

## EU PolicyWatch

### Database of national-level policy measures

Eurofound's EU PolicyWatch collates information on the responses of government and social partners to the COVID-19 crisis, the war in Ukraine, rising inflation, as well as gathering examples of company practices aimed at mitigating the social and economic impacts.

Factsheet for measure MT-2020-11/274 – **Updated** – measures in Malta

# Person with disability benefit who cannot work for medical reasons can apply for benefit

*Beneficċju ta' Persuna b'Dizabilita*

Country	<a href="#">Malta</a> , applies nationwide
Time period	Temporary, 09 March 2020 – 05 June 2020
Context	COVID-19
Type	<a href="#">Legislations or other statutory regulations</a>
Category	<a href="#">Income protection beyond short-time work</a> – Extensions of income support to workers not covered by any kind of protection scheme
Author	Luke Anthony Fiorini (University of Malta) and Eurofound
Measure added	04 April 2020 (updated 15 November 2021)

## Background information

Due to COVID-19 certain groups of individuals considered at greater risk were advised not to go to work and to work from home where possible. Individuals with disability were considered to be at greater risk to COVID-19 than other groups of individuals. A benefit was created for individuals with disability who were employed in the private sector, who due to COVID-19 were advised not to go to work on medical grounds, but were also unable to work from home. To be eligible, individuals had to be advised not to go to work on medical grounds after the 8 March 2020.

## Content of measure

Individuals who are registered with Jobsplus as a person with disability and have a special ID Number or EU disability Card issued by the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability, who work full or part-time in the private sector, who were medically advised to remain at home after the 8th of March 2020, and cannot work from home are eligible.

Those eligible will receive a direct payment of €166.15 per week if they work full-time or €103.85 per week if they work part-time.

Furthermore, the social security contribution will be paid, and their future contributory pension rights safeguarded; disability assistance will continue to be received without deductions.

## Updates

The following updates to this measure have been made after it came into effect.

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05 June 2020 This measure has ended.

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## Use of measure

€13.2 million have been paid out to 8,360 beneficiaries for benefits related to parents, those with medical conditions, disability and those who applied for the additional unemployment benefit. A total of €17.5 million will be handed out by the end of June. A further breakdown is unavailable.

A 2021 prebudget document highlighted that more specifically, 379 person benefitted from the scheme for those with disability who were unable to work during the initial months of COVID-19, incurring a cost of €588,944.

## Target groups

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**Workers**

**Businesses**

**Citizens**

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Workers	Businesses	Citizens
<a href="#">Disabled workers</a>	Does not apply to businesses	Does not apply to citizens

## Actors and funding

Actors	Funding
National government Social insurance	National funds

## Social partners

Social partners' role in **designing the measure** and form of involvement:

	Trade unions	Employers' organisations
Role	Consulted	Consulted
Form	Direct consultation outside a formal body	Direct consultation outside a formal body

Social partners' role in the **implementation, monitoring and assessment phase**:

- No involvement
- Main level of involvement: Unknown

## Involvement

This measure was announced by the Government as part of a second package of measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The announcement of such measures was precipitated by social partner pressure who aired their concerns publicly in the media and directly with Government. On the announcement of these measures, social partners stated that whilst the measures were beneficial, they were not sufficient. It was also stated that consultation was limited and insufficient. This changed a few days later when a third package was agreed between the social partners; the current measure was retained as part of that package too. The measure is administered by the social security department.

## Views and reactions

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact upon business, and following consultation with social partners, the government initially announced a package of measures which included the deferral of taxes and financial support to incentivise telework. Following this announcement, employer associations publicly announced that these were insufficient and would not protect their businesses or jobs, stating the government instead needed to subsidise wages. These calls continued when on the 18 March, the government announced further measures including support for those who had lost their job, the disabled (including this measure), and for employers

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to subsidise quarantine leave. On the 24 March, the government announced a third package of measures which included support for wages and other measures previously announced. This third package of measures was announced by the government whilst flanked by union and employer association members. It was announced that this package was the result of tripartite consultation. Furthermore, following announcement of these further measures, employer associations announced their satisfaction with the package.

## Sources

- 18 March 2020: COVID-19 - Disability benefit
- 01 October 2020: Ministry for Finance - Pre budget document 2021 ([.finance.gov.mt](https://finance.gov.mt)).

### Citation

Eurofound (2020), *Person with disability benefit who cannot work for medical reasons can apply for benefit, measure MT-2020-11/274 (measures in Malta)*, EU PolicyWatch, Dublin, [https://static.eurofound.europa.eu/covid19db/cases/MT-2020-11\\_274.html](https://static.eurofound.europa.eu/covid19db/cases/MT-2020-11_274.html)

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12 September 2022

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Article

