

## “EUROSAI must go on” - the EUROSAI Secretariat’s work in times of the COVID-19 pandemic

*We are redoubling our efforts to prevent the COVID-19 from slowing down EUROSAI's activity, by offering EUROSAI members a virtual tool for actively keeping in touch; providing the Organisation with the support needed to continue functioning; adapting already planned activities to the new reality we are living; establishing working links and good communication between the EUROSAI work on COVID-19 and other INTOSAI/regional initiatives in this field; and, as always, keeping in continued and close touch with all our members... EUROSAI, must go on!*

The EUROSAI Secretariat’s role in keeping things going on in the EUROSAI community during the pandemic crisis has been focused on the following areas:

- ☞ Providing our members with virtual tools for their EUROSAI related work
- ☞ Supporting the Organisation’s work in addressing the impact of the COVID.
- ☞ Ensuring a good coordination between the EUROSAI work on COVID-19 and the INTOSAI and regional initiatives in this field
- ☞ Coordinating the adaptation of EUROSAI’s planned activities to the new emerged issue of COVID
- ☞ Providing since the beginning of the crisis nonstop support to our members, keeping in close contact with them through e-mails, phone calls and videoconferences.

### Providing our members with virtual tools for their EUROSAI related work

Like many other Organizations, EUROSAI has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of EUROSAI Congress, seminars and events has been unavoidable. The need to ensure continuity of our work makes remote working methods more valuable than ever. Therefore, having a user-friendly tool for virtual meetings and webinars, freely available for EUROSAI activities, that can complement other similar tools used by our members, is a remarkable support to keep our Organization working.

The EUROSAI Secretariat General (Spanish Court of Audit) launched in early March a videoconferencing tool (Blackboard Collaborate) for EUROSAI activities, thanks to the kind contribution of IDI which had offered EUROSAI the use of the tool for free and had given technical assistance and training as administrators to the Secretariat staff. To ensure a good understanding of the tool and its possibilities, the Secretariat developed guidance materials for participants and moderators.

The aim of this launch was to support EUROSAI members in carrying on their cooperative work, by providing them access to the virtual working methods that have become indispensable in times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Secretariat and the Coordination Team have been now using the tool for quite some time; the *Project Group on follow up recommendations* found the tool very useful for holding an e-meeting on 14 May, and the *Project Group on auditing the response to COVID-19 pandemic* is planning also to use it (in fact, they will use it for the first time today, June 4, for a webinar for Heads of SAIs, with around 80 participants!).

### Supporting the Organisation's work in addressing the impact of the COVID

Since February, we have closely monitored the impact of COVID together with the Czech Republic (host of the XI Congress) and we worked together with the host, the Presidency, the Coordination Team and the Governing Board to determine how to best address this unprecedented situation. Following a consultation to our members, the Congress endorsed the postponement of the XI Congress to 30 May – 3 June 2021, an entrusted the Governing Board to tackle the urgent issues needed to continue functioning until the Congress. For that purpose, the Secretariat reinforced its efforts to ensure a smooth and effective Governing Board virtual meeting.

### Ensuring a good coordination between the EUROSAI work on COVID-19 and the INTOSAI and regional initiatives in this field

The Secretariat, as focal point of communication between EUROSAI and INTOSAI and its Regional Organisations, is ensuring a good coordination with the leaders of the Project Group on COVID-19 and other EUROSAI members when it comes to initiatives connected with the COVID, for instance:

- ✓ The expert group on COVID-19 set up within the INTOSAI SCEI.
- ✓ ARABOSAI's webinar on COVID-19 on June 22.
- ✓ OLACEFS's series of webinars on COVID.
- ✓ The INTOSAI-Donor Steering Committee' survey on SAI Support Needs during Covid-19
- ✓ CBC initiatives on COVID-19, such as webinars

### Coordinating the adaptation of EUROSAI's planned activities to the new emerged issue of COVID

The EUROSAI Secretariat has been in touch with OLACEFS Secretariat and the SAI of Hungary, host of the IX EUROSAI-OLACEFS Joint Conference, to address the impact of the pandemic on the organization of this event. The pandemic will not prevent us from meeting our colleagues from OLACEFS on 9-11 September 2020 to exchange views on the central theme of the event, "Increasing the impact of SAI's work". However, we will do this virtually and we will be reflecting on how the COVID 19 pandemic is a unique opportunity for SAIs to highlight the impact of their work.

### Providing nonstop support to our members since the beginning of the crisis, keeping in close contact with them through e-mails, phone calls and videoconferences.

Despite the challenge of teleworking, the Secretariat team has been fully available since day one of the pandemic outbreak; members can reach us at our usual phone numbers and e-mails, and communication with the key actors in need of guidance, hosts of events affected by the pandemic and all other EUROSAI members in need of our assistance has been swift and easy!