all schools has ceased except the primary school grades 1, 2 and 3. Even the pupils on these grades are encouraged to stay at home, if possible. The purpose for the exception for grades 1, 2 and 3 is to guarantee vital key workers a possibility to their normal working conditions.</p> <p>Thus, practically all the Finnish school children stay now at home and are taught in distance by their teachers, and – as strictly as possible – according to the normal curricula.</p> <p>On the positive side, the situation means in countries of closed schools a huge leap forward in distance education. Even if the closing of contact teaching may take just a few months, this means in reality a lead of several years in implementing distance education as part of standard school work.</p> <p>It depends on the individual needs of schools, in which extent these experiences and practises remain standard procedures after restart of the schools. Especially the 170 FASSS (Finnish Association of Small Secondary Schools) member schools in rural and scattered settlements across Finland shall have a big boost in their everyday distance education and distance learning. Also the schools in cities shall apparently change their educational practises.</p> <p>On the negative side, this period of current distance learning will have serious consequences for the children, who have difficulties in distance learning and would essentially need contact teaching. After the restarting of schools, these pupils require much pedagogical help, not to be left behind their classmates.</p> <p>Another group in difficulties are the distance taught children whose home environment is socially problematic. Social workers are aware of this challenge and have already started various efforts to help the families and children. Till now, there has been a discussion, how to enhance the collaboration and flow of information between schools and social workers. Hopefully, the period of corona virus shall forward this collaboration.</p> <p>Within the Finnish government, the corona virus has created an unprecedented and unanimous understanding about how to face the financial needs caused by the pandemic. Until now, the main concern has been limited in health and entrepreneurial and employment sectors. However, the current political climate shows signs of a wider cognition of the need of resources also in the social sphere.</p> <p>My personal wish is that in combating this joint enemy of the whole humankind, we also wake up to address our biggest and main enemy – the Climate Change.</p> <p>It would be interesting to know about your thoughts about the above, as well as about corresponding experiences of the political atmospheres in your countries – both in terms of education and in general.</p>
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Flanders/Belgium	<p>In Flanders, we provide daycare for children whose parents work in essential professions (healthcare, distribution, supermarkets,...) Those parents give a certificate from their employer to prove this. As for now we have less than 1,5% of the total of children to take care off. All others are at home with their parents.</p>		<p>In Flanders, Belgium, we do not have a restart date yet. Probably not before the end of april. Until the Easter holiday (4-19/04/2020) students could not get new items to learn at home. After the holiday, they will get new lessons in pre-teaching. When schools re-open, this content will be repeated in the school. As for my primary school: we provided daycare for children of parents in 'necessary professions'. We had like an average of 2 children per day in primary and 3 toddlers in kindergarten. During the 14 days of holiday, they come to the school as well. From the beginning there have been teachers volunteering for this care. Only 2 persons per half day.</p> <p>We will provide teaching material for the students on paper as well as online. Our 6th grade (last year of primary) will do online teaching via google classroom. Their goals are set at the end of June. For the younger students, we will take some content into the next year.</p> <p>We also take notice of and care for children in poor social contexts. A survey has been done to determine who needs support with ICT, internet, homework...</p>
France		<p>Here in France we have opened these schools for children of Key Workers as well.</p> <p>Teachers come on a volunteer basis and there is a rota as well.</p> <p>The cleaning agents are designed to clean place before the children come and after they quit the buildings.</p> <p>But it is not so simple:</p> <p>Headmasters are often alone to welcome the children because teachers do not want to come and help, sometimes it is ok.</p> <p>But often nobody from the cleaning agents want to come and clean, so headmasters and teachers do it.</p>	<p>No general and clear plans. Officially at the beginning of May, but we know all that it could not be possible before June, perhaps not in all the country at the same time. No exams: they are maintained but only with continuous evaluation (2/3 of the year). Between us, we build plans with sanitary aspects, pedagogical aspects and psychological aspects (victims among teachers and families, collective trauma...).</p> <p>special times...</p>
Iceland	<p>In Iceland the kindergartens are partially open and parents working in essential professions get priority. The authorities have a list over parents working in such professions and the plan is even if we close most kindergartens that they will continue to have day care.</p> <p>Answer 2: Preschools and elementary schools are open with certain restrictions. Most 20 students in a group and tried to prevent groups from mixing.</p> <p>Colleges and universities are closed but taught with distance education where possible.</p>		<p>Play schools and elementary schools are still open and running about 30-40 capacity and there are no plans to close them completely at this moment. Students older than 12 are generally studying from home.</p> <p>Secondary schools 16-19 are closed but we are running things in distant education.</p> <p>The current plan says the secondary schools will be closed until at least May 4. It is however most likely that they will be closed for students until the autumn.</p>
Ireland	<p>In Ireland, all schools, primary, secondary, pre-school and crèche facilities are closed. All pubs are closed and all public gatherings are canceled. Many of the parks are closed and all of the playgrounds are closed. There is now a suggestion that the empty crèche facilities will be staffed and opened to cater for the children of health care and first responders children. This has yet to be put in place but I believe that it will be done.</p> <p>These are unprecedented times</p>		<p>there are no plans at present announced to reopen any of the schools or colleges in Ireland. It is expected that the current full lock down will be extended on Sunday. Only essential workers are allowed to travel beyond a two mile radius of home. The building sites closed last week. We now have an extra half a million people unemployed. The measures are very severe but they seem to be slowing the spread of the virus. The biggest anxiety in secondary education at the moment is if and when the senior state exams will happen.</p>

<p>Italy</p>	<p>https://www.esha.org/uncategorized/schools-in-italy-in-covid19-time/</p>	<p>from the point of view of the Italian experience it is a mistake. The sanitary workers took separate houses from their families. The children are looked after by grandparents or babysitters for each family. The categorical imperative is to stay home! Children and young people, together, are a source of spread of infection that is brought home by parents and grandparents who get sick!</p>	<p>The same is for Italy. It's too early to project anything! We are only planning Giune State examination at the end of compulsory school.</p>
<p>Luxembourg</p>			<p>In Luxembourg, pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools and all youth centers and institutions for children are closed from March 14th to May 4th for the moment. It remains possible that this date will be postponed again. Pupils are in contact with their teachers by internet.</p>
<p>Netherlands</p>	<p>In the Netherlands, schools and daycare provide daycare as a solution for parents who work in vital sectors, only when both parents work in one of these sectors! We see that schools and daycare centers work together to find solutions. The schools also provide daycare for children who are in vulnerable situations (for example children with learning and/or behavioral difficulties) to help parents and children coping with the situation. Not ideal, but it works! We have a very limited amount of parents that are using the opportunities provided by the schools and daycare centers.</p>	<p>This is our national website for education and corona. With help of google translate, you can find a lot of answers: https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/veelgestelde-vragen-per-onderwerp/onderwijs</p> <p>Basicly: All parents have to work at home, unless you work in a vital profession, such as medical, teacher, police, food and distribution etc. Parents have (individually) to care for their ow children in their own homes. This means for parents and children not to be in closer contact with others outside (keep 1,5 meters) and as much as possible stay inside your houses. Schools provide for home education (distance learning) by using ICT or bring books tot he children. All tutoring is digital, videocalls and by phone. Parents have to help their children as well as they can. Only children from parents in vital jobs can be taken to school and special needs children in some cases. Schools work together with municipality and childrens daycare to organise this. All teachers that can work at home, where needed they can come to school with keeping distance and hygiene. Mostly they digitally tutor the children from their homes.</p> <p>Translated parts from the letter concerning children with special educational needs:</p> <p>... Many parents have been busy in recent days drawing up daily schedules, explaining and motivating their children to do schoolwork. That is not an easy task. Periodic contact</p>	

about the progress of children's learning is then even more important. Teachers and teaching assistants can try to contact parents and caregivers to discuss the home situation, issues and possibilities... ..

.... Special attention is also paid to children who stay in asylum seekers' centers or other COA reception centers. I am discussing this with the Inspectorate of Education, COA and LOWAN....

... Schools are the first to organize distance education. If schools run into practical problems, they can report to the municipality. I have agreed with the organization of municipalities that each municipality will open a recognizable 'desk' for these types of questions from education. We hereby connect to existing practice, which I am very impressed with

... It is now my primary concern that students can follow distance education. In the Netherlands there is an excellent coverage and a high-quality network, where households can choose to purchase services that suit them....

... Schools each have their own (digital) system for distance education and are best able to determine what is needed to make this accessible to all students. Where possible, we ask schools to come up with solutions themselves, because this will lead to the fastest results. Schools that do not have a network of relevant suppliers or businesses can initially contact the municipality...

... ..A second group are the pupils who need extra guidance, for example because parents do not have a good command of the Dutch language or cannot provide proper guidance. Teachers know very well which children they are. After all, children normally spend a lot of time at school. Now that they do not go to school or childcare, it is extra

<p>North-Rhein Westfalia/Germany</p>	<p>Schools provide childcare for children grades 1 to 6- even on weekends and in the Easter vacations!! -- to parents who are health-care workers or in other essential professions. Their employers have to certify that the parents are essential and have no other child care possibility. The groups have been put in place already although they are not yet needed. We are anticipating that health-care workers will be needed in ever greater numbers within the next couple weeks. While there are some protests from teachers, there are also many volunteers for this duty. Colleagues who are 60 or older or pregnant or with pre-existing health restrictions may not do this job. The principals are responsible for co-ordinating the groups.</p> <p>So far the groups are supposed to be "one-school-only" to reduce the risk of infection (mixing infection chains). The groups may not exceed 5 pupils.</p>	<p>Our schools are providing lessons online for everyone and child care at school to children of key workers. While the time frame for Monday to Friday is clear (the normal school day plus additional time for younger children)(At my school that's Monday to Friday, 8 am until 4 pm), the time frame for the weekends has not been specified. Because we have no information, we are using the 8 am to 4 pm time frame.</p> <p>The Ministry of Schools of NRW has specified that certain colleagues may not be used in the rota (colleagues over 60, colleagues with pre-existing health conditions, colleagues who are pregnant). All the rest of our colleagues have been planned into the Monday through Friday rota. The Ministry specified that the weekend rota be based on volunteers (if possible) and that the "Lehrerrat" (like a staff council) be consulted. The rota we have created for the weekends is made up of volunteers (fortunately we have enough).</p> <p>The Ministry suggests that the rota not be too large because of dangers of infection. Each group consists of no more than 5 pupils. A high standard of hygiene is required at all times (to prevent unnecessary infections).</p> <p>We are a school of 5th to 10th graders. This child care is only offered for our 5th and 6th. Our experience is that there is a very low demand, although it is somewhat higher in the 1st to 4th grade schools. This could be due to the possibility that parents are afraid that their child will bring additional contamination into the household. We have one pupil registered and so far he has needed exactly 2 days. From our parents, we have heard that some essential services have set up their own spontaneous child care groups,</p>	<p>In Germany, I can only speak for Northrhine- Westfalia, but what I can tell you about conditions here is that our Schools Ministry has informed us that they will give us specific information about the "restart" of schools on the 15th of April. This date is in the middle of the two week Easter school holidays here in NRW (which don't really feel that much like holidays). There are many rumors about what will be happening.</p> <p>So far, the Ministry is still standing fast to the idea of the central "Abitur-Prüfung" (highest qualified school leaving exam, comparable to A-Levels in the UK), starting on the 12th of May (posponed three weeks). This is a decision taken by all schools ministers in Germany in their "Kultusministerkonferenz" at the end of March. The reason for this is so that students in all German states will have a comparable school leaving certificate which qualifies them for study programs at a university in any German state. The decision is highly controversial, because no one is really sure if it will be safe to have lessons on the 20th of April (the first day after Easter holidays).</p> <p>For the regular school leavers (O-Levels) it's also complicated.</p> <p>So we suspect the Ministry will start with exam preparation. But no one really knows anything at all. We have had a storm of mails from the State NRW, from the city, from the "Bezirksregierung"(like a district bureaucracy for schools) - and you have to field every one, pass on information, communicate with teachers, with pupils, with parents, deal with everyone's worries about exams, about illness... It's quite complicated. But I'm sure it's like that everywhere.</p>
<p>Norway</p>	<p>In Norway, all kindergartens, schools and universities are closed. The authorities have defined 15 critical occupational groups and these are entitled to an offer to their children. In addition, children with special needs should also be offered. Otherwise, home schooling using various digital resources is the main solution.</p>		<p>Our PM will announce a decision regarding if Schools and Kindergartens will remain closed or open after Easter at the 8/4. I will be able to present more information then.</p>

<p>Scotland</p>	<p>In Scotland the plan is that schools are open only for vulnerable children and the children of emergency service (health/fire/police) workers who have no other option for their care.</p> <p>It is early days here though as today is the first day for general school closures here.</p>	<p>MEDICAL ADVICE - The staff rota doesn't matter. Crucial factors are maintaining social distancing, regular hand washing, coughing into tissue, etc. In Scotland we have schools open to the children of key workers (mainly health workers and other emergency services). School staff are coming in on a volunteer basis to provide childcare and learning. There are many more volunteers than needed to look after the number of children who are coming in to schools. Rotas are being developed to decide how many staff will be in school and how often. These rotas are very varied – some have three shifts per day with two people on each shift, others have the same people on for three days in a row and then off for at least a week.</p>	<p>No plans in Scotland yet. It still seems a long time in the future! All exams have been cancelled and results will be awarded based on teacher judgements about pupil performance.</p>
<p>Slovenia</p>		<p>In Slovenia all schools are closed also for children of key workers. We have organized urgent care and work with those children with teachers volunteer basis to provide childcare and learning, but individually on the home of child or volunteer.</p> <p>All volunteers have received masks and disinfectants, in the programme only healthy children and volunteers are included.</p>	<p>In Slovenia all schools and kindergartens have been closed since 16th March and there is no plan to open them soon, definitely not in April, there are some projections for opening them at the end of May. On line and distance learning is provided and urgent day care with teacher volunteers for children (1-10 years) on the home of child for those whose parents work on urgent jobs position (medical staff, police, fire fighters, etc). State exams are going to start end of May and plans how to organize them are already in final preparation phase.</p>