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Factsheet for case IE-2020-11/782

COVID-19 pandemic unemployment payment introduced

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Country	Ireland, applies nationwide
Time period	Open ended, started on 13 March 2020
Type	Legislation or other statutory regulation
Category	Income protection beyond short-time work – Income support for unemployed
Case created	25 April 2020 (updated 06 May 2020)

Background information

The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment is an emergency payment of €350 per week introduced by the Irish government for a 12 week period and intended to compensate those workers whose employers cannot retain them on their payroll. The payment will also be made to people who are self-employed but whose trade has temporarily ceased.

Workers are eligible to apply for the Pandemic Unemployment Payment if they were in employment or self-employment immediately before Friday 13 March, and have been temporarily laid-off from work or asked to stay at home from work where their employer is not in a position to retain them on their payroll.

In addition, regulation Nr. S.I. No. 95/2020, amendment 3, temporarily suspend the rule in section 62(4) of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005 which provides that Jobseeker's Benefit is paid only from the fourth day of unemployment. The measure is being introduced to mitigate the impact on employers and employees arising from COVID-19 and will apply from the 19th of March 2020 until the 8th of May 2020 inclusive. For that period, Jobseeker's Benefit will be paid from the first day of unemployment.

Content of measure

The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment is a payment of €350 per week available to employees and the self-employed who have lost their job on (or after) March 13 due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic.

The payment was originally set at a rate of €203 but it was increased to €350 by the government on 24 March.

The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be in place for the duration of the crisis.

Eligible workers should not be in receipt of any employment income and be between 18 and 66 years of age.

Use of measure

On 14 April the Irish Times reported that there were 533,000 people receiving the Government's special Covid-19 unemployment payment of €350 a week. This was in addition to the 210,000 on the 'live register' of social welfare claimants.

Actors, target groups and funding

Actors	Target groups	Funding
National government Social insurance	Self-employed Unemployed	National funds

Social partners

Role of social partners	Consulted
Form of involvement	Direct consultation

The €350 a week Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment can also be claimed by self-employed people affected by the crisis and this was welcomed by the Small Firms Association director Sven Spollen-Behrens who said this was important as self-employed people were “experiencing a significant loss of income”.

Sectors and occupations

This case is not sector-specific.

This case is not occupation-specific.

Sources

- 24 March 2020: Covid-19 financial measures will help economy bounce back says Ibec (www.irishtimes.com)
- 03 April 2020: S.I. No. 95/2020 Amendment 3 (www.irishstatutebook.ie)
- 14 April 2020: Irish Times - Some 533,000 receiving Covid-19 unemployment payment (www.irishtimes.com)
- 25 April 2020: Gov.ie (www.gov.ie)