

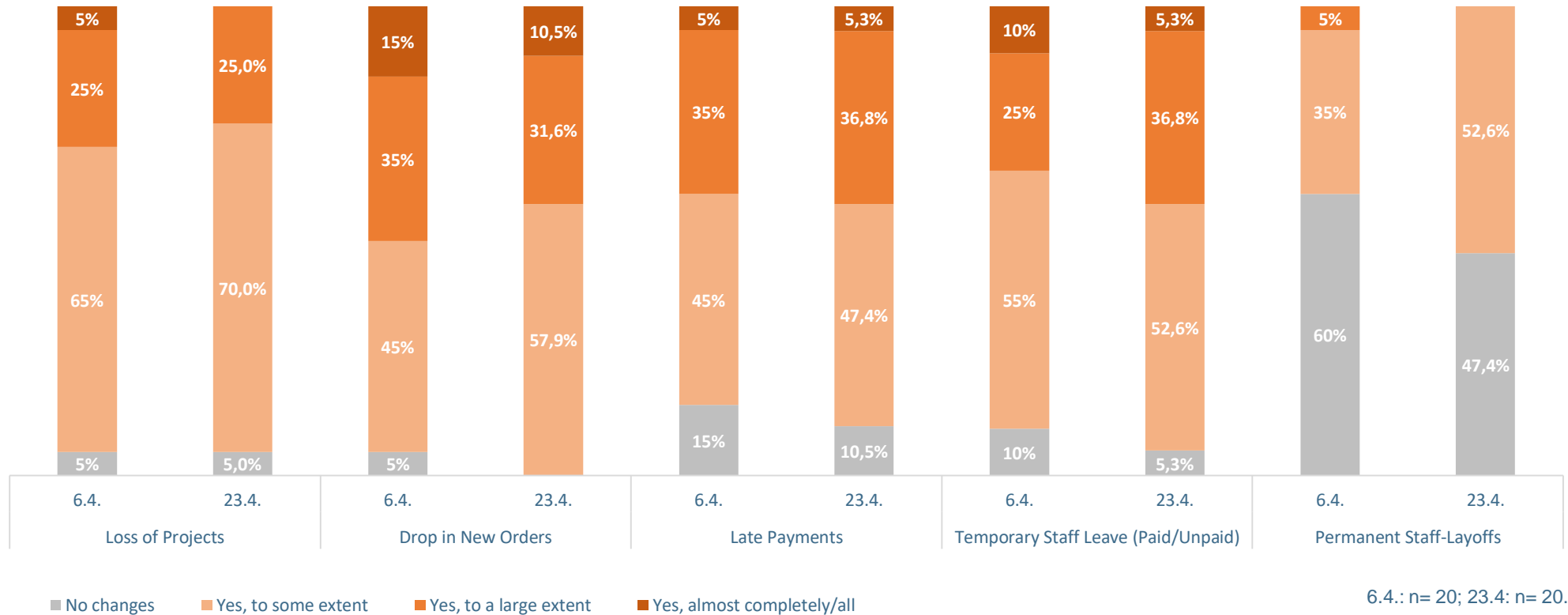
OVERVIEW

- Survey II: conducted between 21st and 23rd April 2020
- 10 questions (8 closed, 2 open)
- 20 EFCA MAs responded (approx. 2/3rd)

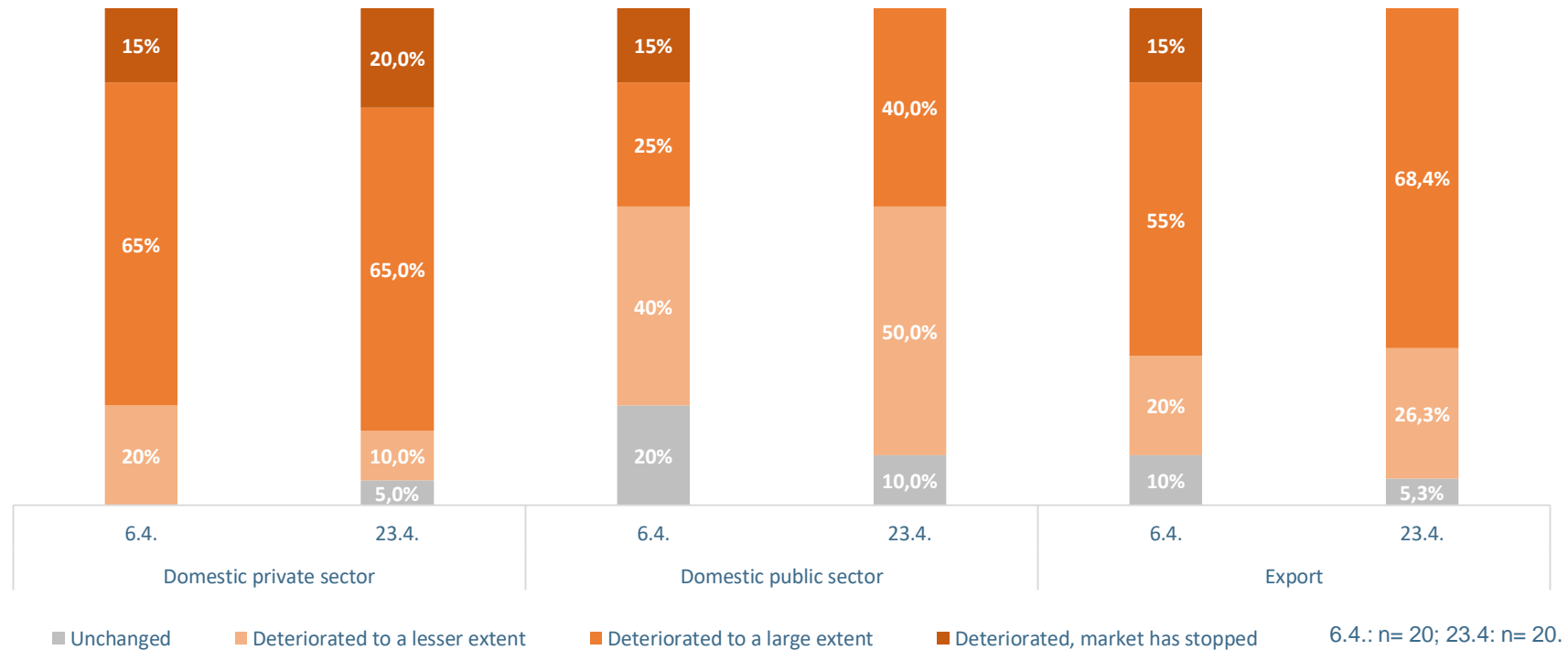
Main conclusions:

- **Staff:** Permanent layoffs are becoming more prevalent than temporary leaves
- **Orders:** Drop in new projects increased, loss of projects stable
- Effects are increasingly affecting **Public sector** and **Exports** in addition to a significant, negative, impact on **Private sector** projects

How are companies affected?



How have the following sectors been affected by the crisis, compared to the situation in January 2020?



What measures have been taken by the authorities in your country that have been useful and supportive to the industry and your member companies?
Please describe briefly.

SWEDEN	<p>Paid sick leave from day one, carried from the state from day 1 rather than from day 15 as before. Furloughing (temporary lay offs) up to 80 %, partly carried by the state (50 %). Reduced social security costs on salaries for 4 months. Ability to borrow/withhold tax and social security. Some state authorities that are major clients have agreed to reduce time of payment to 14 days rather than 30. The state has done a lot of good things. Many measures have been helpful. But much more is needed. But there are industries that are suffering way more than ours.</p>
FRANCE	<p>Subsidize the partial unemployment, and postpone taxes, in order to allow liquidation authorize public authorities to give licences electronically</p>
DENMARK	<p>Primarily activities focused on public work in municipalities and infrastructure. There has not yet been a significant move forward of large capital projects, but a number of smaller projects have been moved forward. In addition, local authorities has been allowed to invest above their "investment cap" for 2020. What is more, payment of invoices has as a general rule for public clients been speeded up, which improves liquidity in consultancy and engineering firms. Finally, construction sites has been open throughout the COVID-19 lockdown.</p> <p>However, none of the existing government schemes for compensating businesses for salaries or loss of income are relevant for consultancy and engineering firms operating in Denmark. Government measures on postponing payment of tax etc. has improved liquidity, thus these measures have a positive impact, also for consultancy and engineering firms operating in Denmark.</p>
ITALY	<p>Waiting for the new Decree within the end of April, On March 18, 2020, the Italian Government enacted a decree with measures to support businesses and families during the Covid-19 crisis. Main provisions:</p> <p>i) supporting the liquidity of companies in Italy binding such liquidity to few specific rules, (ii) strengthening the support for exports and the internationalization plans of Italian companies; and (iii) protecting the business continuity of companies encouraging them not to cease business while facing the current challenges.</p> <p>At international level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 700 million for export • 200 B euro for public warranties • 400 milion euro per a financial fund for SMEs

GREECE	Suspension of tax payment. Facilities for banks to grant loans on favorable terms. Acceleration of payments by applying digital procedures.
LATVIA	The construction sector has not been locked down. Also there are plans to intensify public procurement sector to put more new projects on the market, as practically possible to keep the sector busy.
SWITZERLAND	The Federal Government has made sure that all construction sites remain open, as long as they can implement hygiene-measurements. Companies can quickly request short-time working for their employees to avoid permanent layoffs. Credit-warranties have been issued, so Banks can quickly grant credits to companies at low or no interest rates. Authorities across all jurisdictions are eager to keep up existing projects and are aware of their importance to prevent negative effects on the economy in the long run.
LUXEMBURG	Check our web site
ROMANIA	The government will pay technical unemployment for employees in companies that have been affected by the coronavirus crisis. For the period of temporary suspension of the individual employment contract, the technical unemployment benefits are worth at least 75% of the basic salary, but not more than 75% of the average gross salary. The postponement of the payment of the fiscal obligations without the establishment of the accessories up to 30 days after the cessation of the state of emergency. SME INVEST ROMANIA program was launched last week. It allows SMEs significantly affected by the COVID-19 crisis to ensure their liquidity for the current activity or for investments, by accessing one or more loans guaranteed in the name and account of the Romanian state, through the Ministry of Public Finance. The maximum guaranteed ceiling allocated is 15 billion lei. (approx. 3 billion euro). The government has issued an emergency ordinance requiring public authorities and institutions to receive electronically signed documents.
AUSTRIA	various measures for affected companies; for example: - short-time work - it is possible to reduce or defer contributions to social security for the self-employed - hardship fund for one-person businesses and micro-enterprises - tax deferrals, a reduction of advance tax payments - the bridging guarantees that are already in place for working capital loans for one-person businesses/SMEs will be continued and expanded
GERMANY	Short-time allowance, quick money for small companies, large credits for companies, keep construction sites working, making, simplify procurement law in some states

<p>SPAIN</p>	<p>Exceptional measures to facilitate remote working in the public and private sector. TAX: The Spanish government approved measures extending terms in tax proceedings and in the settlement of debts from tax returns. FINANCIAL: A guarantee line of 100 billion euros under which the Ministry of Economy agrees to provide bank guarantees to companies to obtain credit facilities to meet their needs for liquidity. A 2 billion euros credit line to provide working capital for exporting companies covered by the Internationalization Risk Reserve Fund. This line is intended for certain small and medium-sized companies that have liquidity problems (but are not in a bankruptcy or pre-bankruptcy situation) due to the impact of the crisis generated by COVID-19. This coverage will be provided by CESCE. Increase of ICO financing lines for companies. LABOUR: The government has made application procedures easier and more flexible for companies to obtain authorisation for an ERTE (Temporary Layoffs). Also, has approved a measure allowing deferrals of payment of Social Security contributions.</p>
<p>BULGARIA</p>	<p>The Government is providing financial resource to support small and medium-sized businesses, self-employed persons and those who are in unpaid debt because of the crisis and will not be able to work. The Bulgarian government is proposing two measures to help businesses that face financial difficulties due to the coronavirus outbreak: one is focused on supporting employment, the other to create buffers for firms that may turn unable to pay their loans. The measures include increasing the capital of state-owned Bulgarian Development Bank (BDB) to help businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, government-backed payment of 60% of the salaries of employees who might otherwise be fired, delaying the payment of annual corporate tax until June 30 and offering interest-free loans to workers put on leave.</p>
<p>UKRAINE</p>	<p>Quarantine measures continued, but construction work allowed.</p>
<p>ESTONIA</p>	<p>An emergency situation is valid in Estonia until 1 May. There is no decision yet, but it will be extended by 2 weeks. The government is preparing a national exit strategy, the initial draft will be ready in a few days. Estonian construction sector is functioning still, design sector as well. The employees of many design companies work from home. Virus protection is taken seriously, no meetings requiring physical presence are held. The design sector is not affected very much yet. The construction sites are open (personal protective equipment and disinfection equipment must be used at the workplace and the distance between people must be at least 2 meters if possible). Companies are worried of the drop in new orders. The crisis will hit the construction sector a little later than for example tourism sector. But decrease in the construction sector will definitely come. The domestic private sector will be hit hardest by the crisis. It is very important that the public sector continues to invest and even increases investments. On April 2, the government approved a supplementary budget, which also includes a support package for construction sector. The state thus decided to allocate 145 million euros to the construction sector to help maintain market stability. 100 million euros are planned to co-finance the reconstruction of apartment buildings. 30 million euros will be given to local governments for road construction and 10 million euros to the Road Administration. 5 million was allocated for the demolition of abandoned houses.</p>

TURKEY	<p>With the spread of the new corona virus epidemic, many negative effects are observed in business life. In this context, the obligations of the employers to act in accordance with the relevant legal regulations in some precautions have been examined in our previous respond of the first survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The "force major" measures could not applied for the Consulting Engineering and Architect sector yet in Turkey. * "Short Work Allowance" has been implemented for the business activities since beginning of April. Consulting engineering and architecture sector has been benefited from these measures and recovered some of its losses due to disrupted work due to full or partial lockdown requirements. * There are other banking, financing, credit line expansion, low interest rate incentives etc. being offered to general businesses to help keep the sectors running. Some of these banking and financial measures helps the firms in our sector as well.
PORTUGAL	<p>About the situation in Portugal Nowadays, after COVID-19, we risk to have, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8-10% of decrease of GDP - The double of the precedent unemployment (13 or 14%) - A strong deficit on public accounts, instead of an interesting surplus <p>About measures to be taken, we hope that the government takes the initiative of the recovery with a large program oriented towards the companies in general and involving in particular our associated companies in the public investment to be developed.</p> <p>About the sector's reaction to COVID-19 crisis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sector remains operational - More than 80% of the staff is in remote working, working from home - The construction sector remains in activity - The companies are feeling difficulties on private sector capacity on investment. We are feeling, from now, a strong decrease of work opportunities in the private sector as well as an additional delay on payments <p>Having in mind the general environment, the companies foresee a decrease of their turnover about 10-40% in 2020</p>
IRELAND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme for employees - Pandemic payment to firms - Some government departments are releasing interim payments - Current restrictions mean that most construction sites are closed but there is a government commitment to continue funding the National Development Plan as restrictions are lifted.

BELGIUM	<p>Support measures for companies affected by the coronavirus-crisis. Implementation of temporary unemployment due to force majeure for employees of engineering firms. Deferral of the repayment of business loans (for a max of 6 months). Making teleworking compulsory for non-essential sectors (like the sector of engineering and consultancy firms).</p> <p>Our organisation has informed the several relevant ministers of the different regions about the impact of the crisis on the sector, and our will to continue working (public infrastructure projects, ...), without putting a hold on the governmental investment plans. We received positive replies from several ministers.</p> <p>Together with the regional minister of mobility (Flanders) and the construction sector, plans are made to slowly relaunch public projects in road and water construction, following the safety requirements.</p> <p>ORI is constantly informing the members by updating the website with relevant information and be in close contact with other sector organisations and federations. A transparent and efficient flow of information is necessary.</p> <p>Overview: see https://www.ori.be/nl/corona/ - https://www.ori.be/fr/corona/</p>
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What useful tips, experiences and guidelines for restarting business after lockdown – that could be of interest to share with other companies and countries – have you heard of from your member companies?

SWEDEN	<p>Sweden never closed down, so not opening up. But, ways of working have changed. Most people work from home. I think this will have lasting impact on how we work. Much more distance work in the future. Setting up home work place, technologically, is important. Maintaining close contact with employees/colleagues is more important. Checking on well being of employees/colleagues is also more important when separated. I think all of these matters require planning when it comes to restarting too. How will we work in the future?</p>
FRANCE	<p>Companies tend to impulse e-learning through their workforce in order to be stronger after the lockdowning</p>
ITALY	<p>OICE, representing engineering, architecture and consultancy companies, has signed an important unified URGENT CALL addressed to the Government and the Parliament, Five priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. clear conditions for safe management of construction sites; 2. timely liquidity injection 3. pay for work carried out with emergency sal immediately and sal monthly at full capacity; 4. 'Marshall Plan' for construction: 5. simplification of procedures and flounces. <p>At international level, we are participating to the interesting webinars organized by FIDIC. Very useful the second one on clause of force majeure and others. Very positive exchange, and updates from other markets and associations. We are working very hard with our Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. We are reorganizing our promotional plan composed of business missions, technical missions, special trainings</p>
GREECE	<p>Establishment of teleworking at a rate of about 50%.</p>
SWITZERLAND	<p>Make sure, staff can operate remotely as good as possible, apply flexibility in handling absences due to child-care, illness, risk-aversion or military duties. Seek preemptive agreements with clients in case of delays. Contact local authorities and procurement offices to discuss project-backlog and how it could serve to jump-start the economy. Tackle pending projects using the crisis as an advantage, i.e. renovate schoolhouses while schools are closed. Offer your services as consultant to public entities in identifying suitable projects.</p>

NETHERLANDS	NLingenieurs is working on an acceleration platform "Digital Working". We see that the many digital tools that have been developed by our members in recent years can help to allow participation procedures or decision-making processes to continue without physical meetings. We want to support public clients in switching to these tools by offering them in an orderly manner and actively sharing knowledge.
LATVIA	We do not have complete lockdown in Latvia. Construction sector is working with a principle that there should be social distance of 2 meters kept between 2 people. Therefore the works on site are still taking place. It seems that after softening the limitations the daily work of consulting engineers will become a business as usual.
LUXEMBOURG	Check our web site
ROMANIA	The Romanian government is planning to gradually lift the restriction measures after May 15 (depending on the evolution of the pandemic), so that no measures/tips for restarting the business have been proposed yet.
AUSTRIA	In progress.
BELGIUM	Uniform and clear regulations for an efficient restart (not always the case right now, e.g. organisations working on water supply and sanitation projects all publish separate guidelines).

BULGARIA	For the time being, the government has refrained from commenting on the outcome of the Covid-19 crisis, since the peak of the epidemic has not yet passed and it cannot be predicted for how long the state of emergency will last.
ESTONIA	It is likely will be useful for design staff to work from home even after the emergency time has ended, as the crisis is still going on.
TURKEY	It has been observed that Companies who had strong IT capability have been able to shift to remote working easily and continued to produce. The Consulting Associations may focus on exchanging information about this remote working models among members and organise necessary trainings including Clients. The design world has been in process of increasing remote working and distant collaboration but this Covid-19 crisis will speed up and enhance this process. Clients especially governmental institutions/agencies need to shape up themselves accordingly.
IRELAND	Very important to have clear protocols for health and safety on construction sites. The Construction Industry Federation (CIF) in Ireland has provided guidelines for this in the expectation of sites opening again in early May 2020. https://www.acei.ie/covid-19-news/cif-standard-operating-procedures
SPAIN	<p>Many companies see an opportunity to restart their business with more "green stimulus packages" at European level (For example, by investing in sustainable infrastructure). Advocating for an ambitious recovery plan based on sustainability should serve as support for business activity. It is also a field where our sector is directly involved and can contribute to finding solutions to the challenge in a variety of ways.</p> <p>Likewise, the industry should request at European level and national governments to launch as many tenders as they can in the coming months in order to reactive the economies and strategic sectors.</p> <p>In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sector should work on restructuring for the post COVID-19. • To prepare for increase liquidation and renegotiation of contracts. • To adjust the business strategy to the new "normal" and much smaller domestic and international markets. • Rethinking how work is done and consider the incorporation of new digital capabilities.