

EVERYONE PROTECTS EVERYONE ELSE

A group of technical and scientific experts from several universities —located in Piedmont and in other parts of the national territory— and research centers coordinated by the **Polytechnic University of Turin** has established in this manner a series of guidelines, gathered in the published and constantly updated report “Open Enterprises, Protected Workers”, that will help the political decision-makers restart the country safely.

This is a summary in English of the aims, the context, the general principles and the project. (Translated by Gonzalo Suárez Lovelle).

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The project objectives are to establish a reference framework for procedures, organisation and technology, aimed at **reducing the risk of contracting an infection among people who have no symptoms**, in order to allow a safe and **controlled return to workplaces and social gathering spaces** once the epidemiological data will give the green light.

All this based, not only on the conviction that the **highest protection of workers** in the workplace must be essential, but also to **kickstart quickly** the economic activities of the country **as a key element for the competitiveness if not even for their own survival** —specially in the case of small and medium-sized enterprises—. In line with this prospective, the defined guidelines and praxis should combine the assurance of achievement of a successful control of the risk of infection and **the quickly technical and economic feasibility at any stage of the production chain, from small to large enterprises**.

This document should be considered in close liaison with the **Protocol for the Regulation of Measures for the Contrast and Containment of the Spread of COVID-19 in Workplaces**, signed on 14 March 2020 by the Italian General Confederation of Labour ('CGIL'), the Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions ('CISL'), and the Italian Labour Union ('UIL') and employer's associations following an invitation of the President of the Council of Ministers (**Appendix 1**), and with similar guidelines regarding the building sector¹ and the transport sector². It is aimed to outline the indications contained in the Protocol —regarding praxis and applicable methodology— that can facilitate a quick implementation in the frames of reference (see **Chapter 2**), and particularly in the productive activities, either active or suspended, in a temporary prospective that will vary according to the duration of the SARS-CoV-2 emergency. The information gathered in this project should allow every enterprise to implement successfully the praxis and the measures according to their specificity. Likewise, the aforementioned Protocol in point no. 13 foresees that every enterprise must constitute a committee between employers and employee representative bodies, should it be the case, or with the representatives of the workers for territorial security (RLST), to supervise its application.

¹ Shared Protocol for the Regulations of Measures for the Contrast and Containment of the Spread of COVID-19 in workplaces of the building sector: guideline for the building sector, signed by the social partners on 24 April following an invitation of the Minister of Infrastructures and Transport, and the Minister for Labour.

² Shared Protocol for the Regulations of Measures for the Contrast and Containment of the Spread of COVID-19 in the transportation and logistics sector, signed by the social partners on 18 March, following the invitation of the Ministry of Infrastructures and Transport.

In a last analysis, the promoted work is published and made available to the **political decision-makers** and the **Italian National Institute of Health** ('ISS') for an eventual support in their decision-making process within their respective areas of competence.

The **teamwork of authors of this report** will be available for every interested party (enterprises, public entities, trade unions) during the entire period of the emergency for assistance regarding the most suitable procedure to restart their activities, also in relation to the financial instruments implemented by the State³.

2. APPLICATION CONTEXTS

The methods of the project are adapted for closed spaces where social gatherings can be controlled and in which it is possible to predict the amount and the identity of the expected people, as well as the times of entry, stay and exit. Preferably, places in which people come and go on a regular basis and frequent the same social group. Among these, in order of priority of application:

- **Non-health care workplaces** (manufacturing enterprises, shops, utilities, etc.)
- **Other places of social gathering where an allocated seating ticket is necessary** (i.e. theatres, concerts halls, etc.) **or similar to those** (museums and cinemas in which the ticket is bought at the entrance).
- **Educational establishments** of all types and at all levels.

Only some of the methods of the project will be applicable to open spaces (parks, open-air concerts) or open-access places —or where the access cannot be traced— (supermarkets, cinemas —where a free ticket is required—, hotels, restaurants, airports). Successive and eventual in-depth analysis may involve the former realities, as well as places to practice sports (gyms, indoor gymnasiums, swimming pools) where, in addition to users and sportsmen, workers (trainers, doctors, physiotherapists) and workers with tender contracts (cleaning, custodianship, etc.) are present.

The contexts of festivals or dance entertainments are even more challenging, compromised by the constraint of “interpersonal distance” and the use of personal protection equipment, a term that will be mentioned in this report as an important instrument to reduce the risk of infection transmission.

In any case, it will be essential that the parties analyze jointly the suitability of methods for its application on **means of transport (public or private)**.

3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The basic principle of the project is the **prevention and containment of the infection**, by means of strategies of **prevention, monitoring, information** and **training**. The basis of the project is that “**everyone protects everyone else.**”

Every individual **participates** in the containment actions thanks to a **conscious behaviour**: the constant use of protective equipment to minimize the risk of infection (i.e. masks, ear protectors, gloves, glasses) and organisational procedures of work, about which the worker is adequately informed; he undergoes a multidimensional triage (temperature,

³ Decree-Law No.23 of 8 April 2020. Urgent measures related to access to credit and tax compliance for businesses, special powers in strategic sectors, as well as intervention in healthcare and work, extension of administrative and procedural deadlines. (20G00043) (Official Gazette General Series no. 94 of 08-04-2020).

biochemical analysis, etc.) and eventually adopts digital systems to monitor his own movements aimed at avoiding pointless gatherings.

The digital systems of monitoring will be implemented under the previous enterprise's agreement with, when present, the trade union representatives, with respect to privacy protection. The trade union representatives must always be informed of the measures, aimed at preventing and containing the infection in the workplace, which will be contained in a specific signed protocol.

Given the circumstances, if there is not a trade union representative structure at company level (Rappresentanze Sindacale Aziendale, RSA) or a unitary workplace union structure (RSU), the framework agreements (protocols) at territorial level may be stipulated, signed by the trade union organisations and the employer's associations that have signed the National Collective Labour Agreements (CCNL) applied in the enterprise, which may be additionally recognised at company level with the signing of the Decree-Law and the Worker Representatives for Safety (RLS).

It could be convenient **for the prevention and containment of the transmission of the infection in the work environment** to classify the **workplaces** according to the specific criteria of occupant density and the interpersonal space that must be respected, and **the measures to minimize the risk of transmission of infection** that must be implemented. This could require organisational and procedural changes, as well as in working conditions.

In consequence, the **Documents on Assessment of Risks indicating measures adopted to eliminate interference** (DUVRI) will be updated, considering the potential risks associated to **service, works, construction, and supply contracts, other than transports and logistics in general, the internal services of the companies, the operating methods of productive activities and/or supply of services even within the same organisation.**

Besides, **training and information** plans should be prepared for the workers at any level, as well as **prevention, supervision and monitoring** of the application of the requirements. The **health surveillance** by a **qualified health professional** —already present and appointed for the purpose— will be executed with respect to the hygiene measures contained in the protocol against the infection and the recommendations of the Ministry of Health.

It seems appropriate to make available specific actions of **welfare and psychological support** either at company level or, specially for the small enterprises, at consortium level. Given the emergency situation, such actions will be financially sustained by the State through local crisis units.

Likewise, specific **procedures to respond⁴ in case that a worker is tested positive for Covid-19** should be defined (prearrangement of isolation areas, contact tracing, local disinfection, temporary pause of company functions, etc.), or that a individual is “suspected” with Covid-19, in other words, those workers that are not officially confirmed, maybe with no symptoms, but have been in close and long contact (>15 minutes) with an infected individual (confirmed by nasopharyngeal swab). Besides, similar procedures will have to be defined for those workers holding a tender or service contract who work in the company facilities.

To conclude, it is considered very useful to apply the principles of the present project to various industrial contexts —different by type and size of the workforce— to improve the suggested praxis, following the willingness expressed, in that effect, by some company partners of the project (beta tester).

⁴ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/novel-coronavirus-guidelines-non-pharmaceutical-measures.pdf>

4. THE PROJECT

The group of experts for the elaboration of studies and proposals (AUTHORS) is composed of members of “third” public institutions (universities, third party experts, National Institute for Insurance against Accidents at Work (INAIL), Camera di Commercio, etc.). The private parties and social partners act as independent EVALUATORS of the material elaborated by the AUTHORS.

The lines of development of the project are:

- a. **To minimise the risk of transmission of infection in means of transport from and to the workplace or in other work locations.**
- b. **Definition of welfare policies and management workplace privacy.**
- c. **Definition of appropriate protocols, and information, formation and training instruments** for the workers.
- d. **Definition of appropriate measures for economic and material support** (i.e. medical equipment, such as thermometers, masks, disinfectant, etc., in relationship with Invitalia and the Commissioner Domenico Arcuri) in the enterprises for the adaptation of the requirements for the prevention and containment of the risk of transmission of infection defined in point a.
- e. **Confirmation of the effectiveness of the measures, requirements, and defined protocols** in points a.-d. in its application to some example enterprises of various sectors (production sector, commodities sector, commercial sector) selected to encompass sizes of workforce from small to large enterprises. Those who have collaborated to define which is comprised in points A.-D. will be able to act as a counsellor for the “beta tester” enterprises.

For the first four lines of development, the public experts AUTHORS should continuously update the document for the parts for which they are respectively competent, while being able to communicate with any entity or external individual, and to take advantage of the progress regarding the understanding of infection transmission, the means and practices to its containment, as well as of the data collected from the research of the application of procedures developed in the various contexts of the engaged beta-testers.

The security experts (EVALUATORS) of the actors of the enterprise system (employer’s associations, industries, theatres, museums, start-ups, commercial establishments, schools, etc.) or the trade union organisations (experts identified by the representative secretaries of Turin of CGIL, CISL, UIL, and UGL⁵).

The companies that have joined the initiative with the role of beta-tester will give their opinion regarding the set of preventive and containment measures of the risk of infection, testing implicitly the effectiveness of these measures in their specific context. Consequently, giving the green light to the point e. of the project (resilience test).

⁵ General Labour Union

5. ADVANTAGES OF THE PROJECT: YOU WIN I WIN

The project, regarding its modularity, presents some advantages that may be applied not only to working, but also to the whole social approach for the management of the risk of infection.

5.1. For the community

Starting from the enterprises, in other words, from those places where the culture of reducing the risk of infection is more well-established, the project also presents positive advantages for the whole social life. First and foremost, the mass implementation of the practices contained in the project would allow the complete application and to maximize the results of the principle: “everyone protects everyone else.”

- Standardisation of personal and community methods for the prevention, in the whole national territory and in every production chain: shared methods allow an easier sharing and spread of the good practices in the territory, avoiding localism.
- Coherence with the sanitary guidelines at national and international level.
- Greater spread of many habits (i.e. regarding the use of equipment, preventive formation, etc.) to other sectors of society (educational establishments, worship places, large-scale retail, cinema and leisure places, etc.).

Moreover, a wide application in the territory of the use practices of masks and other protective equipment of the infection might be favored by an industrial conversion for the widespread and local production of this equipment, solving the important and current lack of supplies. For this purpose, it is necessary to promote:

- Clear guidelines concerning the fabrication and the use of “community” masks with an optimal filtration level.
- Cautious use of the available resources, respecting the demand of high-quality equipment supplies —such as the type 2 surgical masks and the personal protective equipment type FFP2 and FFP3— of the sanitary professionals and the control authorities of the territory.

5.2. For the worker

Awareness, assumption of responsibility and effective protection will be fostered by the participation to structural and shared activities. Particularly, the main advantages for the workers to achieve should be:

- The worker acknowledges that he works in safe working conditions, thanks to both the efforts of the enterprise and the individuals.
- An active participation to reduce the risk of infection.
- Protection of the familiar and social environments in general, to which the worker returns at the end of the working day, thanks to the reduction of risks in the enterprise and in the means of transport.

5.3. For the employer

It could be achieved:

- An anticipated and controlled restart.

- The reference to procedures approved by competent authorities.
- A greater communication with authorities and trade unions.
- A protection of disputes.