

Support measures to address the consequences of the Covid-19 Coronavirus as regards employment and enterprises

Press conference – 3 September 2020

In the context of the instructions by the President of the Republic and the constant review procedure for measures taken to address the crisis on account of the pandemic with a view to supporting both the workers who have lost their employment or full employment as well as their enterprises, the functioning of which has been affected by the impact of the virus, the Council of Ministers approved, today, the following Proposal of the Minister of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance and the Minister of Finance:

1. The implementation of the following Special Plans being applied by the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance are extended until 31st October 2020, inclusive:

(a)	Special Plan for Hotel and Tourist Accommodation,
(b)	Special Plan for Economic Activities related to the Tourism Industry or Economic Activities directly affected by Tourism or Economic Activities linked to Businesses under Mandatory Full Suspension,
(c)	Special Plan for Businesses of Certain Economic Activities
(d)	Special Plan for Complete Suspension of Business Activity
(e)	Special Unemployment Support Plan
(f)	Special Plan for Certain Categories of self-employed, concerning persons who are not employers and which are registered in the Register of the Social Security Services for specific professional categories. The Special Plans will be implemented during the period referred to on the basis of the table attached as Appendix I and will include the requirement of non-dismissal of employees until December 2020.

2. The following are to be announced and implemented by the Human Resources Development Authority (HRDA):

(a) Special Schemes for the Training of Employees to the amount of €14 million for the period beginning after the end of October 2020, aiming to enable 1,000 Small and Medium Enterprises, which have sustained substantial reduction in their turnover due to the pandemic, to train on average once a month their employees with the training cost being covered by the Scheme (€12 per hour for a total of 200 hours of training) and

(b) A Programme is introduced for the Professional Training of Unemployed (focusing on Unemployed in the Hotel Sector), amounting to €7 million.

3. Schemes are announced and implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance concerning the Subsidisation of the Payroll Cost for the Recruitment of Unemployed Personnel for the period beginning after the end of October 2020, by making use of the European Social Fund as follows:

Scheme		Estimated Cost
i	Incentives Provision Scheme for Recruitment of Unemployed	€17,000,000
ii	Incentives Provision Scheme for Occupational Rehabilitation of Released Prison Inmates	€4,000,000
iii	Incentives Provision Scheme for the Employment of Young People aged 15 to 29 years, who are out of work, education or training (for immediate recruitment)	€1,000,000
iv	Incentives Provision Scheme for the Training of Young People aged 15 to 29 years, who are out of work, education or training (for immediate recruitment)	€4,000,000
TOTAL		€35,000.00

4. The Special Plans for Full and Part-time Suspension of Business Activities implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance for Hotels and Tourism Related Enterprises are modified and implemented for the period from November 2020 until March 2021, following social consultation.

5. Certain businesses are specifically supported after the end of October 2021 as well, depending on the pandemic data, and

6. The employees' rights are protected against any unilateral decisions not in line with the statutory procedures of the Trade Relations Code and the Protection of Wages Law through continuous checks and measures, concerning counter-incentives for the companies, as for instance the exclusion from Special Plans or other measures, implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance.

The implementation cost for the Special Plans until October 2020 amounts to €50 million while that of the additional Training and Recruitment of Unemployed Plans amount to €56 million.

EK