



PROTECTION OF SMEs AND SELF-EMPLOYERS IN TIMES OF COVID-19

As **COVID-19** has spread around the globe, **SMEs, professionals in public practice, and self-employed workers** seem to be the most vulnerable to the economic effects that it's causing at a global level of society. As the number of SMEs in Europe goes up to 25,000 representing 2/3 of the jobs, it is of extreme importance for the economy to reduce as much as possible the **economic impact** COVID-19 may have in this group. This is why, among the measures governments worldwide have implemented in the framework of these crisis, many of them have concretely focused on these two groups, implementing **fiscal, monetary and employment measures**.

The **general practice** among countries has been to defer the tax payment, increase the flexibility when granting loans, give special grants to the most affected groups, and adopt non-lay-off regimes or extend the eligibility of unemployment benefits.

This has been possible, in the case of EU countries, thanks to the extraordinary unprecedented measures taken by the **European Union**.

Fiscal and monetary measures

The European Commission has adopted a **Temporary Framework** to enable Member States to use the full flexibility foreseen under State aid rules to support the economy during the outbreak, and the amendment of the **Short-term export-credit insurance Communication** so as to allow companies to obtain short-term export-credit insurance from public insurers.

Also, the '**general scape clause**' contained in the Stability and Growth Pact has been activated. This allows EU member states to temporary deviate from the fiscal requirements and apply a fiscal policy that may facilitate the implementation of measures to address the economic consequences of the health crisis. This activation has no precedent since the inclusion of the clause in the SGO in 2011, and may only be activated in the case of a severe economic downturn in the Eurozone or in the Union as a whole.



Furthermore, the ECB (European Central Bank) has adopted a package of **monetary policy measures**, such as additional longer-term refinancing operations (LTROs), more favorable terms in already existing LTROs, and the addition of a temporary envelope of additional net set purchases, among others.

Employment

In order to complement the measures taken by EU state members in this field, the European Commission is proposing the implementation of a new temporary instrument under the name **Sure** (Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency). Under this instrument, €100 billion will be available for this program, by means of which EU countries will receive financial assistance under the form of loans granted on favorable terms. Also, so as to avoid as much as possible employ loss, the program supports reduced time work schemes, being the employee's income loss compensated by the members state.

Furthermore, the European Commission is also working on a permanent **European Unemployment Reinsurance Scheme** in order to support national measures to preserve jobs and protect employees' who lose their jobs due to an economic outbreak.

The present document will gather the measures taken by each state member of the **Fédération des Experts Comptables Méditerranéens** (FCM) in the field of taxes, grants, loans and employment to protect SMEs and self-employed workers **as of April 27th 2020**.

TAXES

Albania

- **Deferral of profit tax installments for SMEs**
- **Postponement of deadline for the presentation of financial statements of 2019**



Legal entities and other taxpayers registered for Corporate Income Tax (CIT) purposes would be entitled to submit the Annual Financial Statements of 2019 by 31 July 2020.

▪ **Deferral of settlement of the annual CIT liability for 2019**

CIT registered taxpayers having an annual turnover of less than ALL 14 million can do the settlement of the annual CIT liability within the second half of 2020. Exceeding that annual turnover, the settlement of the annual CIT liability for 2019 will have to be done by 31 March.

▪ **Deferral in 2020 CIT advance payments**

The CIT advance payments for 2020 for registered taxpayers having an annual turnover of less than ALL 14 million should be paid no later than 31 December 2020.

▪ **Deferral of tax payments**

Bulgaria

▪ **For Corporate Income Tax (CITA) and Personal Income Tax Act (PITA)**

The deadline has been extended until 30 June 2020 for:

- Filing annual tax returns
- Payment of taxes

Also, the usage of 5% discount when filling the annual tax return under PITA and the term for additional payment of the due tax has also been extended until 31 May 2020.

▪ **For companies to fill their financial statements and annual reports:**



The deadline has been extended to 30 September 2020. These can be signed by means of electronic signatures.

- **Advance instalments for corporate income tax**
- **No enforcement proceedings shall be initiated under the TSSPC**

Tax and Social Security Procedure Code unless such initiation is necessary for the protection of important state or public interest.

Cyprus

- **2 months deferral of VAT payment**
- **2 months deferral of submission or tax declarations and payments**
- **Deferral to complete the filling of the Annual Reports by companies to the Registrar of Companies**
- **Temporal exemption in the payment of the increase contribution to the general healthcare system**

Employers and employees will not be liable to pay during three months the increased contributions to the GHS that have just come into force.

France

- **Accelerated refund of tax credits for CIT and VAT**
- **Deferral of social security and tax payments for companies**



- **Postponement of payment of the next installments of direct taxes**

This will be automatic and will lead to no penalty for companies. It allows the deferral of direct taxes for a period of three months. The postponement does not apply to the return filling deadlines. It does not apply either to vat tax, assimilated taxes or withholdings of employees' individual income taxes by employers.

- **No new tax audits or procedural actions will be started during lockdown**

Greece

- **Postponement of the sales list filling for 2019 to June 30.**

- **Postponement of VAT payments**

- For businesses and employees affected by COVID-19 until August 31.
- For those due at the end of March, its payment will be postponed for four months.
- Those who choose not to defer the payment will profit of a 25% tax discount.

- **Reduction of VAT for goods related to addressing the outbreak**

The reduction has been from 24 to 6%. It is applicable for products related to preventing the spread of COVID-19.

- **Suspension of Social Security contributions until June 30**

Italy

- **DTA transformation deriving from unpaid credit**



In the aim of promoting the sale of non-performing loans (NPL), it is possible to transform a portion of DTA (deferred tax assets) relating to tax losses and allowance for corporate equity (ace) into a tax credit for an amount proportional to the value of the non-performing loans that are sold to third parties.

- **Tax deferral business of the tourist, hospitality and leisure sector**

The deferral will cover the tax applied on employees income, vat, social contribution and employer's security due from march 2 to April 30. This measure is applied also concerning certain tax payments for business from other sectors with a turnover less than €2 M.

- **60% tax break of on commercial rents**
- **Deferral of tax compliance for all employers**

All tax compliance fulfillments (other than tax payments) expiring from march 8 to May 31, 2020 are postponed to be made within June 30, 2020 with no penalties.

- **Suspension of executive payment**
 - Certain tax payments such as executive tax payments notices, social contribution executive payment requests, executive assessment acts issued by the local offices or by the custom duties office due between march 8 and march 31 are postponed to June 30, 2020.
 - Certain settlement payments, expiring on February 28 ("*rottamazione-ter*") and march 31 ("*saldo e stralcio*") are due by May 31, 2020.
 - In the case of executive notices of assessment, these must be settled in a single payment by June 30, 2020.

- **Deducibility of donations for COVID-19**

Kosovo



- **Three month deferment for installment payments for property tax.**
- **Two month postponement of submission of financial statements, auditor's report and review reports**
- **One month postponement for filling and paying taxes, as well as for tax refund requests.**
- **Temporary vat payment exemption on imports of grain, wheat and flour for the production of bread and bread products.**

An exemption will also apply for economic operators and their contractors that import or produce the mentioned in the custom tax payment.

Morocco

- **2 month Deferral of social contributions for all businesses**
- **Deferral of tax payments for certain businesses**

Businesses that are eligible for the deferral are those with an annual turnover lower than 20 M dirhams.

- **Deferral of personal income tax filling**

The deferral will be from end-April to end-June 2020.

- **Tax exemption for employees in the formal sector**

The limit of the exemption is of 50% of the average monthly net salary.

Portugal

- **Deferral of tax payments and tax returns**



- **Postponement in the payment of social security contributions**
- **Suspension of social security contributions for businesses affected by the outbreak**

Spain

- **Moratorium to social security contributions**

The moratorium will be of 6 months. This is applicable for businesses and self-employers whose activities that have not been suspended during the state of alarm. It is subject to request and will have a reduced interest of 0,5%.

- **Postponement of payment of social security debts**
- **Exemption on social security contributions for businesses**

This measure is applicable for businesses that maintain employment under ERTE. In the case of workers with discontinuous contracts in the tourism sector and related activities, their exemption from the social security contributions will be of 50% from February to June 2020.

- **Six month interest –free suspension of social security contributions for self-employed workers**

This interest-free suspension, which will be of six months, will be for the period of April to June 2020, and is subject to the condition of continued activity in May and June.

- **Postponement of payment of custom declaration debts up to May 30.**
- **Deferral of income, corporate, and VAT tax obligations for SMEs**



There will be no interest to pay by these businesses as a consequence of the deferral in the payment. The deferral will be of 6 months.

Tunisia

- **Postponement of CIT payments, other taxes and social contributions**
- **VAT exemptions**
- **VAT refund procedures and reimbursement acceleration**
- **Rescheduling taxes and custom arrears**

This measure seeks to provide liquidity to the private sector, limiting layoffs and protecting the most vulnerable, in particular in the informal sector.

Turkey

- **Deferral of VAT declaration and payment for all taxpayers from march 26 to April 24**
- **Application of force majeure provisions for specific taxpayers affected by covid-19**
- **Deferral of VAT tax return filling dates for businesses in hospitality, leisure and sanitary sectors to July 27**
- **6 month deferral of vat and social security contributions for business from selected sectors**

The selected sectors are the following: Retail trade, iron-steel, automotive, logistics-transportation, cinema-theatre, housing, food beverage, textile-garment and event-organisation services.



- **Waive of the accommodation tax in the tourist sector until January 2021.**
- **Lower of vat rate for domestic flights from 18 to 1% for 3 months**

United Kingdom

- **Holiday for business rates for 2020-2021 tax year** for businesses in the retail, hospitality, leisure, and nursery sectors that are based in the UK.
- **Deferring vat and self-assessment payments:**
 - For all businesses:* vat payments will be deferred for three months in the case of business.
 - For self-employers:* income tax payments due in July 2020 under the self-assessment system will be deferred to January 2021.
- **Extension of scope of time to pay service:** time to pay service is a debt repayment plan by HMRC that allows companies to pay back the tax payments they have defaulted to pay over the period of 6 to 12 months. Due to covid-19, now all businesses and self-employed people that are in financial distress and have outstanding tax liabilities are eligible to receive this support.
- **Postponement of off-payroll working rules reform:** these rules, which ensured that two people doing the same work for the same employer are taxed in the same way, will now come into effect on 6 April 2021 instead of 6 April 2020.

GRANTS

Albania

- **Minimum salaries to small businesses and self-employed workers**



Small businesses and self-employed that are forced to close activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic will receive minimum salaries (up to two in the case of family businesses with unpaid family members), doubling the unemployment benefits and social assistance layouts.

Bulgaria

- **Subsidy of 60% of the employees' salaries and social security contributions of businesses critically affected**

The coverage of the salaries and social security contributions due by employers is only applicable for employees of affected sectors that without the subsidy they would have had to lay off.

- **Possibility for managing authorities of EU funds to unilaterally modify grant contracts**

This may be done to reduce or increase the amount of agreed funds.

Cyprus

- **Special leave grant**

Parents working in the private sector who remain home for child care of children of up to 15 years old can receive a grant of up to €2,500 during the period of up to 4 weeks. 60% of the salary will be paid for the first €1,000 of the parent's salary, and a 40% allowance will be paid for the next € 1,000 of the salary. In case of single parent families, the rate of payment of the allowance is set at 70% and 50%, respectively. The latter applies also for those with health issues.

- **Subsidy of 60% of employees' salaries**

Small businesses that employ up to 5 people, provided that they retain their employees at work and their turnover has been reduced by more than 25%, can be eligible to the business support plan, which provides a subsidy of 60% of employee salaries.



France

- **Solidarity fund – ‘Fonds de solidarité’**

Direct financial support for affected microenterprises, liberal professions, and independent workers who have 10 or more employees who make less than €1 M a year, whose annual revenues is under €60,000, and who, following the Decree from March 23 2020, they are affected by the prohibition of receiving public. The aid is up to €1,500. This aid may be extended to a complementary aid from €2,500 to €5,000 for businesses under the most difficult circumstances who are unable to pay the debts in 30 days.

- **Subsidy of part of salary lost due to the short-time working scheme**

Workers who have seen their hour scheme reduced will receive support for their wages.

- **Facilitating granting of exceptional bonuses exempt from social security contributions**

- **Sick leave payments for child care**

- **Extension of expiring unemployment benefits**

These will be extended until the end of the lockdown.

Greece

- **€ 800 Subsidy for employees and self-employed professionals**

Eligible employees are those who have been or will be suspended from their employment contracts until April 30 by businesses affected by the outbreak.

Eligible employees are also those who were laid off or were forced to quit between March 1-17.

- **Extension of unemployment benefit for two months**



- **The Annual Easter Bonus remained in full**

Employers have been given the right to pay the Easter bonus by summer without penalties.

- **Cash bonus to health workers**

Italy

- **Allowance for self-employed workers**

The allowance for March is of € 600.

- **Employee bonus**

A bonus of EUR100 is granted to employees with an income of below EUR40,000 in the previous year. The bonus is proportional to the number of days worked at their place of work in March 2020. This bonus is not taxed and will be paid directly by the employer.

- **Tax credit for shops and stores:**

A tax credit that is equivalent to the 60% of the rent due for the month of March 2020 of shops and stores that were forced to close as a result of the lock-down. In order to enjoy it, they shall introduce the tax code (6914) in their tax payment form. Businesses whose activities have been identified as essential cannot enjoy the aid.

- **Tax credit for the 50% of costs of sanitizing products:**

The credit is up to a maximum of €20.000.

- **Incentive in export**

When exporters seek to penetrate a new foreign market, up to 50% of the related costs will be paid by the state under a non-repayable co-financing arrangement, within the limits imposed by EU regulations on small state aid.



Kosovo

- **Two monthly salaries**

These are given to entities that have seen a diminution in their operations as a consequence of the measures taken by the government or have been forced to keep their employees at home. The amount of the monthly salary is of €170. The amount of the monthly salary is of €170 to up to a maximum €41 m.

- **Two month 50% rent subsidy for SMEs spending up to €12 m**

- **Support for exporters**

The government will benefit exporters that increase their export volume. The amount destined has been €10 m.

- **Three monthly assistance**

The assistance will be of up to €130 a month is given to employees who lost their job during the outbreak. The maximum amount allocated to this measure is €4 million.

- **Increase in the budget for grants and subsidies to the ministry of agriculture of €5 m.**

- **Economic support for exporters of €10 m**

Morocco

- **Mobile payment for household's with a non-contributory health insurance**

Household's that benefit from the non-contributory health insurance (RAMED) receive a payment of 800 to 1200 dirhams in the month of April. Also, other households which do not benefit from RAMED will be able to claim economic support.



Portugal

Spain

- **Increase in the sick pay**

Employees infected by COVID-19 receive a sick pay, which has been increased from 60 to 70% of the regulatory base, which is paid by the Social Security budget.

- **Allowance for self-employed**

Self-employed workers that have been affected by a suspension in their economic activity will receive an allowance.

- **Temporary subsidy for household employees affected**

They will receive an amount equal to the 70% of their contribution base

- **Temporary allowance for temporary workers whose contract has recently expired**

The allowance will be of €430 for workers whose contract has expired within the state of emergency and that are not entitled to unemployment benefits.

- **Refund of costs of cancelled events that supported internationalization**

- **Rental assistance for vulnerable renters who are not large property holders**

- **Extension of eligible recipients of social benefit to energy provision**

Self-employed workers who have seen their monthly income diminished by over 75% with respect to the previous semester.

- **National COVID-19 income support scheme**



Tunisia

- **Support for workers on temporary unemployment due to the outbreak**

The aid will be of 300 TND.

Turkey

- **Craft-and-trade credit card for craftsmen and small traders under a 25.000 TL limit**
- **Minimum wage support for business regardless of the size**
- **Grant will be provided to firms that locally produce disinfectants, protective clothes, goggles and masks of up to €930.000**

United Kingdom

- **Coronavirus job retention scheme**

through this scheme, UK employers can claim for 80% of furloughed employees' usual monthly wage costs, up to £2,500 a month, plus the associated employer national insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contributions on that wage. The scheme is open to employers that had created and started a payroll scheme on 28 February 2020. This measure started on 1 March 2020 and will last for at least 3 months.

- **Support for businesses paying statutory sick pay to their employees**

Employees with fewer than 250 employees will be able to reclaim SSP for up to 2 weeks per employee unable to work due to COVID-19.

- **Businesses that pay little or no business rates**



An additional small business grant of £10,000 will be given to small businesses based in England that already enjoyed the small business rate relief, rural rate relief and tapered relief.

- **For business in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors**

They will automatically receive a cash grant of £25,000 in businesses with a retail value between £15,000 and £51,000; of £10,000 with a retail value below £15,000.

- **A self-employment income support scheme**

Self-employers (including members of partnerships) who have lost income can claim a taxable grant worth 80% of their trading profits up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for the next 3 months, which may be extended if needed.

LOANS

Albania

- **Reduce of the policy rate**

The Supervisory Council of the Bank of Albania decided on March 25th to reduce the policy rate from 1% to 0.5%.

- **Access for companies to overdrafts in the banking system to pay wages with low interest rate**

A sovereign guarantee fund enables companies to access overdrafts in the banking system to pay wages for their employees for up to 3 months with an interest rate of up to 2.85% for the period of 2 years.

Starting in April, cabinet ministers and lawmakers will receive half of their salaries for the next three months with the savings going to the Anti-COVID 19 social support fund.



- **Reschedule of loan instalments that entered into force on 13 march and last until 31 may**

Borrowers, individuals and businesses whose financial situation has deteriorated due to the outbreak, may benefit from a delay of up to 9 months in the payment of their loans. The reschedule is subject to its request.

- **Postponement of the repayment term of the loan instalments to the business entities and individuals until 31 May**

This measure is applicable to all borrowers that have experienced difficulties during the outbreak as a result of COVID-19, but is subject to request to the lending institution, who shall report on it within 3 days after the receipt of request.

- **Temporal waive of commissions for transfers in local currency**

Bulgaria

- **Non-application of effects of late performance of obligations of individuals and private entities:**

This includes monetary consequences, such as interest and penalties for late payment, as well as non-monetary consequences, such as early repayment, contract termination and seizure of property.

- **Interest free loans to employees on unpaid leave**

- **Moratorium on bank loan payments**

Cyprus

- **Simplification of approval processes for loan restructuring**



- **Simplification of documentation requirements for new short-term loans and other credit facilities**

France

- **Public loan guarantees for start-ups**

They can cover up to 90% of the loan. They can be distributed by private banks and Bpifrance (Banque Publique d'Investissement).

- **Guarantees by internal reallocations within Bpifrance or budget allocations**
- **Credits to 'strategic economic actors'**

An amount of €20 Md has been destined to give credits to strategic economic actors that have been affected by the outbreak, to reinforce their own funds and debt security. This credits are part of the program 'Exceptional reinforcement of the State's financial participations in the framework of the sanitary crisis' (*Renforcement exceptionnel des participations financières de l'État dans le cadre de la crise sanitaire*).

- **Loans for companies in difficulties**

The Fund for Economic and Social Development (FESD) has seen increased its capacity in €925 M, seeking to destine the loans to fragile companies or to companies facing economic difficulties within the outbreak.

Greece



- **€1 B financing scheme support to active SMEs affected by the health crisis**

The immediate financial support given within the framework of this scheme may be wholly or partially repayable. It is directly given by the State, and the specific will depend on the current situation of the SME. This program This scheme seeks to support enterprises in order to maintain the employment. In this sense, the enterprises that enjoy this support will be applied the “no lay-off” clause.

- **Interest payment subsidies**
- **Suspension in payments on performing loans offered by Banks and loan managers to individual borrowers affected by the outbreak.**
- **Three month suspension of debt payments for employees and self-employed receiving the €800 subsidy**

Italy

- **Loans of up to €5 M per enterprise**

Business will have access to these loans for 9 months after the entry into force of the Italian Decree. The loan will be used to make investments and restructure debts.

- **Special financial protection measures for SMEs**

Certain types of financing cannot be revoked but can be extended; repayments of loans can be extended or suspended; the Central Guarantee Fund will partially guarantee certain types of financing.

- **Moratorium for SMEs and personal mortgage repayments**
- **€100 B has been destined to a Central Guarantee Fund for SMEs’ access to credit**



- **€30 B have been destined for loans given by banks to SMEs to be guaranteed between 70 to 90% of the loan amount**

These loans will be subject to conditions, such as the fact that the business won't have to pay dividends for 12 months, and that the loan must support activities within the Italian territory. Also, the business should not have been in difficulty before the outbreak.

Kosovo

- **Interest-free government loan**

Public entities that have financial difficulties due to the public health emergency situation, are entitled to interest-free lending from the government. The government will allocate €20 million, and the allocated funds carry zero annual interest rate.

- **Kosovo special guarantee fund**

Micro-entities and the self-employers are eligible for these loans for a maximum period of 24 months, and a maximum of €10,000. €15 million have been allocated for this measure.

- **Suspension of payment of loan instalments:**

Individuals or businesses who due to the financial difficulties they are facing due to a decrease in their personal or business income and are not able to repay the loan may ask the lender to postpone the loan repayment deadline until 30 April. In cases of suspension, the central bank of Kosovo has undertaken the necessary legal measures to prevent these loans to be classified as non-performing loans in the credit registry. Penalty rates shall not apply during this period.

Morocco

- **Diminution of policy rate to 2%**

The central bank reduced the policy by 25 bp to 2%.



- **Suspension of loan payments for SMEs and self-employed**

The suspension will be effective until June 30.

- **Expansion of the range of collateral accepted for repos and credit guarantees to include public and private debt instruments**

- **Increase of the Central Bank's refinancing operations**

This measure has been established in order to support banking credit to SMEs

- **Government guarantee of short-term loans to SMEs**

The Government will guarantee, through the Central Guarantee Fund, 95% of the bank's new short-term loans given to SME's.

- **3 months deferral for employees affiliated in the CNSS to pay their bank commitments linked to consumer and mortgage loans**

Portugal

- **Moratorium on bank loan repayments for families and companies affected**

The moratorium will be of six months.

- **Credit lines** for affected businesses

- **Softening in macro-prudential measures for consumer credit**

- **Measures for less significant banks under the supervision of the Banco de Portugal**

- Possibility to operate below selected capital and liquidity requirements
- Extension of deadlines of reporting obligations



Spain

- **Postponement of reimbursement**

This is applicable for beneficiaries who have had inactivity periods, a diminution in their sales or supply interruptions as consequence of the sanitary crisis.

- **For loans given by the SG of industry and SMEs** the postponement will be of two and a half years, which may be extended.
 - **Loans given by autonomous communities and local entities:** they may ask for the postponement of the principal or interests to be satisfied in 2020. They may be self-employers or businesses that are not part of the public sector.
- **1 year suspension of payment of interests and redemption of loans for businesses in the tourist sector or are part of the R+D entrepreneurship program**
 - **Three month moratorium on mortgage payments for self-employed and homeowners who have rented out their mortgage properties**
 - **€100 billion has been destined to loan guarantees**
 - **Introduction of a special credit line for the tourism sector**

Tunisia

- **Postponement of credit reimbursement**

This measure would apply for 3 to 6 months, depending on the net revenue level.

Turkey



- **Working capital loans for all firms preserving the current employment level**

The limit of the loan will be 5,000 TL, with a 36 month maturity, 6 month grace period and subsidized 7,5% interest rate.

- **Stock financing assistance for exporters** during the outbreak.
- **Postponement of interest and debt payments** by public SMEs bank halkbank for 3 months.
- **Increase of limits for SMEs loans** by the credit guarantee fund from \$3.8 to \$7.7 billion.
- **No-limit liquidity to banks:** the CBRT will provide banks with as much liquidity as they need through intraday and overnight standing facilities. Banks will also have additional liquidity facilities to secure uninterrupted credit flow to the corporate sector. The maximum amount of liquidity that a bank can receive through this facility will be linked to the amount of credit that it has already provided or will provide for the corporate sector.
- **Increase of liquidity limits of primary dealers in open market operations (OMOS)**
- **Rediscount credits for exporters and foreign exchange earning services.**

They include

- A 90-day extension of maturities for the repayment of rediscount credits
- An additional 12 months export commitment fulfilment time for firms having benefitted from these credits
- An extension of the maximum maturities for rediscount credits from 120 days to 240 days for short-term credits, and to 720 days for longer-term credits.
- **Other measures concerning banks:**
 - The number of days to be passed in the delay period for classifying a loan as non-performing has been increased from 90 days to 180 days.



- Flexibility has been granted to banks for not classifying a performing forbore loan under probation as non-performing even though additional forbearance measures are applied or it becomes more than 30 days past due.

United Kingdom

- **Coronavirus business interruption loan scheme**

Businesses and self-employers based in the UK from certain industrial sectors (related to food production and sanitary services) can access a loan of £1,000 to £5 million for up to 6 years in which the first 12 months of interest payments will be covered by the government. Business eligible for the loan should be in the case of not having sufficient security to meet a lender's normal requirements, and have not received de minimis state aid beyond €200,000 equivalent over the current and previous two fiscal years. In order to encourage lenders to provide finance, the government will provide a 80% guarantee on each loan.

*banks such as Lloyds banking group and NatWest have expressed their disposition to support UK small businesses applying favorable measures in their funding.

EMPLOY

Albania

- **Minimum salary of ALL 26,000 per month**

Employees working for businesses or entrepreneurs registered for CIT or as small businesses, as well as self-employed workers with an annual turnover below ALL 14 M in 2019 are eligible for this aid. Employees with more than one job will only be able to benefit from one payment.

Bulgaria



- **Possibility for registered unemployed to sign labor contracts with agriculture producers**

These persons will not lose their unemployment benefits within the framework of the sanitary crisis.

- **Rights for employers**

- To decide part-time work
- To suspend the work of the company or of certain departments
- To provide half of the paid annual leave

- **State subsidy of 60% of the salary of the employees and social security contributions**

Only certain category of employers will fall within the scope of eligibility of this measure.

Cyprus

- **Exemption from the payment of the General Healthcare System Contributions for three months**

This measure enters in the framework of the Program for Financial Support to address the economic impact of the sanitary crisis.

France

- **Partial unemployment plan - '*Dispositif de chômage partiel*'**

This measure applies for companies who have been approved the partial activity. the company gives an compensation equal to the 70% of the brut salary, and the government will be refunded by the government for salaries of up to €6,927.



Greece

- **Subsidy for employees temporary suspended from work**

An amount of €800 will be provided to up to 1.7 M employees, which will be equivalent to 81% of the total of the private sector. The subsidy is tax-exempted, and their insurance contribution is covered. Also, the payment of certified debts to the fiscal administration is suspended for 4 months. When payed on time, a remission of the 15% will be applied.

- **No lay-off clause**

This clause will apply to SMEs economically affected by the sanitary crisis who enjoy the financial support from the government, who, as a consequence, won't be able to lay off their employees.

Italy

- **No lay-off during 2 months**

No lay off may take place from February 23. This measure is applied for all workers, independently of the type of contract signed with the employee.

- **Extension of the unemployment insurance mechanisms during 9 weeks**

- **€600 bonus for self-employed and autonomous workers**

- **€100 salary bonus for workers who are not teleworking at home**

- **€600 bonus for working parents**

Kosovo



- **Partial coverage of employees hired during the outbreak**

The amount receive will raise up to € 130, and will be given during the months of April and June.

- **Partial coverage of employees' salary and pension contributions**

The amount of the salary covered will raise up to €170 per employee per month and will be given during the months of April and June.

- **Additional partial coverage of employees' salaries working in groceries, bakeries and pharmacies**

The amount will raise up to €100, and will be given during the months of April and June.

- **Monthly assistance for employees laid-off due to the sanitary crisis**

They will receive an amount of €130.

- **Increase in the social assistance and pensions by €30**

Morocco

- **Suspension of social security charges**

- **€190 monthly allowance for employees affiliated in the CNSS**

- **Possibility for recent unemployed to put off debt payments**

The payments of the debts may be done until June 30.



Portugal

▪ **Simplification of lay-off regime**

The lay off-regime allows businesses in a special circumstance suspend the employee's contract or reduce the working hours. It is now accessible to companies:

- Whose complete or partial closure was forced by a decision coming from the authorities
- Who have seen a 40% decrease in invoicing compared to the month prior or year before.
- Who have seen their activity stop totally or partially due to an interruption of global supply chains, or the suspension or cancelling of orders

Spain

▪ **Easier access to ERTES for business affected by COVID-19**

An ERTE is a temporary suspension of a contract or a reduction in working hours. Business shall present a commitment to maintenance of employment during the 6 months following the resumption of the activity. There is no requirement to be met of prior minimum contribution.

- **Subsidy for domestic workers whose contract has been suspended or terminated**
- **Employees who were in probationary period and have seen their contract terminated after March 9 are entitled to the unemployment benefits**

Tunisia

- **300 M envelope for unemployed workers**

Turkey



- **Double of the part-time compensatory work scheme for four months**

United Kingdom

- **Subsidy of 80% of laid-off workers pay up to £2,500 per month**

Employers eligible are those severely affected by the sanitary crisis.

- **Laid-off employees must receive from the employer the lower of 80% of their reference pay and £2,500 per month**
- **Refund of Statutory Sick Pay paid for up to 2 weeks due to COVID-19 for businesses with less than 250 employees by February 28**
- **Taxable grant of 80% of trading profits for self-employed workers and members of a partnership/LLP who have lost income due to the sanitary crisis**

They will receive a grand £2,500 per month for 3 months, which may be subject to extension. Their trading profits must be below £50,000 per year and over the half of the individual's total taxable income.

OTHERS

Bulgaria

- **No distrains shall be imposed on bank accounts of individuals and medical centers, pensions and salaries**



France

- **Postponement of rent and utility payments for affected microenterprises and SMEs**

Italy

- **Rules relating to the conduct of company meetings and deferral of approval of the financial statements**
 - All companies to convene the general assembly can approve the financial statements within 180 days of the end of the financial year.
 - Votes can be expressed electronically or by correspondence, and attending at the meeting can be done by telecommunication. Limited liability companies may also express vote by written consultation or by express written consent.
- **Three month ban on shorting of shares**

Morocco

- **Acceleration of government payment to its suppliers**

The Government has decided to accelerate the payments to its suppliers so as to support its businesses.

Spain

- **Ban of short-selling Spanish shares in the stock market**



- **Automatic moratorium on rent payments for vulnerable tenants whose landlord is a large public or private housing holder**

This measure will apply during the COVID-19 crisis outbreak.

- **Option to temporarily suspend or modify supply electricity and natural gas contracts without penalty for business and self-employers**
- **Suspension of payment of electricity and natural gas bill for suppliers to traders**

Business of this sectors will receive endorsement equivalent to the loss of income and will have tax exemptions.

United Kingdom

- **Protection from eviction for commercial tenants unable to pay their rent up until 30 June**

OFFICIAL WEBS

European Union

Fiscal and monetary measures

https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/what_is_new/covid_19.html

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/03/23/statement-of-eu-ministers-of-finance-on-the-stability-and-growth-pact-in-light-of-the-covid-19-crisis/>

<https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/pr/date/2020/html/ecb.mp200312~8d3aec3ff2.en.html>

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Employment

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Albania

<https://kryeministria.al/multimedia/covid-19-qeveria-miraton-masat-e-reja/>

IMF

<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/10/pr20148-albania-imf-executive-board-approves-us-in-emergency-support-to-combat-covid-19-pandemic>

Bulgaria

<https://coronavirus.bg/bg/merki/ikonomicheski>

<https://coronavirus.bg/bg/az-sum/predpriemach-rabotodatel>

Cyprus

<https://www.icpac.org.cy/selk/covid.aspx>

<https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/press.html>

<http://mof.gov.cy/en/>

http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/index_en/www.aboutcyprus.org.cy

France

<https://www.economie.gouv.fr/covid19-soutien-entreprises>

Businesses and self-employed workers



<https://www.economie.gouv.fr/covid19-soutien-entreprises/reponses-gouvernement-difficultes-independants>

<https://www.economie.gouv.fr/covid19-soutien-entreprises/les-mesures>

<https://www.economie.gouv.fr/files/files/PDF/2020/Coronavirus-MINEFI-10032020.pdf>

http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/15/textes/l15b2820_projet-loi

Employment

<https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/le-ministere-en-action/coronavirus-covid-19/article/communiqués-de-presse>

Greece

<https://government.gov.gr/topothetisi-tou-ipourgou-ikonomikon-k-christou-staikouragia-tin-proti-desmi-metron-antimetopisis-ton-epiptoseon-tou-koronoiou/>

<https://www.minfin.gr/web/guest/-/d-t-topothetese-tou-ypourgou-oikonomikon-k-chrestou-staikoura-gia-to-olokleromeno-schedio-antimetopises-ton-oikonomikon-epiptoseon-tou-koronoiou-gia-t>

Italy

<http://www.governo.it/it/curaitalia>

<http://www.mef.gov.it/covid-19/>

Kosovo

<https://msh.rks-gov.net/adresimi-i-ministrit-te-shendetesise-arben-vitia-ne-konferencene-sontme-per-media/>



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Morocco

<https://www.cg.gov.ma/ar>

Portugal

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<https://www.dgert.gov.pt/covid-19-perguntas-e-respostas-para-trabalhadores-e-empregadores-faq>

Spain

General page

<https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/covid-19/Paginas/index.aspx>

Self-employed workers

<https://www.mineco.gob.es/portal/site/mineco/menuitem.b6c80362d9873d0a91b0240e026041a0/?vgnnextoid=e4bd69e8c9b11710VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD>

Businesses and employment

<https://www.mineco.gob.es/portal/site/mineco/menuitem.b6c80362d9873d0a91b0240e026041a0/?vgnnextoid=f38c69e8c9b11710VgnVCM1000001d04140aRCRD>

Tunisia

<http://fr.tunisie.gov.tn/>



<http://www.finances.gov.tn/fr>

<http://www.emploi.gov.tn/fr/>

Turkey

<https://www.tccb.gov.tr/en/>

https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/tbmm_internet.anasayfa

United Kingdom

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-employees>

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FCM SECRETARIAT

April 27th, 2020