

Bird & Bird & COVID-19

Key policy measures and obligations for food & beverage businesses during these challenging times.

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Introduction

The COVID-19 crisis is impacting every single aspect of our lives and of the economy, with massive disruption on many levels due to the stringent confinement and quarantine measures adopted in all parts of the world and an expected long term impact on the global economy and trade. While most sectors are actually brought to a halt or experiencing a severe slowdown of their activities, sectors that are of critical or strategic importance have to remain in function.

Agri-food is one sector that supplies essential goods and services and as such, the sector has a key role to play in the schemes that the competent authorities put in place to manage the crisis, notably by defining measures for the purpose of ensuring as little disruption as possible to food supply, so that consumers continue to have access to sufficient quantities of food and that food is safe.

There are multiple risk factors for disruption, including the unavailability of the necessary workforce or shortages in essential supplies upstream. In the EU, the temporary introduction of internal border controls also adds complexity to the transport of goods in the internal market. In addition, there is a threat of a spike in prices or other unfair trading practices that needs careful monitoring and action.

In this PDF, which will be updated and supplemented regularly, our Food & Beverage team summarises key policy measures being adopted to alleviate the impact of the crisis on the sector or otherwise maintain the accessibility of food for consumers and other related information, with a particular focus on developments that entail obligations for businesses. This overview hopefully helps businesses navigate the patchwork of measures being discussed and adopted in these challenging times.

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European Union

Whilst in the European Union, most emergency regulatory measures fall within the remit and competences of the individual Member States and are therefore enacted at national level, one particular legislative initiative taken by the Commission is worth mentioning on this page, namely the adoption, on 30 March 2020, of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/466 (the "Regulation") that provides for a set of temporary measures intended to contain the risks to human, animal and plant health and animal welfare that certain serious disruptions of Member States' control systems due to coronavirus disease may do arise.

The impact of this Regulation on food business operators consists in **changes as to how and by whom official controls and other official activities may be performed during the coronavirus disease outbreak**. These measures are currently scheduled to remain available to Member States until 1 February 2021.

The constant evaluation of the situation has allowed to consider that disruptions related to availability of staff and the capacity of official laboratories in the context of official controls would not persist beyond 1 August 2020, and the related measures have therefore been waived as from that date.

In a nutshell, the Regulation currently allows Member States, by way of temporary measures:

- In order to mitigate the **difficulties related to the signature and issuance of original paper official certificates and official attestations which should accompany consignments of animals and germinal products** moved between Member States or entering the Union, official controls and other official activities on official certificates and official attestations can exceptionally be performed on an electronic copy of the original of such certificates or attestations, or on an electronic format of the certificate or attestation produced and submitted in TRACES. Of note:
 - This will be possible only if the person responsible for presenting the official certificate or official attestation presents to the competent authority a statement affirming that the original of the official certificate or official attestation will be submitted as soon as technically feasible
 - Operators remain entitled to submit original paper certificates and attestations where these exist.
- To adopt certain measures **to avoid serious health risks for staff of their competent authorities** without jeopardising the prevention of risks to human, animal and plant health arising from animals, plants and their products and without jeopardising the prevention of risks to animal welfare, namely through allowing meetings, such as interviews with operators and their staff in the context of official control methods and techniques referred to in Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625, can be held using available means of distance communication instead of having to take place in person.

Importantly, Member States that wish to apply the temporary measures laid down in the Regulation have to inform the Commission and the other Member States thereof, as well as of measures they take to remedy their difficulties in carrying out official controls and other official activities.

The Regulation –the current consolidated text of which is available [here](#) - allows the Member States to enact such measures effective 31 March 2020 until 1 February 2021.

Belgium

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	No
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	No
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although all food retailers may continue to operate at their usual opening hours, night shops have to close at 10pm at the latest. • It is not possible to purchase alcoholic beverages after 8pm. • Food markets are allowed, provided that all the social distancing rules are respected. Food markets have to close at 10pm and cannot sell alcoholic beverages after 8pm. It is forbidden for customers to eat the purchased products at the stall. • Restaurants and bars have to remain closed until further notice, but restaurants are allowed to supply foods by means of delivery and take-away until 10pm.
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All necessary measures must be put in place by all shops to guarantee that there is a minimum distance of 1.5 metres between people. • Furthermore, supermarkets may only have a maximum of 1 customer per 10 square metres and the customers may only be present for a maximum of 30 minutes. • Everyone older than 12 years should cover up their nose and mouth.
5	Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?	The Federal Agency for Safety of the Food Chain has allowed wholesalers of foodstuffs whose stock of refrigerated foodstuffs cannot be disposed of due to the closure of the restaurants and bars, are exceptionally allowed to freeze refrigerated pre-packaged foodstuffs provided multiple conditions have been complied with such as the sale of such products frozen before 1 January 2021 and used by 31 January 2021 at the latest.

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Czech Republic

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	No
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	No
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of 25 May 2020, restaurants and bars may re-open with restricted opening hours from 6 am to 11 pm (the restriction does not pertain to take-away sale). As of 26 May 2020, there will no longer be any special opening hours reserved for elderly.
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All necessary measures must be put in place by all open shops to guarantee that there is a minimum distance of 2 meters between customers. All open shops must ensure proper management of waiting queues, both inside and outside the establishment especially by marking the waiting area and placing the markers for minimum distances between customers. All open shops must place disinfectants close to frequently touched objects (especially handles, railings, shopping trolleys) so that they are available to employees and customers. The masks are mandatory for customers as well as workers. All open shops must ensure that their workers wear gloves when in contact with the goods and when receiving payments from customers. All open shops must ensure that customers are informed of the above rules, in particular through information posters at the entrance and in the establishment or by communicating the rules through the speakers in the shop. In addition, the sale of non-prepacked bread and other pastry is allowed only if it is ensured that no crowding occurs at the point of sale and if the point of sale is equipped with personal hygiene aids. Operators of retail shops shall also provide disposable gloves or other similar hand protection (such as a microtone bag) to customers at each entrance to the shop free of charge. <p>As regards the re-opened restaurants, the measures are</p>

		<p>following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers must be seated so that there is a distance of at least 1.5 meters between them, except for customers sitting at the same table. • The staff actively prevents gathering of persons at a distance of less than 1.5 meters from each other, including the waiting area. • Hand disinfection for customers is provided at the entrance and bathrooms. • Chairs and tables must be disinfected before seating each new group of customers. • The dispensing window for sale of food must be disinfected at least every 2 hours. • If an employee has a body temperature of 37 °C and higher or other symptoms of COVID-19, he or she must be prevented from entering the restaurant. • The staff must wear the mask all the time, the customers must wear the mask when moving around the restaurant premises (e.g. to bathrooms).
5	<p>Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?</p>	<p>Not for the moment, however, the Ministry of Health may still adopt further emergency measures necessary to protect the public health.</p>

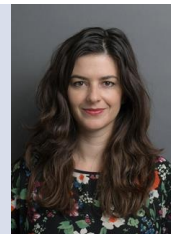
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Denmark

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	No
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	No
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	No Actually, the Authorities are very attentive to avoid that to many people are shopping at the same time, thus the retail businesses have been allowed to expand their opening hours.
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	Yes All companies have a general obligation to ensure that they take appropriate measures to restrict the spreading of the virus, e.g. informing customers, offering disinfectant and marking distances with stickers on floors. Please note, that the list is non-exhaustive and companies must assess the necessary measures themselves based on the recommendations from the Public Health Agency. All retailers must restrict the number of customers that can visit the stores at the same time. They must also find alternative solutions to queuing, or inform the customers of the distance they should keep from other customers. Many retailers have also installed shields between the costumers and the check out counters to protect the employees. In addition, it is a requirement to wear masks in all kind of shops in Denmark. The requirement applies to both costumers and workers.
5	Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?	No

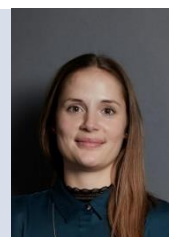
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Germany

1	<p>Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?</p>	<p>No</p>
2	<p>Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?</p>	<p>No</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture is in regular exchange with the business associations involved. • The authorities could only intervene if there is a supply crisis within the meaning of the relevant law (“Ernährungssicherstellungs- und -vorsorgegesetz”). However, the Federal Ministry does not currently assume that the corona virus event could lead to such a supply crisis.
3	<p>Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 8 March 2021 most retail businesses may reopen, provided that shopping appointments are made (“click & meet”). Businesses for everyday needs and basic supply may open without this requirement. The latter includes food retail and wholesale businesses as well as markets. They can operate normally at their usual opening hours but in compliance with the appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures. Exemptions may apply for retailers offering delivery and pick-up and for commercial supplies. • Restaurants and bars may operate for contactless delivery or pick-up of food and drinks. Outdoor dining may not reopen until 22 March 2021 at the earliest. A decision on further opening steps is expected on 22 March 2021.
4	<p>Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All States require a minimum distance of 1.5 m between customers. • In all Federal States supermarkets and other shops may only have a maximum of 1 customer per 10 square metres. Businesses with a total sales area of more than 800 square metres are allowed 1 additional customer per every 20 square metres exceeding 800 square metres. • All shops must control access and avoid queues. Some employ private security services for this purpose. • In some Federal States shops must have protective devices (e.g. dividing shields) for their staff. Some also require frequent airing of the sales area.* • All States foresee a mandatory wearing of medical face masks for customers and some for the staff as well. Exceptions apply to children (some States allow non-medical masks until the age of 14; children under the age of 6 do not need to wear masks)*, , disabled persons and persons who can substantiate (e.g. by a medical certificate) that they cannot reasonably be expected to wear a mask for health or other compelling reasons.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In all States, however, retailers can refuse access to the premises or the store by exercising their domiciliary rights, if customers refuse to wear a mask or cannot be expected to do so due to health reasons.* • In some Federal States shops have to provide hand sanitizer for their customers if possible.* • In some Federal States shops have to disinfect all surfaces frequently touched by customers and/or staff several times a day.* • Some Federal States recommend a contactless payment via debit- or credit cards instead of payment in cash.*
5	<p>Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?</p>	<p>No</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The restrictions on “normal household quantities” are set by some food retailers themselves. • The authorities could only intervene if there is a supply crisis within the meaning of the relevant law (“Ernährungssicherstellungs- und -vorsorgegesetz”). However, the Federal Ministry does not currently assume that the corona virus event could lead to such a supply crisis.

* Even though the information originates from a joint decision of the Federal Government and the Federal States, details of the implementation in the Federal States differ, and are being modified at short notice. In addition, local restrictions may apply. For more information on specific regulations in the different Federal States please see our regularly updated overview [here](#) and [here](#).

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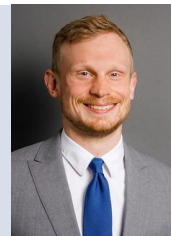
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Hungary

<p>1</p>	<p>Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?</p>	<p>No</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been no specific prohibitions enacted in this respect in relation to COVID-19, however the Hungarian Competition Authority is keeping a close eye on promotional and commercial activities and enforces general rules very strictly. The Authority issued several communications and recommendations on best practices, where it emphasizes inter alia that it is strictly prohibited to attribute medicinal effect to food, or to advertise food alleging that it has some kind of medical effect or it is effective against COVID-19. Communication available here. • The Hungarian Competition Authority have ongoing assessment on commercial practices, especially on web shops and products claiming medical effects against COVID-19. It emphasizes that, in the current situation it is highly important that web shops inform consumers about their products and services in accordance with the applicable legal regulations, in particular on pricing, indicating manufacturer/distributor information, information leaflets etc. Communication available here. Upon starting an investigation on products claiming special or medical effect against COVID-19, the Competition Authority now suspends all sales and marketing activities with the subject matter product until the end of the investigation.
<p>2</p>	<p>Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?</p>	<p>No</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently there is no general reporting obligation towards the authorities. However the government has the power to regulate the limitations or prohibitions regarding selling, purchasing and consuming foodstuff and other products and consuming water by governmental decrees. • The Operational Task Force of the Ministry of Defence may decide on a case by case basis whether the direct overseeing of food producer/pharmaceutical companies or supplier is needed to ensure safe and sufficient supplies to the people of Hungary. More information available here. • Additionally, the Hungarian Competition Authority advises to be prudent when keeping stock and refrain from suggesting the product's undue popularity by falsely communicating insufficient number of stock.
<p>3</p>	<p>Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting from 11 November 2020, individuals (except from employees) cannot enter shops, tobacco shops and lottery shops from 7 p.m. till 5 a.m. and these shops should be closed during this time. Pharmacies and gas stations are exempted of this and so may be opened during this time. The operator of the shops is responsible for the compliance with these rules. The compliance with the obligation to close the shop is supervised by the police. In case of non-compliance, the police may (i) impose a fine between HUF 100 000 - HUF 1 000 000 on the operator and/or (ii) may close the premises for minimum one day and for maximum one year. The fine should be paid within 15 days. The above

		<p>legal consequences may not be applied if the operator has taken the necessary measures to stop the unlawful activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting from 11 November 2020, individuals can only enter restaurants, bars and coffee shops for the period of time to pick up their takeaway order. Canteens at workplaces, restaurants of accommodations (for serving the staying guests), canteens at educational institutions (for serving students and employees of the institution), canteens at health institutions are exempted from this provision. The operator of the restaurants, bars and coffee shops is responsible for the compliance with these rules.
4	<p>Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of 21 September 2020, it is mandatory to wear protective masks in shops covering the mouth and the nose of the individuals shopping or working in shops. If an individual does not wear protective masks correctly, the operator of the shop is obliged to ensure that this individual leaves the premises. Customers are also obliged to wear protective masks while staying in restaurants, bars and coffee shops for the period of time to pick up their takeaway orders. If a customer does not wear protective masks correctly, the operator of the restaurant, bar or coffee shop is obliged to ensure that this individual leaves the premises. The compliance with these obligations is supervised by the police. In case of non-compliance, the police may (i) impose a fine between HUF 100 000 - HUF 1 000 000 on the operator and/or (ii) may close the premises for minimum one day and for maximum one year. If the operator has taken the necessary measures to stop the unlawful activity (i.e. has ordered the individual to leave and, if the individual did not leave, called the police) the police may not apply the above legal consequences. The fine should be paid within 15 days.
5	<p>Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 4 November 2020 the Government again declared the “state of emergency”. The Government is empowered to adopt emergency measures guaranteeing the continuity of the economy and the functioning of the market, as well as the protection of the consumers. During the state of emergency, for the purposes of selling daily consumer products and catering products, commercial activities may be conducted off-premises without notification and registration with the authorities on the basis of agreements with catering businesses and shops selling daily consumer products. Such activities can be conducted by shops and catering businesses as well. During the state of emergency, retail sale via mail order may be conducted without notification and registration with the authorities for the purposes of selling daily consumer products and catering products. During the state of emergency foodstuff may be sold via commercial activities conducted off-premises. Incidentally, some adopted emergency measures effective from 11 November 2020 may also affect food businesses, such as:

- starting from 8 p.m. till 5 a.m. everyone must stay at their residential address;
- gatherings in public areas are prohibited;
- it is prohibited to organize events, including music events, cultural events, Christmas markets; the maximum number of participants in private events is 10 persons, except funerals where the maximum is 50 persons;
- accommodations may only receive guests who stay for business, economic or educational purposes;
- individuals are not permitted to enter theatres, concert halls, movie theatres, gyms, zoos, museums, spas and swimming pools, etc.

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Italy

1	<p>Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There is no general ban in place concerning promotional/commercial communication per se.</p> <p>Anyway, food and beverage companies and the retail businesses shall always avoid any type of crowd in close environments and shall guarantee the social distance also in open space.</p> <p>Fairs and congresses are still suspended.</p>
2	<p>Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?</p>	<p>No</p>
3	<p>Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?</p>	<p>Since May 18th, 2020 we have been entered into stage "<i>two-bis</i>".</p> <p>All the business activities are opened without any national restriction regarding open hours except those decided on local level (by municipals or regions).</p> <p>Food retailers may continue to operate at their usual opening hours and in compliance with local regulation (if any).</p> <p>Catering services activities (including bars, pubs, restaurants, ice cream shops, patisseries) are opened. However, each region shall evaluate the compatibility of the mentioned business activities with the epidemiological trend on local level and shall adopt the relevant protocols or guidelines able to prevent or reduce the risk of infections. They can always supply foods by means of delivery and take-away.</p> <p>Markets are opened in accordance with local regulations.</p> <p>Anyway all the business activities shall guarantee the minimum safety measures described below.</p>
4	<p>Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>All the business activities shall implement specific safety measures related to the business activity and proportionate to the possible risk of infection, in compliance with the relevant protocols or guidelines adopted by the regions or by the Conference of the regions and autonomous provinces.</p> <p>In any case, such safety measures shall at least guarantee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social distance at least 1 meter (it is recommended to maintain in all activities and their phases); • the cleanliness and hygiene of environments (it is recommended at least twice a day and according to opening hours);

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate natural ventilation and air exchange in closed environments; • adequate availability and accessibility to hand disinfection systems (it is recommended, in particular, the availability of such systems alongside keyboards, touch screens and payment systems); • the actual possibility of maintaining the appropriate mask by everyone in the recommended contexts (is recommended the use of face masks in closed places or environments and in any case in all possible work phases where social distance cannot be guaranteed as well as the use of disposable gloves in purchasing activities, particularly for the purchase of food and drinks); • measures to avoid any type of crowd; • the entrances take place in a deferred manner (is recommended the access regulated in accordance with the following methods: (i) Time slots; (ii) For business space up to forty square meters, people may enter one at a time, in addition to a maximum of two business operators; (iii) For business space larger than those described above, access must be regulated according to the available spaces, differentiating, where possible, the entry and exit routes); • adequate and efficient information and communication systems to ensure customers' clearance. <p>Of note, many shops and supermarkets, even if it is not strictly required by law, offer to clients hands-sanitizing gels and disposable gloves.</p>
5	<p>Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?</p>	No

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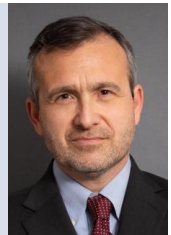
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The Netherlands

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	No
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	No
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chairman of the security region determines where and under what conditions markets may take place. • Restaurants and bars have to remain closed until further notice, but restaurants are allowed to supply foods by means of delivery and take-away. • Please note that all shops except for supermarkets (and other stores that mainly sell food products) must close at 20:00 (8:00 PM).
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All necessary measures must be put in place by all shops to guarantee that there is a minimum distance of 1.5 metres between people. • Stores are now also required to regularly clean shopping carts and baskets. • Furthermore, supermarkets have decided to only allow a maximum of 1 customer per 10 square metres (though this decision is not based on a Government decision or law).
5	Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?	No

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Slovakia

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	No
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	<p>Yes</p> <p>As per food stock reporting, we are not aware of any new Slovak law restrictions due to COVID-19.</p> <p>However, each food operator has to execute and maintain a Crisis Plan, which would cover wide area of topics, including data on maintaining production, distribution, supply of food to food processing establishments, HACCP and hygiene standards, etc.</p>
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Shops have their opening hours from 9 am to 11 am reserved for the needs of older people (those older than 65 years). The older people are allowed to shop also outside the allocated hours, but it is strongly recommended to them to use the stipulated time frame.</p>
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	<p>Yes</p> <p>The number of customers in the premises at any one time may not exceed a concentration of 1 customer per 15 m² (small retail premises 10 m²) of the sales area of the shop.</p> <p>Hand disinfection or disposable gloves must be available and applied when entering the shop. The masks must be worn by the people in the shops.</p> <p>The small retail premises shall be disinfected every day. Public food facilities (restaurants, bars) are obliged to serve food and drinks in a packaged state and should be closed after 10:00 pm; it is forbidden to consume food and drinks in the interior of the premises.</p> <p>In queues waiting before entering the store or in front of the cashier, customers must keep a distance of at least 2 meters.</p> <p>It is recommended to measure the temperature of people at the entrances of the shops.</p> <p>It has to be ensured that floors are washed wet every day.</p> <p>Notice regarding the obligations and hygiene measures have to be visibly displayed on all entrances to the shops.</p>
5	Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?	<p>No</p> <p>We are, however, aware of the Recommendations on sale of food (hygienic and security recommendations mostly, sale of unpacked bread etc.) during the COVID 19 pandemic, issued by the State Veterinary and Food Supervision of the Slovak Republic available in Slovak here.</p> <p>However, the situation is changing dynamically and we recommend checking it on a regular basis.</p>

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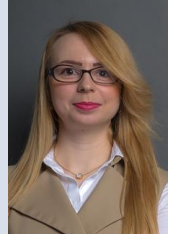
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Spain

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	Not to date
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	No To date, these measures have only been adopted in relation to certain medical devices.
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spanish national authorities have not established any specific restriction on opening hours. However, among the main measures that most food retail businesses have adopted to prevent contagion, include restriction in business hours to limit exposure. Restaurants and bars have to remain closed until further notice, being able to exclusively provide delivery and take-away services in accordance with Royal Decree 463/2020 by which the State of Alarm is declared
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Under Royal Decree 463/2020 states that in any case, crowding shall be avoided and consumers and employees shall be controlled to maintain a safety distance of at least one (1) metre in order to avoid possible contagion.</p> <p>Also, the Spanish Government has published a Guide on good practice in workplaces. Some of the recommendations are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The maximum capacity must allow compliance with distance requirement. When possible, access control mechanisms will be enabled at the entrances. All the public (also queue people), must keep the al distance requirement. The company must provide Personal Protective and Safety Equipments (PPE) when the risks cannot be avoided or sufficiently limited by technical means of collective protection or work organization procedures. . Personal protective equipment will be appropriate to the activities and work to be carried out. <p>The Guide can be accessed here (only in Spanish).</p>

5

Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?

The Food Industry is one of the essential services during the State of Alarm. Thus, to guarantee continuity in the supply and distribution of food, Royal Decree-Law 10/2020 specified that, in addition to retail food and beverages establishments, activities that participate in the market supply chain and in the operation of food and beverage production centers are considered essential. Thus, businesses linked to these activities must continue to operate in order to allowing the distribution of food and beverages from origin to final destination.

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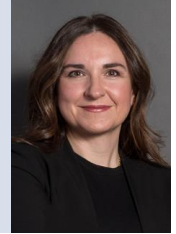
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Sweden

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	No
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	No
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	No
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All companies have a general obligation to ensure that they take appropriate measures to restrict the spreading of the virus, e.g. informing customers, offering disinfectant and marking distances with stickers on floors. Note that the list is non-exhaustive and companies must assess the necessary measures themselves based on the recommendations from the Public Health Agency. All retailers must restrict the number of customers that can visit the stores at the same time. They must also find alternative solutions to queuing, or inform the customers of the distance they should keep from other customers. Restaurants, cafes and bars must take precautionary measures against crowding (e.g. it is not possible to operate across a bar where people may gather closely to wait to order or be served.). All customers should be seated (at an appropriate distance from each other) when they eat or drink.
5	Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?	No

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<p>1</p>	<p>Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?</p>	<p>No, but in practice many discounts/promotions seem to have been curtailed to avoid customers bulk-buying.</p> <p>There are not any new restrictions in relation to the promotions/commercial communications for food and beverages in the UK. The ASA does however provide guidance on where advertisements will be 'problematic'. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent advertising regulator. The ASA makes sure ads across UK media stick to the advertising rules (the Advertising Codes). The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) is the sister organisation of the ASA and is responsible for writing the UK Advertising Codes.</p> <p>ASA guidance states:</p> <p><i>"Advertisers claiming that their food or supplement can help protect consumers from infection of coronavirus by, for example, supporting their immune system are likely to be problematic.</i></p> <p><i>There are rules which limit the claims that can be made for these products to only those expressly listed as authorised on the EU Register of nutrition and health claims. Foods and supplements are also prohibited from making any claims to prevent, treat or cure human disease."</i></p> <p>Additionally, the central principle of the CAP Code requires all marketing communications to be 'prepared with a sense of responsibility to consumers and society'; this of course has particular relevance at the moment.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The Coronavirus Act 2020 contains a number of provisions relating to food supply. Persons in a food supply chain (or closely connected to a food supply chain) may be required to supply relevant information to the authorities, when this is necessary to establish whether there is disruption (or risk of disruption) to the food supply chain, and where the information has previously not been provided when requested (or false/misleading information was provided).</p> <p>Most supermarkets have been limiting sales of certain items to a restricted number of items per customer (e.g. only 2 bags of flour per customer), although some of these restrictions are now being eased.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Opening hours for food shops have not been restricted, although in practice many are operating under reduced opening hours.</p> <p>With regard to England, The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Business Closure) (England) Regulations 2020 were passed on 21 March 2020, which requires the closure until further notice by the Secretary of State, of restaurants (including restaurants and dining rooms in hotels or members clubs); cafes (including workplace canteens, but not including cafes or canteens at a hospital, care home or school, prison and military canteens, or services providing food or drink to the homeless); bars, including bars in hotels or members' clubs; etc.</p>

		Takeaways establishments and restaurants offering a pick-up service may continue to operate, subject to adhering to certain social distancing requirements.
4	<p>Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?</p>	<p>Yes, in terms of official Government guidelines. The social distancing measures depend on the nature of the establishment. However, general social distancing guidelines include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use additional signage to ask customers not to enter the shop if they have symptoms; • Regulate entry so that the premises do not become overcrowded; • Use floor markings inside the commercial spaces to facilitate compliance with the social distancing advice of 2 metres, particularly in the most crowded areas, such as serving counters and tills; • Use vertical signage to direct customers into lanes if feasible to facilitate movement within the premises while maintaining 2 metre distance; • Make regular announcements to remind customers to follow social distancing advice and clean their hands regularly; • Place plexi-glass barriers at tills and counters if feasible, as an additional element of protection for workers and customers; • Encourage the use of contactless payments where possible, without disadvantaging older or vulnerable customers; and • Provide additional pop-up handwashing stations or facilities if possible, providing soap, water and hand sanitizer. <p>Supermarkets:</p> <p>In addition to the above, supermarkets must avoid crowding and create adequate spacing between individuals. Effective measures to support this will vary by store and location, but could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the number of customers within store and limiting access to avoid congestion; • Implementing queue management systems to limit crowds gathering at entrances and maintain 2 metres distance; and • Reminding customers to only buy what they need. <p>Outdoor food/farmers markets:</p> <p>Local Authorities may decide to close these markets as part of actions taken to maintain social distancing. Where markets are still in operation, food market operators are required to consider how they can safely sell their products without encouraging crowds and ensure hygiene measures are in place. This can be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking orders online or by telephone in advance and pre-packing orders to limit face-to-face time in the market; and • Considering delivery services if possible. <p>Takeaways and restaurants offering a pick-up service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No orders should be taken in person on the premises - this should be communicated to customers by appropriate

		<p>means such as signage;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses should therefore only take orders online or by telephone; • Customers could have staggered collection times - customers should be discouraged from entering the premises until their order is ready; • Customers arriving without having already placed an order should be encouraged to leave the premises to place their order by telephone or online and to return at a designated time for collection; • Customers whose orders are ready should enter one at a time to collect orders and make payments; and • Businesses should discourage crowding outside the premises. Where possible, use queue management systems to maintain 2 metres separation.
5	<p>Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?</p>	<p>No, not specifically.</p> <p>As previously mentioned, in the context of supermarkets, one of the guidelines provided includes reminding customers to only buy what they need, and individual shops have adopted various restrictions on bulk purchasing certain items.</p>

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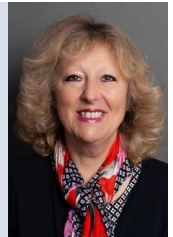
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Australia

1	Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?	No
2	Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?	No
3	Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?	Each state and territory has its own restrictions in relation to the operations of food retail businesses. For example, in NSW there are no restrictions on the opening hours for food retail businesses.
4	Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?	<p>No</p> <p>There are no directives from the federal or state government requiring food retailers to implement social distancing measures or provide protective equipment. However, many supermarkets in Australia have implemented their own measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting up posters and floor markers to encourage shoppers to keep their distance; • Recommending that customers use 'tap and pay' where possible; • Providing hand sanitiser to customers prior to entering the store; • Limiting the number of customers insider stores; • Installing plastic shields at checkouts; and • Installing plastic shields at checkouts.
5	Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Small bars and other licensed restaurants and bars are now able to sell takeaway alcohol and alcohol deliveries.</p>

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Singapore

1	<p>Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?</p>	<p>No</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While there are no formal restrictions, food and beverage outlets are encouraged to avoid activities that would attract crowds in and outside their premises. • Instead, a tiered pricing strategy is encouraged to support staggered meal hours, particularly at locations that attract large crowds.
2	<p>Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, Singapore already had measures in place to prevent and manage food supply disruption. • The measures include diversification of food sources, funding schemes for local farmers, and stockpiling staple food products. • To keep our diversified food lines intact in spite of the COVID-19 crisis, Singapore has actively sought to keep trade links open to avoid supply chain disruptions.
3	<p>Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bars and entertainment venues have been ordered to remain closed since 27 March 2020, until further notice. • Restaurants and cafes are allowed to resume dine-in services, as long as there is no live music, television screening or any other forms of public entertainment at these venues. Recorded music can be played, but at no louder than 60 decibels. • Sale and consumption of alcohol must also cease by 2230hrs daily, including at any outdoor refreshment areas owned or managed by these establishments. Furniture at such outdoor refreshment areas should be kept secured after close of business. Self-service buffet lines must also be suspended.
4	<p>Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food establishments with dine-in services only are allowed to seat groups of up to 8 persons, with at least 1 metre spacing between groups. Gatherings of more than 8 persons will not be allowed, even if split across multiple tables. There should be no mixing or intermingling between groups. • As an exception to the 8-person rule, restaurants may provide their venue for wedding receptions, solemnisations, and work-related events by third parties. Events that are social or recreational in nature are not allowed. Safe distancing measures and maximum capacity limits must still be complied with. • It is mandatory for all employees, customers and delivery personnel to wear masks at all times. Customers can remove their masks when eating or drinking, but should otherwise keep their masks on before food is served and

		<p>immediately after meals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queue lines and waiting areas must be clearly demarcated to ensure that safe distances of at least 1 metre between patrons. Pre-ordering and contactless payment solutions should also be implemented where possible to prevent physical clustering. • Safe distancing measures must be clearly communicated to customers, by putting up simple signage and conducting proper training for service personnel. • Common spaces must be frequently disinfected, especially high touch surfaces (e.g. door handles, toilets, bins) and interactive surfaces (e.g. smart kiosks). • Except for establishments that only provide takeaway or delivery, TraceTogether-only SafeEntry* must be implemented for all dine-in customers and visitors. Establishments should ensure that they can facilitate check-in via both the TraceTogether token and the TraceTogether mobile application. <p><i>*TraceTogether-only SafeEntry is a nationwide digital programme implemented by the Singapore Government to facilitate contact tracing efforts, by recording the personal details of all individuals when they visit public venues. Check-in may be administered by either (1) manually scanning the barcode on the Government-issued TraceTogether token, or (2) having individuals scan a QR code using the TraceTogether mobile application.</i></p>
5	<p>Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?</p>	<p>Not at the moment, but the Singapore Government is closely monitoring the situation and will progressively implement further measures as appropriate.</p>

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UAE

1	<p>Have any restrictions been enacted in relation to the promotion / commercial communication around food and beverages?</p>	<p>No</p>
2	<p>Are food businesses (producers, importers, distributors) required to monitor their stocks/supplies availability and/or report them to the authorities, or have any other measures been taken in relation to food stocks/availability?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The UAE has enforced Federal Law No. 3 of 2020 regarding the regulation of the strategic stock of food commodities (the “Law”). The Law is aimed at organising food supplies in the event of crises, emergencies and disasters, as well as for achieving food sustainability.</p> <p>The Law provides that the UAE Ministry of Economy (MOE), in coordination with the National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority (NCEMA) and other relevant bodies, will have the authority to implement sustainability and safety policies for the strategic stock of food commodities.</p> <p>The MOE will be responsible for setting up a register which will include the Suppliers and Registered Traders and their classification.</p> <p>The Law imposes several obligations on Suppliers, defined as “The producer or importer who provides food commodities to the distributors and traders either from within or outside the State” and Registered Traders, defined as “Any person who starts a commercial activity related to food commodities; such person shall be licensed in the State for the purpose of implementation of the present Law”.</p> <p>This includes an obligation on Suppliers and Registered Traders to distribute the stock of strategic commodities in the event of emergencies, crises or disasters in accordance with the strategic plans implemented by NCEMA and other relevant bodies. Any Supplier or Registered Trader who violates this obligation will be subject to an imprisonment term and a fine of not less than (AED 1,000,000) one million Dirhams and not more than (AED 5,000,000) five million Dirhams.</p> <p>The law also details penalties for the other obligations on Suppliers and Registered Traders, and these include a fine of between (AED 500,000) five hundred thousand Dirhams and (AED 2,000,000) two million Dirhams.</p>
3	<p>Have your national authorities restricted opening hours of food retail businesses?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurants and bars have to remain closed until further notice, but restaurants are allowed to supply foods by means of delivery and take-away. • Food retail outlets in the UAE, including cooperative societies, grocery stores, and supermarkets, are allowed to operate 24 hours, provided shoppers inside do not exceed 30 per cent of the total capacity. In practice in Dubai, however given that the first Dubai lock out/sanitisation drive was from 8pm to 6am (which is now a 24 hour lock down as at 22 April 2020), most grocery stores and supermarkets are closing at 8pm.

4	<p>Do food retailers have the obligation to implement social distancing measures and/or provide protective equipment (or other similar obligations)?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All necessary measures must be put in place by all shops to guarantee that there is a minimum distance of 2 metres between people. All customers are required to wear facemask and gloves at all times. • Certain supermarkets, such as Carrefour, only allow a certain number of customers at a time (leading to large waiting times outside the outlet). Some supermarkets are doing temperature checks on entry.
5	<p>Have any other binding measures/policies been enacted to maintain the accessibility/availability of food for consumers that generate obligations on food businesses?</p>	<p>No</p>

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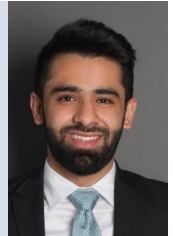
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