

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-2020-7/277 – **Updated** – measures in Malta

Facilitating teleworking

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Country | Malta , applies nationwide |
| Time period | Temporary, 15 February 2020 – 08 May 2020 |
| Context | COVID-19 |
| Type | Legislations or other statutory regulations |
| Category | Protection of workers, adaptation of workplace – Teleworking arrangements, remote working |
| Author | Luke Anthony Fiorini (University of Malta) and Eurofound |
| Measure added | 04 April 2020 (updated 20 June 2022) |

Background information

As part of the Maltese effort to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, workers were encouraged to work from home where possible. Many Maltese organisations were not in a position to carry out this transition seamlessly, with few organisations offering employees the opportunity to work from home prior to COVID-19. In order to facilitate this change of working method, the government introduced a grant to support employers to invest in technology to facilitate this change.

Content of measure

This call supports employers and self-employed individuals to invest in technology that enables teleworking: the aim of the call is to partially cover the costs involved in making a transition to telework.

Support is limited up to €500 per teleworking agreement and €4,000 per undertaking. The grant shall be awarded against 45% of the eligible cost. In order to be eligible, the employee should not have had an active teleworking agreement prior to the 15th of February 2020. All costs must be incurred after this date. The employee must be able to address their role via teleworking, a formal teleworking agreement must be in place, and they can connect to the work place via a VPN or equivalent solution.

Updates

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

14 July 2020 This measure has now ended.

Use of measure

By the beginning of June, €300,000 had been disbursed via this scheme, whilst €376,000 has been approved.

Up to the end of July, 370 businesses benefitted from this scheme with the cost amounting to €605,613.

In September, the CEO of the Malta Enterprise stated that in total, over 500 businesses benefitted from the scheme.

The Economy minister announced that as per 19 October 2020, 662 applications had been received with €899,813 being disbursed to applicant companies.

Target groups

| Workers | Businesses | Citizens |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Self-employed | Applies to all businesses | Does not apply to citizens |

Actors and funding

| Actors | Funding |
|---------------------|----------------|
| National government | National funds |

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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**:

- Unknown
- Main level of involvement: Unknown

Involvement

The measure was one of the very first to be introduced by the Maltese government. Direct and public communication had occurred between government, unions and government. Amongst the many concerns that were discussed were the costs associated with sudden number of teleworking employees. In view of these concerns, this measure was introduced through the Malta Enterprise by the Government; consultation was limited and social partners were dissatisfied with the package of measures introduced during this early phase of the pandemic.

Views and reactions

This measure formed part of an initial package of measures to support organisations hit by COVID-19. Employer associations announced their displeasure at this initial package of measures stating that it was insufficient to protect businesses and jobs.

Sources

- 01 March 2020: Facilitating teleworking activities (covid19.maltaenterprise.com).

Citation

Eurofound (2020), *Facilitating teleworking, measure MT-2020-7/277 (measures in Malta)*, EU PolicyWatch, Dublin,
https://static.eurofound.europa.eu/covid19db/cases/MT-2020-7_277.html

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