

Latvia

Please find below a brief description of the legal solutions available in the current situation:

1. Putting on idle time due to the fact that the employer is not able to provide employees with work (it is not important that this is due to the government's decision). Pursuant to the Labour Act employer has to pay salary for this period, but pursuant to the Act re measures of the national threat and prevention and elimination of its consequences due to the spread of COVID-19 adopted on March 20, if the employer is recognized as severely affected by the state of emergency declared in Latvia, it could require that the state pays the payment for the idle time. Tomorrow the Cabinet of Ministers will adopt regulations by setting the business sectors which are recognized as affected.
2. Termination of employment relationship - due to reorganisation and liquidation of the positions. In this situation the notice period is 1 month and employer has to pay the severance payment which depends on the length of service. In the specific cases, redundancy may be recognized as collective redundancy, then the process is even longer. The approach of the government - keep as many jobs as possible, therefore, there are no regulations which would facilitate all this process (at list at this moment).
3. Offer amendments to the employment contracts - decrease of working time/remuneration, but it is possible only pursuant to the mutual agreement.
4. Mutual termination of employment relationship - possible at any time, but usually there is paid some compensation fro this. Please note that in Latvia employers has to have the ground set by the Labour Act for the unilateral termination of employment relationship.
5. Some additional sources of information (my apologies, but not all are available in English, but maybe this still this could be useful for your member companies):

a) <https://www.ellex.lv/en/news-events/news/the-covid-19-infection-and-the-rights-and-duties-of-an-employer-/47593> (prepared by me on March 16, the only change -mentioned in Point 1 of this email re the idle time);

b) <https://spkc.gov.lv/en/news/get/nid/530> (information prepared by the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control of Latvia which is the main governmental organisation coordinating all issues);

c) <https://arodbiedribas.lv/news/darbinieku-un-darba-deveju-attiecibas-jautajumi-un-atbildes/> (good source of information prepared b y the trade unions, but unfortunately only in Latvian);

d) <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/313373-par-valsts-apdraudejuma-un-ta-seku-noversanas-un-parvaresanas-pasakumiem-sakara-ar-covid-19-izplatibu> (the Act re measures of the national threat and prevention and elimination of its consequences due to the spread of COVID-19, but only in Latvian. This act provides the aid package provided by the state);

Here is also some useful, updated information and **it is in English language:**

<https://fm.gov.lv/en/news/61889-government-ratifies-a-uniform-law-for-all-measures-for-containing-the-spread-of-covid-19>

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