

D.T5.1.1 Transnational report on available policy instruments for fighting the Covid-19 negative consequences

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

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List of Abbreviations

BWCON	Bwcon GmbH
DR	Danube Region
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EUSDR	EU Strategy for Danube Region
EWC	Women Entrepreneurship Centre
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
IRS	Innovation Region Styria Ltd
JS	Joint Secretariat-Budapest
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
RRA	Regional Development Agency Podravja -Maribor
NSHM	National Stakeholder Group Meeting
PA	Priority Area of EUSDR
PAC	Priority Area Coordinator (EUSDR)
PBN	Pannon Business Network Association
PCTM	Project Coordination Team Meeting
PIMM	Association of Small and Medium Enterprises in Constanta
PM	Project Manager
PMCT	Project Management and Coordination Team
PP	Project Partner
ODIMM	Organization for Small and Medium Enterprise Sector Development
RAPIV	Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovations - Varna
SCOM	Steering Committee
SEBS	School of Economics and Business, University of Sarajevo
SGZ	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Stajerska
SoC	Study of Current State
TG	Target Group
TLE	Transnational Learning Event
TP	Thematic Pole
TPV	Technology Park Varazdin Ltd.
UOC	OVIDIUS University of Constanta
UP	University of Pannonia
VFU	Varna Free University „Chernorizets Hrabar”
WP	Work Package
WPL	Work Package Leader
YWE	Young women entrepreneurship

Executive Summary

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of individuals and societies, including on the economy and labour markets, is unprecedented in modern history. All countries have implemented regulations or recommendations to apply social/physical distancing, impacting first on sectors with direct face-to-face or client contact and gradually forcing other business activities to shut down or reorient their working arrangements, particularly following the declaration of the spread of the novel coronavirus as a global pandemic on 11 March 2020. The speed and severity with which economic consequences have taken hold demonstrate the knock-on effect of the containment measures necessary to control the spread of the virus, in the large parts of the economy effectively in hibernation for several months (European Commission, 2020a).

The impact of the global health emergency has placed a growing number of businesses, including women owned companies under threat, putting the jobs of more and more workers at risk and impacting the livelihoods of many citizens, particularly financially vulnerable groups already struggling with debt issues.

Policymakers – including governments, support institutions, social partners and other social actors – moved swiftly in an effort to mitigate the social and economic effects on businesses, workers and citizens, often taking measures which would have been unthinkable only months ago, or had been under discussion without progress for many years prior to the outbreak of the pandemic.

In every country involved in the project WOMEN IN BUSINESS, a package of measures has been adopted aimed at supporting jobs and businesses. This includes the relaxation of state aid rules and the application of the full flexibility of fiscal rules to allow governments to provide liquidity to the economy to support businesses and jobs.

The Transnational Report on available policy instruments to support for fighting the negative consequences for women entrepreneurs from Covid-19 includes a short review of the provided measures in each PP's country and detailed information of most used ones.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Precise impacts are difficult to predict and depend on the dynamics of the virus spread, and the impact of containment measures. Beyond this, the economic and employment effects will greatly depend on the effectiveness of measures introduced to keep businesses afloat and to secure employment and incomes – as well as their sustainability.
- The majority of measures recorded (35%) were aimed at supporting businesses to stay afloat, while close to 20% sought to protect incomes (beyond short-time working) and 13% focused on the protection of employment (mostly linked to short-time working).

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- Initiatives to support businesses primarily took the form of subsidies targeting the self-employed, micro and small businesses (37%), with deferral of payments and eased access to low cost (state-backed) finance also granted to allow enterprises to overcome the short- to medium-term impact of full or partial closure and loss of revenue and enable them to cover ongoing running costs.
- Another feature of the COVID-19 response was the extension of income support to groups not previously covered (such as the self-employed and workers on temporary contracts), demonstrating the possibility to find (at least temporary) solutions to long-standing policy debates in the face of impending hardship for groups often most directly impacted in the context of economic crisis situations.
- Countries outside the EU, such as Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina have limited number of support measures, mainly aimed at supporting business to stay afloat through access to financial instruments and deferred payments of taxes, social contributions and loans. Policy makers could enlarge the range of the support similarly to the rest of the involved in the Report countries.
- The policy support at the start of the pandemic was open to all SMEs in need and with few strings attached. As a result, the take-up was generally high. In many respects, this high take-up can be seen as a success, which helped avoid a massive rise in bankruptcies during 2020. However, it may have led to the situation where support went to companies that did not need it, resulting in a less efficient and more costly provision of aid.
- The policy makers have to develop programmes towards viable enterprises that really need the support. This could be done by tightening ex-ante eligibility criteria and/or by introducing conditionality in accessing support or focusing support measures on sectors.
- None of the policy measures available in the Danube region provide tailored support to women led companies. Specific schemes with a view to gender disparities are key to ensure equal opportunities to recover. Examples for such schemes are limited but could be found in some EU countries and USA.
- Public response measures typically did not target start-ups specifically and many liquidity relief measures were not easily accessible for new ventures because of their eligibility criteria. On the other side, they were one of the most affected groups by the pandemic. The examples of schemes applied in Germany and Austria could be used for transfer in other DR countries.
- None of the policy measures available in the PPs countries is targeted to support back the business to normal by enhancing employability and training. Enabling SMEs to maintain access to skills during the crisis, as well as develop further skills, constitutes an important aspect of the required structural policy response to the crisis. There are some examples for such schemes in other EU countries such as Finland, Ireland, Greece, or other countries such as Australia.
- Governments of involved countries should prepare for responsible exit strategies that do not end support too rapidly and abruptly, and at the same time include a perspective and a roadmap on a responsible exit.

1. Introduction and Methodology

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of individuals and societies, including on the economy and labour markets, is unprecedented. The impact of the global health emergency has placed a growing number of businesses under threat, putting the jobs of more and more workers at risk and impacting the livelihoods of many citizens. Policymakers moved swiftly in an effort to mitigate the social and economic effects on businesses, workers and citizens.

Because of the negative impact of Covid-19 pandemic to business environment it is necessary to be identified the new measures launched by governments of DR countries, what the effects of the pandemic on the operation of companies owned/led by women and the difficulties female entrepreneurs faced in reconciling their entrepreneurial and family roles and whether the launched measures are effective enough to support them in running their business. The Study is made among WEs, focusing on YWEs. The results from the activity will be incorporated in the Policy Guide which will be presented to stakeholders and will be disseminated through the dissemination channels of the project.

Desk research on available EU policy measures was made. Additionally, WOMEN IN BUSINESS team made national researches in all project countries in order to identify the available policy measures for support.

2. Policy measures for fighting negative consequences from Covid-19 available in the Danube Region

SME policy makers across countries responded with unprecedented speed to the pandemic and containment measures, and the impact this had on SMEs. In fact, the months of March and April 2020 will probably enter in history books as the period when the highest numbers of SME policy initiatives were launched. In ensuring rapid delivery, two factors appear to have been particularly important: **low administrative thresholds for accessing government support** and **digital delivery systems**.

The COVID-19 crisis's fiscal response on the part of public authorities, aimed at mitigating the economic and labor market impacts. This has taken a variety of forms: for example, aids to workers via temporary and accelerated unemployment benefits and support to businesses via tax deferrals, credit guarantees and temporary wage subsidies (Eurofound, 2020b, 2020). In Germany, for example, the immediate fiscal boost of COVID-19 measures is estimated to be 10% of 2019 GDP (Anderson et al, 2020) with additional assistance in the form of tax deferrals, liquidity and other guarantees raising this (potentially) to 50% of GDP.

In the face of the unfolding COVID-19 crisis, the EU and the Member States have taken action seeking to minimize the impact of the pandemic on businesses, workers and citizens.

At EU level, in addition to measures to support national healthcare systems and instituting coordinated research programmes seeking effective treatments for COVID-19 and fostering collaboration in the development of a vaccine, a package of measures has been adopted to bolster jobs and businesses. This includes the relaxation of EU state aid rules and the application of the full flexibility of EU fiscal rules to allow governments to provide liquidity to the economy to support businesses and jobs.

In early April 2020, a €540 billion emergency rescue package was adopted to deal with the consequences of the crisis. This includes a pan-European Guarantee Fund established by the European Investment Bank, which provides €200 billion in financing for companies (particularly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)) and the creation of a new fund of up to €100 billion to support Member States implementing short-time working schemes in an effort to safeguard jobs. Known as SURE (Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency), the initiative approved on 19 May 2020 will finance loans on favourable terms to EU countries facing a ‘sudden and severe’ rise in spending on such schemes. The flexibility of the use of the Structural Funds has also been increased to allow Member States to transfer money between different funds and regions to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Specific sectoral measures have also been developed, including those supporting the hard-hit tourism sector.

On 27 May 2020, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced plans to borrow €750 billion to support recovery efforts in the EU. This initiative must first be unanimously approved at national level.

Table 1 provides a summary of the measures delivered in EU¹ by category, the categories providing a framework for the different measures. At the same time, it is important to recognize that any policy initiative can clearly pursue a variety of goals and have multiple target groups. For instance, measures designed to help businesses to stay afloat also contribute to safeguarding employment, whilst employment protection measures such as short-time working also assist businesses to retain a skilled workforce during a downturn, allowing them to recover more quickly once the crisis situation abates.

¹ Covid-19 Policy responses across Europe, Research Report, 2020, Eurofound
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Table 1 Categorization of mitigation measures

Businesses	Employees
Ensuring business continuity and support for essential services - Mobilizing a larger workforce - Smoothing frictions or reallocation of workers - Change of work arrangements - Remuneration and rewards for workers in essential services	Protection of workers at the workplace - Occupational health and safety - Teleworking arrangements, remote working - Change of working hours or work arrangements - Well-being of workers
Supporting businesses to stay afloat - Access to finance - Direct subsidies (full or partial) - Deferral of payments - Rescue procedures in cases of insolvency or adaptation of insolvency regulation	Income protection beyond short-time work - Support for parents and carers (financial or in-kind) - Paid sick leave - Income support for unemployed - Extensions of income support to workers not covered by any kind of protection scheme
Employment protection and retention - Income support for people in employment (e.g. short-time work) - Changes in dismissal law - Working time flexibility - Wage flexibility - Enhancing employability and training	
Supporting businesses to get back to normal - Measures to support a gradual relaunch of work - Enhancing employability	

The desk research of EU policy measures applied shows that that close to 35% of the initiatives adopted in the early phase of the evolution of the pandemic, from February to late April 2020, focused on supporting businesses to stay afloat. This was followed by income protection beyond short-time work measures (19% of initiatives) and employment protection and retention measures (13% of initiatives), many of which were related to the implementation of short-time work. Around one-tenth of policy initiatives were designed to ensure business continuity and provide support for essential services (11%) and prevent social hardship (9%).

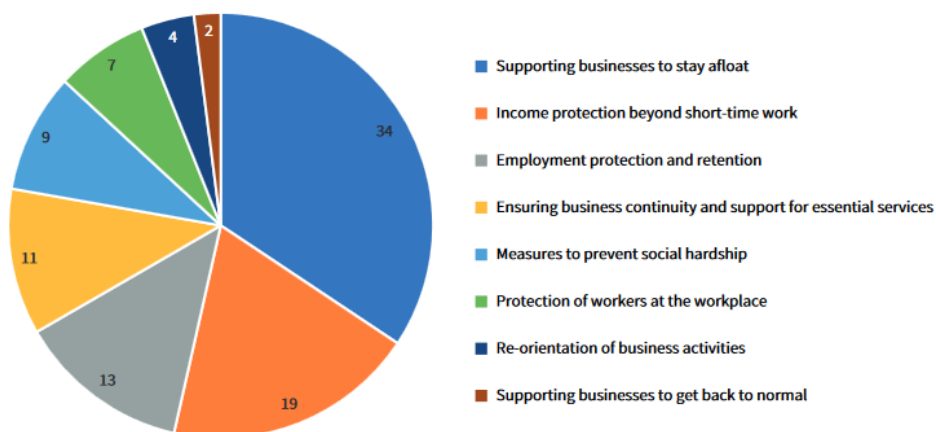
The largest share of the initiatives aimed at keeping businesses afloat took the form of non-repayable grant payments, primarily aimed at the self-employed, micro and small businesses to enable them to continue paying ongoing operating costs (rent, utilities, etc.). This focus serves to highlight the severity of the short-term impact of containment measures and the associated closure (or partial closure) of many businesses. Of almost equal importance beyond such rapid response financial aid initiatives were policies seeking to ensure ongoing access to finance,

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including through government-backed bank guarantees for business loans at low interest rates, as well as the deferral of financial commitments such as social security contributions, taxes and loan payments.

It is interesting to notice that in certain countries, different type of support is provided by different social partners. For example, in Germany, the public service union Ver.di and care sector employer organization BVAP have agreed a COVID-19 bonus of €1,500 for staff working in long-term and home care – a sector long struggling to recruit and retain sufficient staff numbers.

Figure 1 Distribution of policy measures in different categories (%)



Source: Eurofound COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch database (status April 2020)

WOMEN IN BUSINESS team members, who were largely responsible for populating the data in the Report, were asked to focus their reporting on the most used/ significant measures adopted in each participating country. Reporting, therefore, does not cover all the measures adopted, but provides a good overview of the direction and prioritization of measures applied.

The current Report focuses on measures implemented to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on businesses, and employees at national level in the 9 DR States. It does not include public health measures and information on travel and movement restrictions.

Special attention is put on measures with highest rate of application in DR countries namely “supporting **businesses to stay afloat**”, “**income protection beyond short time work**”, and “**employment protection and retention**”.

Table 3: Overview of measures adopted in DR countries to mitigate the impact of COVID-19: Measures for businesses

Ensuring business continuity and support for essential services				Supporting businesses to stay afloat			
5 countries				9 countries			
Change of work arrangements	Mobilisation of a larger workforce	Remuneration and rewards for workers in essential services	Smoothing frictions or reallocation of workers	Access to finance (financial instruments)	Deferral of payments (tax reliefs)	Direct subsidies (full or partial)	Rescue procedures in case of insolvency or adaptation of insolvency regulation
AT, SL	AT, SI	DE, HU	AT, DE	AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, RO, MD	AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, RO, SI, MD	AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, SI, BH, RO	DE, SI

Employment protection and retention				Supporting businesses to get back to normal		
8 countries				1 country		
Changes to dismissal law or employment protection legislation	Income support for people in employment (e.g. short-time work)	Wage flexibility	Working time flexibility	Transfer or redeployment of workers	Enhancing employability and training	Measures to support a gradual relaunch of work
none	AT, BG, DE, HR, HU, SI, RO, MD	HR	AT, HU	None	None	AT

Table 4: Overview of measures adopted in DR countries to mitigate the impact of COVID-19: Measures for employees

Protection of workers at the workplace			
5 countries			
Change of work arrangements	Occupational health and safety	Teleworking arrangements, remote working	Well-being of workers
HU, HR	AT, SI	AT	none

Income protection beyond short-time work			
6 countries			
Extensions of income support to workers not covered by any kind of protection scheme	Income support for the unemployed	Paid sick leave	Support for parents and carers (financial or in-kind)
AT, BG, DE, HR, RO, SI	AT, BG	SI	AT, BG, RO

Source: COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch database (status April 2020), own research (status August 2021)

By and large, **the policy support at the start of the pandemic was open to all SMEs in need** and with few strings attached. As a result, the take-up was generally high. In many respects, this high take-up can be seen as a success, which helped avoid a massive rise in bankruptcies during 2020. However, the **wide and relatively easy access** to credit and the changes in insolvency and bankruptcy procedures in some jurisdictions **may also have unintended consequences**. First, it may have led to the situation **where support went to firms that did not need it**, resulting in a less efficient and more costly provision of aid. Some empirical evidence shows that this indeed may have been the case. (Gourinchas et al., 2020[21]) showed that in some cases SMEs that did not need the support benefited as well, and that **the fiscal cost of an intervention that narrowly targets at risk firms can be modest** (0.54% of GDP), whereas non-targeted subsidies can be substantially more expensive (1.82% of GDP). However, according to the World Bank small firms world-wide were among those least likely to receive support (Apedo-Amah et al., 2020[22]).

In moving forward, policy makers should increasingly consider **tailoring programmes towards viable enterprises that really need the support**. This could be done by **tightening ex-ante eligibility criteria and/or by introducing conditionality in accessing support**. **Focusing support measures on sectors** and activities that most need them, is another example of a more targeted approach, which is increasingly adopted for instance on the hospitality and tourism sector.

In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, **public response measures typically did not target start-ups** specifically and many liquidity relief measures were not easily accessible for new ventures because of their eligibility criteria. In a growing number of countries dedicated start-up packages were launched (for instance in Austria, Germany), whereas more generally other instruments such as early-stage equity and start-up support were included in liquidity packages (for instance in Germany, Hungary) (OECD, 2020[2]).

The COVID-19 pandemic hit women business owners disproportionately. Reasons include that these businesses tend to be concentrated in the industries most affected by the pandemic, have relatively small financial buffers and limited access to different financial sources. Women-owned businesses are on average smaller and younger compared to male-owned businesses. They are more likely to be self-funded, or funded by friends and family, and have fewer financial assets. In addition, women have less access to external finance, and lower levels of financial skills compared to men. Women entrepreneurs retain fewer professional contacts, including advisory boards or professional advisors to share advice about managing risks through the pandemic (OECD, 2020[43]). In their continued support efforts, policymakers should take the diversity of SMEs and the specific circumstances of vulnerable groups of SMEs into account, in order to avoid the risk of some segments of the SME population not being able to benefit from the policy response. **Specific schemes with a view to gender disparities are key to ensure equal**

opportunities to recover. Policy makers have learned that it is not only necessary to understand the differential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women-owned businesses but also to design inclusive schemes that allow them to have adequate access to support. However, **examples of such schemes are so far limited.**

After the first wave of the pandemic in the spring of 2020 and the SME policy measures deployed, in many countries the focus of their attention increasingly turned to exit strategies from such support. However, with new waves of the pandemic and lockdowns in the fall, countries have typically extended and expanded their emergency support, and placed on hold discussions on exit strategies until progress in vaccinations would allow for this. A too sudden withdrawal of emergency public support measures would unnecessarily risk the bankruptcy of viable businesses, with the end of lockdown measures in sight after large scale vaccinations. At the same time, it is increasingly clear that the policy response has also negative impacts, and that indefinite continuation of emergency support measures is undesirable. **Governments should prepare for responsible exit strategies** that do not end support too rapidly and abruptly, and at the same time include a perspective and a roadmap on a responsible exit.

According to the Survey about consequences of Covid-19 to women entrepreneurs in the DR, remote work is one of most used way to work while limiting risks of contracting the virus and evidence presented in this brief confirms its surge in use. Public investment should be targeted **to improving digital infrastructures**, which remain a necessary but not sufficient condition for large-scale remote working, and the digital skills of the population, to ensure that businesses and individuals can reap the full benefits of digitalisation. This **will not only support the recovery from the current crisis but address structural challenges linked to the ongoing digital transformation.** Upskilling and retraining are solutions to boost skill development and retraining of vulnerable workers, allowing them to re-enter the labour market in high-quality jobs and with an effective skill set. Retraining and upskilling, however, takes time and income support will be needed during the transition to a restored economic activity.

2.1. Supporting businesses to stay afloat

In an effort to mitigate the severe consequences of the pandemic on the economy, the majority of government measures have focused on safeguarding the survival of companies impacted by the crisis in the short term. This has included a wide range of measures to help businesses to stay afloat through various financial supports, particularly where they have been affected by full or partial shut-down. Such temporary emergency measures essentially fall into 3 main categories:

- **Access to finance through (government-backed) loan guarantees and liquidity on preferential terms.**
- **Deferral of loan, tax and social security payments.**

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- **Provision of grants** or cancellations of existing loans, tax or social security liabilities.

Access to finance

The majority of countries have adopted measures to provide enhanced access to liquidity for a wide range of businesses. This can involve direct government backing for business loans or the allocation of government funds to commercial banks to ensure and encourage continued lending to qualifying businesses. Such state guarantees range from 50% to 100%, but are most frequently in the region of 80% of total loan capital. While the schemes are mainly aimed at SMEs and micro enterprises, in Bulgaria and Germany there is also support for mid-caps 12 and larger enterprises. Specific sectoral support measures are also in place for the agriculture and forestry sectors in Croatia, the tourism and creative industries in Austria and Croatia.

To prevent the curtailment of business innovation during the pandemic Germany has also instituted schemes specifically aimed at start-ups and young innovative companies. In general, the supports available tend to offer short term (up to one year) loans at very favourable interest rates (below 1%) or at zero-rated interest, particularly for small and micro companies hardest hit by lock-down measures. Longer term and larger loans often attract somewhat higher interest rates (up to 4%), but in some cases allow for extended deferral periods. In terms of loan purpose and amount, most are intended to cover wage and other operating costs; in a number of cases, the total loan amounts are limited to 25% of 2019 turnover (or double the previous year's wage costs). A number of eligibility criteria are generally applied, such as the company's ability to demonstrate its financial health prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the absence of outstanding liabilities in terms of tax or social insurance payments. Many schemes initially envisaged limited timescales for applications, although some have subsequently been extended as the impact of the crisis continued to be felt.

Deferral of payments

The majority of countries have implemented legislation providing for the deferral of various tax and social security liabilities for companies significantly impacted by a loss of income due to COVID-19. In Austria, such measures primarily targeted the self-employed, whereas in Slovenia the self-employed are among a broader list of target groups for such relief measures.

Direct subsidies

While the dramatic and sudden loss of income has certainly posed existential challenges to many small and micro businesses, it has also impacted on large companies facing ongoing operating costs, such as rent and utilities. To come to the rescue of enterprises that have been acutely affected by the complete temporary cessation of business (and those with dramatic drops in income) in the short term, some countries introduced non-repayable grant schemes. These

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grants largely deliver lump sum supports allowing businesses and self-employed individuals to cover their fixed business expenses for a limited period of time. Some are specifically targeted at businesses affected by mandatory closure (such as in Hungary), while others support companies with a loss of income related to a specific share of turnover in the same month of the previous year (for example, in Austria, Bulgaria). Certain sectors (such as tourism) are supported by grant measures in Bulgaria, Croatia, and Slovenia. While they may constitute a lifeline for many businesses, such eligibility criteria inevitably mean that some enterprises cannot access support. Although these measures have been largely welcomed, such restrictions and the time lag in the realization of payments under such schemes have been among the main points of contention.

Table 7: Certain grant payments introduced in the Danube Region countries to support businesses with fixed costs

Country	Target group affected by impact of Covid-19	Nature of support	Level of support in euro
Austria	One-person companies Micro-enterprises with less than 10 employees (full-time equivalents), with an annual turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 2 million New self-employed persons Independent contractors and liberal professions	Grant for fixed costs for a six-month period	EUR 500 or EUR 1,000 depending on the scale of annual turnover; Payments amounting to 80% of lost income up to a maximum of EUR 2,000 per month for six months; "Comeback bonus" amounting to a maximum of EUR 500 per month for six months; In total, a non-taxable subsidy (net loss of income and comeback bonus) of up to EUR 30,000 is granted.
	SMEs (companies up to 250 employees)	Subsidy to cover rent, insurance premiums, licence costs, utility bills, entrepreneur's salary, loss of goods	Depending on the scale of turnover loss – up to 75% of the fixed costs
Bosnia and Herzegovina	SMEs in tourism and hospitality sectors, transport and communications, agriculture and food industry, and for export companies	Subsidy to cover the minimum gross salaries and operating costs	
Bulgaria	SMEs with turnover at least EUR 15,338	Subsidies for cover fixed costs	Depending on the scale of the turnover from previous year – 10% of the turnover but minimum EUR 1,533 and maximum EUR 5,113
Germany	SMEs, self-employed, farmers, foresters, and freelancers	Emergency aid (one-off grant)	EUR 9,000 for solo self-employed persons and companies with up to 5 employees, EUR 15,000 for enterprises

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			with up to 10 employees, EUR 30,000 for enterprises with up to 50 employees.
	SMEs, self-employed persons, and also non-profit companies and organizations.	Subsidies for covering fixed operating costs	Depending on the scale of drop off the revenues, up to 100% of the fixed costs
Romania	PFA, Micro enterprises, SMEs	Grants for materials, late debts to suppliers, rent, etc.	EUR 2,000
	SMEs	Working capital grant, under the form of unit cost	Depending on the scale of turnover – 15% of the turnover but minimum EUR 2,000 and maximum EUR 150,000
	SMEs from the Hospitality Industry – Restaurants, Pensions, Hotels, Travel Agencies, and Tourist Guide	Subsidy to cover the minimum gross salaries and operating costs	20% of the base value, resulted from carrying out activities in 2020 compared to 2019 but no more than EUR 800,000 per company
Slovenia	Self-employed, self-employed in culture, farmers	Subsidy to guarantee a basic income	EUR 700 per month

2.2. Employment protection and retention

Measures to keep businesses afloat by assisting with day-to-day operating costs were complemented in all countries with initiatives seeking to limit the impact of the pandemic on employment and incomes. A particular emphasis of the COVID-19 response in the EU, compared, for example, to that in the US, has been on preserving the employment relationship using the model of the German short-time work (Kurzarbeit) scheme. A consequence of this EU policy focus has been that job loss in the initial phase of the crisis in the EU has been less dramatic than that observed in the US (Financial Times, 2020b). In addition, extraordinary efforts have been made during the crisis to protect the incomes of groups previously unable to access such support (such as atypical workers and the self-employed) – in many cases overcoming (at least temporarily) long-held concerns and objections against the extension of social and income protections to such groups. Another specific focus during the COVID-19 health emergency has been on stabilizing the incomes of those directly affected by the virus: who are either sick, in self-isolation due to (potential) exposure or in quarantine. Finally, for workers impacted by unemployment in the short term, access to such benefits was eased in a number of countries, particularly for those with insufficient contribution records.

Income support for people in employment: Short-time work

The experience of the global financial crisis has shown the importance of continued attachment of workers to the labor market, allowing firms to retain skills, expertise and labor. Maintaining this attachment allows affected organizations to begin the path towards recovery more smoothly as restrictions are eased and demand grows (Eurofound, 2020c). One

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assessment of the German Kurzarbeit scheme found that it preserved around 580,000 jobs in the years of the 2008–2009 global financial crises (Hijzen and Martin, 2013).

Testament to the fact that STW schemes played an important role in the previous crisis, all EU Member States now operate some form of STW scheme. A number of countries, particularly in central and Eastern Europe developed such schemes during the 2008–2009 global financial crises, while others have been implementing schemes in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Bulgaria and Hungary are entirely new in STW schemes.

Amendments to existing schemes primarily aim to ease access, broaden eligibility and increase state funding. For example, Austria has amended the rules of the existing scheme to allow for working hours to (temporarily) fall to zero, while on the other hand also allowing for overtime to be carried out. The employers' share of social security contributions is also covered by the state during the COVID-19 crisis. Similarly, in Germany, an extension to the Kurzarbeit regime provides for the Public Employment Service to cover employer social insurance contributions. It makes STW accessible to businesses experiencing a 10% drop in demand (previously 30%).

2.3. Income protection beyond short-time work

While the use of short-time work allowances has become increasingly common during the global financial crisis – and was expanded in response to COVID-19 – the measures reported in this point are in many ways more specific to the pandemic response. This includes the extension of income protection to groups not previously covered in order to prevent financial hardship, as well as initiatives around the extension of sick leave and family leave schemes to account for both the requirements around self-isolation/ quarantine and the challenges linked to the closure of schools and crèches.

Extensions of income support to workers not covered by any kind of protection scheme

While STW schemes have been implemented, adapted and extended to provide a degree of employment and income security (in the short to medium term), similar protection was previously largely inaccessible to freelancers, solo-self-employed and other self-employed groups – as well as workers on temporary contracts – placing them at particular risk of economic shocks (OECD, 2020). The lack of income protection for these target groups is linked to a range of factors including the lack of – or more limited – access to social protection systems; an inability to bargain collectively to ensure greater levels of protection or more limited levels of organisation (Eurofound, 2020c) and a lack of provision of what might be described as universal minimum income schemes. The need to address some of these issues has been under discussion at national and European level for a number of years, with only limited Project co-funded by European Union Funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)

progress. The extent to which individuals in this target group have been impacted by the restrictions imposed to combat the COVID-19 pandemic (for example, self-employed tradesmen and self-employed and micro companies in the leisure and hospitality sector) has led many states to institute income protection measures which previously appeared to be impossible to instigate. In recent months, some countries have introduced measures covering the solo self-employed (Germany), freelancers (Bulgaria) and the self-employed (Austria, Romania, Slovenia). Countries like Austria, Bulgaria, and Croatia have specifically included artists and individuals working in the creative industries who have been particularly impacted by the closure of venues and cancellation of events and creative productions. Croatia has targeted additional support to protect the income of 'permanent seasonal workers'.

While most countries determine that this income reduction should be measured against a range of previous months (or the same month in the previous year), the Slovenian scheme requires a proven loss on income in March 2020 compared to February of the same year – an approach which has been criticized on account of the variation of incomes from self-employment in different months.

3. Focus on applied national policy measures for fighting negative consequences from Covid-19

The current Report is focused on policy measures applied in the 9 partners countries from the Danube Region. They are presented within 4 main groups.

Table 8: Grouping of the policy measures

Main groups of measures	Types of adopted measures	
Subsidies for costs or revenue compensations	Supporting businesses to stay afloat	Direct subsidies (full or partial)
Subsidies for employees and workers	Ensuring business continuity and support for essential services	Remuneration and rewards for workers in essential services
	Employment protection and retention	Income support for people in employment (e.g. short-time work)
Governmental support through financial instruments	Supporting businesses to stay afloat	Access to finance (financial instruments)
Other type of support	Ensuring business continuity and support for essential services	Mobilization of a larger workforce
		Smoothing frictions or reallocation of workers
	Supporting businesses to stay afloat	Deferral of payments (tax reliefs)
		Rescue procedures in case of insolvency or adaptation of insolvency regulation
	Employment protection and retention	Changes to dismissal law or employment protection legislation
		Wage flexibility
		Working time flexibility
	Supporting businesses to get back to normal	Measures to support a gradual relaunch of work
	Protection of workers at the workplace	Change of work arrangements
		Occupational health and safety
		Teleworking arrangements, remote working
Income protection beyond short-time work	Income support for the unemployed	
	Income support for workers not covered by other protective schemes	
	Paid sick leave	
	Support for parents and carers (financial or in-kind)	

3.1 Austria

Measure: Hardship

Group of the measure	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Short description of the policy measure	Fund for EPU, micro enterprises and new founders
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	March 16, 2020 to October 31, 2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	Legally operated commercial company in the own name and on own account or independent professional practice of a freelance profession; Registered office or permanent establishment in Austria, economically significant losses due to COVID-19 (no longer able to cover running costs or officially ordered ban on entering the premises or a drop in sales of at least 50% compared to the same month of the previous year)
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	One-person companies Micro-enterprises with less than 10 employees (full-time equivalents), with an annual turnover or balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 2 million New self-employed persons Independent contractors and liberal professions
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	Phase 1: EUR 500 (annual net income between EUR 5,528 und EUR 6,000); EUR 1,000 (annual net income from EUR 6,000) Phase 2: Payments amounting to 80% of lost income up to a maximum of EUR 2,000 per month for six months; "Comeback bonus" amounting to a maximum of EUR 500 per month for six months; In total, a non-taxable subsidy (net loss of income and comeback bonus) of up to EUR 30,000 is granted. Phase 3: Extension from 2 August to 31 October 2021 for the monitoring period July, August and September 2021
What did work well?	No information
What did not work well?	No information
Good example related with the measure	No information

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Measure: Grants to cover fixed costs

Group of the measure	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Short description of the policy measure:	The grants are given to cover fixed costs on the part of companies which suffer from serious liquidity shortfalls and loss of revenue as a result of the coronavirus crisis. Fixed costs encompass, amongst other things, rents for business premises and leases, interest expenses for loans, expenses for electricity, gas and telecommunications, operational insurance premiums, financing costs of leasing installments, operational license fees and other required, contractually operational payment obligations and the loss of value of perishable or seasonal goods with at least 50 % of the value lost as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	March 2020 – December 2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	Funding is provided to companies whose headquarters or permanent establishment are in Austria and which perform a significant operational activity in Austria; Companies which were experiencing financial difficulties as of December 31, 2019 are not eligible for funding (pursuant to EU rules on state aid), The companies must take reasonable measures to reduce fixed costs and safeguard jobs in Austria
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	SMEs (companies up to 250 employees); Companies with more than 250 employees as of December 31, 2019 as well as companies in the finance and insurance sector are excluded
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	The fixed cost subsidy is limited to up to 75% of the fixed costs per company, scaled according to the loss of turnover or the percentage of the loss of turnover. Phase 1: The fixed costs grant is staggered according to amount of lost revenue and is limited to a maximum of EUR 90 million per company:

	<p>40-60% 25% compensation (max. of EUR 30 million) 60-80% 50% compensation (max. of EUR 60 million) 80-100% 75% compensation (max. of EUR 90 million)</p> <p>Phase 2:</p> <p>The loss in revenue must equal at least 30 percent (previously 40 percent). The fixed costs will have to be incurred in the period between September 16, 2020 and up until June 30, 2021 at the latest.</p> <p>Either a quarterly (e.g. 2nd and 3rd quarter of 2020) or monthly approach can be used as the basis for calculating the amount of the fixed costs grant.</p> <p>When selecting the monthly consideration period (up to ten periods under consideration or months between September 16, 2020 and June 30, 2021), the fixed costs taken into account must have arisen in the corresponding period.</p> <p>The replacement rate of the subsidy in Phase II is calculated on a linear basis and corresponds to the percentage of the revenue loss. For this reason, in case of a 75% drop in revenue, 75% of the fixed costs are covered (up to 100% revenue loss). In Phase I, only three different replacement rates were defined (25% / 50% / 75%).</p> <p>Companies whose annual revenue is below EUR 120,000 at the time of submitting the application can apply for the flat rate of 30% of the revenue decrease.</p> <p>The maximum amount per company is capped at EUR 800,000, the minimum amount is specified to be EUR 500.</p> <p>Newly founded companies which already achieved revenue before September 16, 2020 can also apply for the second phase of the fixed costs grant.</p>
What did work well?	No information
What did not work well?	No information
Good example related with the measure	No information

Measure: Corona short-time work

Group of the measure	Measure subsidies for employees (salaries, paid leave, etc.)
Short description of the policy measure:	<p>Support for companies and safeguarding employment. The Austrian Federal Government has made a budget of up to EUR 12 billion available to finance short-time work for Austrian companies in response to the coronavirus.</p> <p>The Corona short-time work is a new, expanded form of short-time work for companies which are economically affected by COVID-19. The temporary reduction of normal working hours and wages is designed to preserve the liquidity of companies and secure jobs, regardless of the particular size and sector of the company.</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	March 2020 –June 2022
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government, Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS)
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	Economic difficulties in connection with COVID-19, social partnership agreement, lost working hours
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Short-time work is possible for companies regardless of the respective company size and regardless of the respective industry.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	<p>During the planned period of short-time work, working hours can be reduced to a level between 10% and 90 % of the contractually stipulated normal working hours. Depending on their salary range, the employees continue to receive between 80 % and 90 % of their previous salaries (net salary guarantee) from their employers.</p> <p>The AMS compensates employers for the costs of the working hours lost (short-time work grants) in line with specified flat rates, and thus, for the most part, the additional costs arising in comparison to actual working time. This is done when certain prerequisites are fulfilled (e.g. economic difficulties in connection with COVID-19, social partnership agreement, lost working hours). As a result, the labor costs for employees are reduced by up to 90%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The short-time work grants provided by the AMS are based on the net salary of the employee before the introduction of short-time work, and are designed to

	<p>guarantee a minimum income: In the case of a gross salary of up to EUR 1,700, the remuneration amounts to 90% of the previous net salary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the case of a gross salary of up to EUR 1,700 and EUR 2,685, the remuneration amounts to 85% of the previous net salary. ▪ In the case of a gross salary of more than EUR 2,686, the remuneration amounts to 80 % of the previous net salary. ▪ There are no work grants for incomes above the maximum contribution basis of EUR 5,370, the AMS covers the additional costs incurring for the employer in comparison to actual working time but not for the portions of income above the maximum contribution basis. ▪ The short-time work grants provided by AMS cover 100% of the previous net salary for apprentices. <p>As of 1.7.2021, the amount of short time work grants will be reduced and the minimum working hours will be adjusted.</p>
What did work well?	Short-time work was used most frequently of all measures in Austria and was evaluated very positively by the companies.
What did not work well?	Settlement very complicated
Good example related with the measure	No information

Measure: Loan guarantee of the Republic of Austria

Group of the measure	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.;
Short description of the policy measure:	<p>Federal guarantees are available for loans amounting to 90% of the loan volume. The upper limit is a maximum of three month's turnover or a total of EUR 120 million (this can only be increased in exceptional cases).</p> <p>A loan interest rate not exceeding 1% is applied. In addition, guarantee fees of between 0.25 and 2% are charged in accordance with EU state aid law (depending on the size of the company and the term of the guarantee).</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	Since April 2020, maximum duration is 5 years and can be extended by up to 5 years.
Who does provide the support?	Government

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(national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>Single point of contact is the principal bank. Depending on the company, the application is forwarded to Austria Wirtschaftsservice (for SMEs), Österreichische Hotel- und Tourismusbank (for tourism companies) or Oesterreichische Kontrollbank (for large companies).</p> <p>Through these three funding bodies, COFAG (Covid-19 Funding Agency) issues credit guarantees for loans granted by banks to companies. COFAG guarantees 90% of the loan amount.</p>
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	SMEs and large companies, location and business operations must be in Austria and there must be a liquidity requirement for the domestic location
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	Federal guarantees are available for loans amounting to 90% of the loan volume. The upper limit is a maximum of three month's turnover or a total of EUR 120 million (this can only be increased in exceptional cases)
What did work well?	No information
What did not work well?	No information
Good example related with the measure	No information

Measure: Special tax regulations concerning Coronavirus

Group of the measure	Other type of support (some specific support measure which could help women to sustain their business, could be social measures, etc.)
Short description of the policy measure:	<p>Reduction of the advance payments of income and corporate tax for 2020 (down to zero).</p> <p>If this reduction results in an additional claim in the assessment for 2020, no claim interest will be charged. The reduction of the advance payment of corporate income tax for 2020 can be applied for until October 31, 2020.</p> <p>Payment facilitations (deferment or payment in installments)</p> <p>Deferrals of tax arrears approved after March 15, 2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 virus and which expired on October 1, 2020 are automatically extended until 31 March 2021 (no deferral interest will be imposed during this period).</p> <p>This extension encompasses all taxes booked on the tax account</p>

	<p>up to September 25, 2020.</p> <p>If tax arrears are not subject to the legally permissible deferral, an application can be submitted to defer tax payments or pay in installments</p> <p>No deferral interest will be imposed between March 15, 2020 and March 31, 2021. Afterwards the deferral interest rate will amount to two percent and will be gradually increased (a 0.5 percent rise every two months).</p> <p>Bonus payments and allowances for service are considered to be tax exempt.</p> <p>No fees and administrative levies are imposed when applying for benefits, no stamp duties are levied for legal transactions which are required to implement measures in connection with the COVID-19 crisis situation.</p> <p>Application for late payment charges</p> <p>No late payment fines are imposed for taxes due between March 15, 2020 and December 31, 2020.</p> <p>Non-imposition of late charges</p> <p>Interest on declarations not submitted in due time will not be imposed until August 31, 2020.</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	Different time frames, depending on the processing agency
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Federal Ministry of Finance
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	

Good example related with the measure	
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3.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided into two Entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska, which are politically autonomous to an extent, as well as the Brčko District. The Federation and the Republika Srpska governments are charged with overseeing internal functions. Each has its own government, flag and coat of arms, president, parliament (FBiH) and assembly (RS), police force, customs, and postal system. The Federation is further divided into ten cantons, which are then subdivided into municipalities. Republika Srpska is divided directly into municipalities. The city of Brčko in northeastern Bosnia is a seat of the Brčko District, a self-governing administrative unit; it is part of both the Federation and Republika Srpska.

At the national level, BiH does not have direct power to act in connection with the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the BiH Council of Ministers formed the Socio-Economic Response Group, which commenced work in June 2020, and is responsible, among other things, for coordinating the activities of all levels of government in defining socio-economic measures to respond to the pandemic. The focus throughout 2020 and 2021 was on preserving borders, receiving donations, harmonizing recommendations for health care of citizens and the like, while mitigating economic consequences were more concerned with entity governments and lower levels of government in BiH.

Most of the measures to deal with Covid-19 related economic crises were conducted on the lower level of governments (entity and cantonal level). These measures were financed primarily through an IMF loan of 400 million of EUR. Legal ground for intervention in the case of FBiH was secured by adopting so-called "Umbrella Corona Law - Law on Mitigation the Negative Economic Consequences" (Official Gazette of FBiH, 2020a) while on the other hand in the RS there are a number of regulations.

Beside measures implemented on the entity level (some of which are explained in the text below), an additional 200 million BAM received from the IMF loan to support the economy was allocated through the FBiH budget to the cantons, which could freely implement the funds according to their needs. With regard to the COVID-related legislation, some of the cantons decided to adopt similar Covid laws. For example, the Sarajevo Canton, adopted the "Law on Mitigation of Negative Economic Consequences and Crisis Savings in the Sarajevo Canton". Support to the salaries in affected companies was secured for the March, April, May, June and July. Sarajevo Canton engaged also local government units (municipalities) to jointly support locally registered crafts. Combined direct support in 2020 implemented in Sarajevo Canton was Project co-funded by European Union Funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)

around 20 million BAM (18 million financed by cantonal government and around 1.5 million financed by municipalities). In other Cantons implemented support was much smaller, and in some of them (such as Una Sana Canton) non-existent¹³. This basically means that the level of support received by the affected business in FBiH depend from the location of their operations.

Hence, the measures differed in part in the two entities, Republika Srpska and the Federation and its 10 cantons. The following are just some of examples of entity-level measures.

Federation of BiH

As part of economic assistance measures, the Government of the Federation of BiH has undertaken the obligation to subsidize the payment of contributions for pension and health insurance for workers affected by the closure of the economy.

Measure: Subsidies Under the Law on Mitigation of Negative Economic Consequences

Group of the measure	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	<p>The Law was adopted in May 2021 (two months after pandemic started) and subsidized contributions for compulsory insurance for April, May and June 2020 in the total amount of about 90 mil. BAM. The measure was open for all companies in which a decrease in turnover of 20% or more was recorded compared to the turnover in the same month in 2019. The business would be entitled to a right to subsidy under the condition that it has settled contributions and personal income tax payables, by February 2020.</p> <p>This law prescribes: subsidizing contributions for compulsory insurance, suspension of calculation and payment of default interest on public revenues, abolition of obligations to pay advance income tax, abolition of obligations to pay advance income tax on self-employment, termination of calculation of default interest on late payment, termination of forced collection, maintenance of stability of certain payments, postponement of application of regulations during the state of the accident in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB&H), and establishment of the Guarantee Fund.</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government of FB&H.
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms,	Business entities have the right to subsidize contributions in accordance with the Law in the amount of 244.85 KM per month per employee starting from the calculation and payment of gross

<p>etc.)</p>	<p>salary for April 2020 and each subsequent month, including the calculation and payment of salaries for the month after the end of the accident. Subsidizing contributions for each employee is done in a way that for pension and disability insurance is directed 135.70 KM, for health insurance 97.35 KM and for unemployment 11.80 KM, if in the month for which the salary is calculated, <i>there is a decrease in turnover 20% and more in relation to the realized turnover in the same month in 2019.</i></p> <p>The payment of the lowest net salary to the employees is not conditioned by the simultaneous payment of subsidized contributions.</p> <p>Business entities that are not in the fiscalization system in accordance with the regulations on fiscal systems shall also have the right to subsidize contributions in accordance with the provisions of this Law.</p> <p>For sole proprietors and business entities in low-accumulation activities for which the bases are lower than the minimum gross salary, the subsidy of contributions for April of the current year and each following month, including calculation and payment of contributions for the month after the end of the accident the amount of contributions determined on the prescribed monthly basis for the current year.</p> <p>Business entities are obliged to submit to the Tax Administration a request for subsidies and tax returns from the regulations on contributions and regulations on income tax by the tenth of the current month for the previous month.</p> <p>Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form (http://pufbih.ba/v1/public/upload/files/Uputstvo_za_ZSD_Final_v1.pdf) • MIP-1023, Specification 2001, 2001-A, 2002 and 2002-A (monthly tax and contribution calculation forms) <p>Financial income cards and a copy of the pages of the business/accounting books (if fiscal device is not available)</p>
<p>For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)</p>	<p>Business entities</p>
<p>Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)</p>	<p>Payment of contributions on behalf of the subsidy for the months: 04/2020, 05/2020 and 06/2020, in the total amount of 89,798,367.53 KM, and as stated in the monthly amounts for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2020: 38,069,259.64 KM for 23,872 taxpayers and a total of 164,279 employees according to taxpayers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2020: 32,230,050.34 KM for 19,916 taxpayers and a total of 142,044 employees according to taxpayers. • June 2020: 19,499,057.55 KM for 14,324 taxpayers and a total of 86,276 employees according to taxpayers.
What did work well?	The Government of FBiH instructed the Tax Administration of the Federation of BiH to publish on its website a list of subsidy beneficiaries based on the Law on Mitigation of Negative Economic Consequences, with the aim of transparency in spending funds from the Stabilization Fund.
What did not work well?	<p>The tax offices received and processed 61,946 applications for subsidies, and after checking all applications and submitted documentation (forms MIP-1023 for employees or forms 2002/2002-A for sole proprietors), determined that 58,212 applications meet the legal requirements for subsidies, and 3,733 applications do not meet the statutory requirements for the use of the contribution subsidy.</p> <p>Federal Ministry of Finance is as of 09.09.2020. made all payments of calculated and approved requests for subsidies to the Tax Administration on September 11, 2020. submitted analytical treasury files by which the distribution of paid subsidized contributions was made to taxpayers (JIB, amount, type of income, municipality, payment account, tax period).</p>
Good example related with the measure	

Republika Srpska

Measures taken by the RS Government to address the economic consequences of the pandemic relate to the commitment to pay health and pension insurance contributions to about 40,000 workers directly affected by the closure, i.e., government measures, in the amount of KM 50 million or 0.15% in% of GDP.

In addition, the Decree on the conditions for using tourist vouchers in RS was adopted, which formalizes the subsidy for the use of accommodation services in hotels and catering facilities on the territory of RS. The aim of these regulations is to encourage domestic tourism in the conditions of a pandemic, but also direct support to business entities in the field of tourism and catering that have suffered significant damage. Measure subsidies for employees (salaries, paid leave, etc.)

Federation of BiH

The Government of FBiH undertook to pay the minimum wage to employees in companies suffering from the consequences of the closure of the economy.

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Measure: Decree on intervention measures to support vulnerable sectors of the economy of the FBiH in the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic²

Group of the measure	Subsidies for employees
Description of the policy measure:	In October 2020, the Government of the FBiH passed the Decree on intervention measures to support vulnerable sectors of the economy of the FBiH in the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic. Total financial resources in the amount of 90 million KM are distributed for the tourism and catering sector, the transport and communications sector, agriculture and food industry and assistance to export companies for the payment of minimum gross wages (Official Gazette of FBiH, 2020c). The fund covered the payment of minimum gross salaries and current operating expenses until the end of 2020.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government of FBiH
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	Subsidies granted through a public call may be granted to a beneficiary who meets the following cumulative conditions: a) the beneficiary is registered at territory of the Federation of BiH; b) the aid beneficiary achieved a drop in taxable turnover of at least 40% in the period from 01.04. to 30.09.2020. in relation to the taxable turnover realized in the same period in 2019 or is an exporter who in the previous year realized exports over 30% of the total income in that year.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	The total financial resources for the implementation of this Decree are provided in the Budget of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2020 in the amount of 90,000,000 KM and allocated to the departments of line ministries under this Decree as follows: a) Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism in the amount of 30,000,000 KM for the allocation of financial assistance to the tourism and hospitality sector; b) Federal Ministry of Transport and Communications in the amount of 20,000,000 KM for the allocation of financial assistance to the transport and communications sector; c) Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and

² <https://www.paragraf.ba/propisi/fbih/uredba-o-interventnim-mjerama-za-podrsku-ugrozenim-sektorima-privrede-federacije-bosne-i-hercegovine-u-okolnostima-pandemije-covid-19.html>

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	Forestry in the amount of 10,000,000 KM for the allocation of financial assistance to the sector of agriculture and food industry; d) Federal Ministry of Energy, Mining and Industry in the amount of 30,000,000 KM for the allocation of financial assistance to export companies.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	90 million KM
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	Financial assistance to beneficiaries is granted on the basis of general conditions and specific criteria for each sector within the identified ministries, and pays no later than January 31, 2021.
Good example related with the measure	

Republika Srpska

The government undertook to pay the minimum wage for April, for all employees of the sector affected by government measures, for which 53 million KM or 0.16% in% of GDP was allocated, and 25 million KM (0.08% of %GDP) transferred to the Unemployment Fund.

Measure: Decree on the allocation of funds to businesses and entrepreneurs for addressing the consequences of the pandemic

Group of the measure	Subsidies for employees
Description of the policy measure:	
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The decree was adopted in July 2020, focusing on companies that only partially ceased their business activities, or which had reduced business volume (at least 20% compared to the same month of the previous year) ³ .
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government of RS
Requirements for application for	Business entities or entrepreneurs who have a registered office

³ <https://www.paragraf.ba/propisi/republika-srpska/uredba-o-dodjeli-sredstava-za-saniranje-posljedica-pandemije-virusa-korona-za-mart-2021.html>

the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	in the Republic of Srpska and perform activities that were prohibited by the conclusions of the Republic Emergency Situations Headquarters for more than five days, starting from March 4, 2021 have the right to funds. Also, a business entity or entrepreneur operating within the shopping center is obliged to meet an additional condition, i.e., that in the period from March 26 to March 29, 2021, it did not have a recorded turnover through the fiscal cash register.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Business entities or entrepreneurs
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	N/A
What did work well?	No information
What did not work well?	No information
Good example related with the measure	No information

Federation of BiH

The Government of the Federation of BiH has allocated about one billion KM to help the economy through the establishment of a special fund for economic stabilization for which 500 million KM and the establishment of the Guarantee Fund in the Development Bank to maintain and improve liquidity of companies affected by the pandemic.

Measure: Credit-guarantee programs for the use of funds from the FBiH Guarantee Fund

Group of the measure	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.;
Description of the policy measure:	In September 2020, the Government of FBiH adopted Credit-guarantee programs of three federal ministries which enable commercial banks to approve loans to businessmen with the use of funds from the Guarantee Fund of the Federation of BiH established with the Development Bank of the Federation of BiH ⁴ . These are the federal ministries of development, entrepreneurship and crafts, energy, mining and industry, and

⁴ <https://rbfbih.ba/sredstava-garancijskog-fonda-federacije-bih/>

	<p>agriculture, water management and forestry.</p> <p>The goals of these credit-guarantee programs are to provide support to businessmen who have problems in accessing credit funds to maintain the necessary liquidity, maintain the existing level of employment, and create new jobs, in conditions of difficult and impossible business due to the COVID-19 viral disease pandemic. Support to entrepreneurs, as end users of the Guarantee Fund, is reflected in the ability to provide more favorable credit facilities through commercial banks, which will be provided in part by the guarantee of the Guarantee Fund.</p> <p>Credit guarantee programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Federal Ministry of Development, Entrepreneurship and Crafts ● Program for micro, small and medium enterprises ● Federal Ministry of Energy, Mining and Industry
<p>When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe</p>	<p>Sept.2020</p>
<p>Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)</p>	<p>Government of FBiH</p>
<p>Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)</p>	<p>- Program for craftsmen and other independent economic activities</p> <p>Loans for which guarantees of the Guarantee Fund can be issued within this Program are for liquidity, working capital, investments and short-term, and in all four cases the loan amount is up to 300,000 KM.</p> <p>- Program for micro, small and medium enterprises</p> <p>Within this Program, loans can be approved in the amount of up to 1,250,000 KM and are intended for maintaining liquidity, working capital, investments, and short-term purposes.</p> <p>Guarantees of the Guarantee Fund are intended initially, for a period not exceeding 12 months from the date of declaring the cessation of the accident caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (until 31.05.2021), strengthening the credit potential of craftsmen and other independent economic activities, as well as micro, small and medium companies for securing sources of financing with the aim of mitigating the negative effects caused by the pandemic of the viral disease COVID-19 on the economy of the Federation of BiH and creating conditions for sustainable economic growth and employment.</p> <p>The goal of the program is to preserve liquidity, the existing level</p>

	<p>of employment, and create new jobs, by ensuring easier access to credit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programs for large companies and - Program for exporters. <p>According to the Law on Accounting and Auditing in FBiH, large companies are those that on the day of compiling financial statements meet at least two of the three prescribed conditions: that the average number of employees during the year is greater than 250, that the average value of business assets at the end of the business year amounts to more than 4,000,000 KM, and that the total annual income is more than 8,000,000 KM.</p> <p>The Exporters' Program states that the beneficiary can be any company that has encountered difficulties in doing business as a result of a pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus and which achieved at least 30% of export revenue in the operating income of the previous financial year for which official annual financial statements of the company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program for agriculture and food industry. <p>For the programs of all three federal ministries, it is common that Guarantee Fund guarantees can be issued for loans with a maturity of up to 60 months, including a grace period of up to 18 months for long-term loans, intended to finance current liquidity (gross salaries, operating costs, etc.) from the day of declaring the state of the accident, i.e., from 17.3.2020, then working capital, completion of already started investments before the declaration of the accident, as well as small-scale investments.</p>
<p>For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)</p>	<p>Federal Ministry of Development, Entrepreneurship and Crafts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program for craftsmen and other independent economic activities, - Program for micro, small and medium enterprises. <p>Federal Ministry of Energy, Mining and Industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programs for large companies and - Program for exporters. <p>Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program for agriculture and food industry.
<p>Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program for craftsmen and other independent economic activities, <p>The total amount of guarantees under the Program is 50,000,000 KM.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program for micro, small and medium enterprises. <p>The total amount of guarantees under the Program is 150,000,000 KM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programs for large companies and - Program for exporters. <p>The total amount of guarantees for these programs is 100 million KM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program for agriculture and food industry. <p>The total amount of guarantees under this Program is 100,000,000 KM.</p>
What did work well?	No information
What did not work well?	Due to the slow process of preparing implementation documents, the Fund started to issue guaranties in December 2020. After four mounts of its operations (end of March) less than 15% of its potential was activated. There were almost no guarantees for SMEs and crafts.
Good example related with the measure	No information

Republika Srpska

RS has launched a guarantee programme aiming at facilitating access to finance for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises through the issuance of a guarantee for secured loans approved by a bank or microcredit organization. The Solidarity Fund for the Reconstruction of the RS was also established, with initial funds in the amount of 50 million KM.

In the RS, legislative regulations focus on tax measures to mitigate the economic consequences caused by the COVID-19 crisis, and tax measures have been adopted to postpone a deadline for settling tax obligations (profit tax, forest taxes, income tax, etc.). These regulations are directed to micro-enterprises and all persons earning from so-called independent activities, in case the bans have stopped their businesses. Amounts are available from the Solidarity Fund for the reconstruction of the RS. Assistance is specifically provided for employees who worked in companies that were banned for their activities, but only in the amount of the lowest salary. These RS regulations cover businesses who are unable to continue working, offer support for co-financing salaries and contributions.

Measure: Decree with legal force on prudent measures to mitigate the economic consequences caused by the COVID-19

Group of the measure	Other type of support
<p>Description of the policy measure:</p>	<p>This Decree provides for tax measures with legal force as follows⁵:</p> <p>Extension of deadlines for settling tax liabilities:</p> <p>The Decree extended the deadlines for settling tax liabilities as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deadline for payment of income tax for 2019 determined on the basis of annual income tax return for 2019, extended until June 30, 2020, - deadline for payment of compensation for improvement of public forests, determined on the basis of tax return for other benefits are extended until June 30, 2020. • the deadline for payment of fire compensation, determined on the basis of the tax return for other payment fees, is extended until June 30, 2020. • the deadline for payment of income tax, according to the annual income tax return for 2019, has been extended until June 30, 2020, • the deadline for payment of the first part of the real estate tax has been extended until June 30, 2020, and the second part of the tax until December 31, 2020. <p>The regulation stipulates that taxpayers who have difficulties in doing business, can apply for these taxes no later than June 30, 2020 - to pay these obligations in installments by the end of 2020.</p> <p>In addition to deferred payment of taxes, for paid salaries, funds for payment of taxes and contributions for March 2020, employers, legal entities and entrepreneurs and liabilities based on contributions of persons earning income from self-employment, who are prohibited by the decision of the Emergency Situations Headquarters are provided from the funds of the Solidarity Fund for Reconstruction of RS, intended for remediation of the consequences caused by the corona virus in RS</p>
<p>When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe</p>	<p>In the "Official Gazette of Republika Srpska", no. 35/20, the Decree with legal force on prudent measures to mitigate the economic consequences caused by the COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus was published. The regulation entered</p>

⁵ <https://www.rsm.global/bosniaandherzegovina/bs/news/uredba-sa-zakonskom-snagom-o-poreskim-mjerama-za-ublazavanje-ekonomskih-posljedica-nastalih-0>

	into force on April 11, 2020.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government of RS
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	A written statement is to be submitted to the RS Tax Administration with a request for remediation of the consequences caused by the corona virus.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Taxpayers, legal and natural persons
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	
What did work well?	No information
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	No information

Analyzing the economic support measures conducted in BiH during 2020 through public calls reveals that assistance programs implemented by ministries at all levels through public calls do not specifically target women-owned or co-owned businesses. All legal (and natural) persons who meet the established conditions for each program separately, and which were principally related to the restriction on performing activities and the decrease of total revenues owing to restrictions on mobility or visits to stores, are eligible for public invitations.

When deciding on measures, no consideration was given to how the adopted measures would affect women-owned enterprises in particular. Furthermore, the proposed measures did not include enterprises that were first launched in 2020, as such companies did not run in 2019 and could not show a revenue decline. This was primarily an excluding requirement for applying to these programs. As a result, it can be observed that the programs do not recognize the circumstances for application by enterprises whose owners/co-owners are women, despite the fact that the majority of these companies employ their owners/co-owners. As a result, they frequently lack the time and human resources needed to gather the necessary papers to apply for public programs, and the increased scope of family responsibilities hampers the implementation of these tasks.

For mitigating the issues due to COVID-19, limited support programmes can be identified:

- The Federation of BiH Chamber of Commerce and the FBiH Gender Centre will begin the "Support Programme for Women Affected by Coronavirus - Implementation of Online Business" towards the end of 2020. The program's purpose is to empower and support women whose activities are jeopardized as a result of the pandemic. The project is financially supported by the FIGAP II initiative, which is funded by the Kingdom of Sweden via SIDA (FBiH Government, 2020).
- The programme "Support to Self-Employed Women Entrepreneurs in the RS for Remediation of the Consequences of the Pandemic" prepared by the Ministry of Economy and Entrepreneurship of RS in cooperation with the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska and with the supports of UN Women and the Kingdom of Sweden (RS Government, 2020).

This demonstrates the government's insufficient support for female business owners. At the same time, other parties, such as programming actors and other networks, are providing assistance:

- the Foundation 787, in collaboration with the British and Swedish embassies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as UN Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, provides assistance to up to twelve women business owners in overcoming the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The assistance comprises tailor-made services like as counseling and educational services, as well as non-refundable cash of up to 60,000 KM for female business entrepreneurs. The assistance is available for six months (October 2020 – March 2021) (Foundation 787, 2020).
- As part of the EBRD's Women in Business Programme, the EBRD and Raiffeisen Bank BiH are implementing assistance measures for women business owners through a loan line of up to €2 million (EBRD, 2020).
- Another project, initiated in January 2021 by the ILO in collaboration with the German Development Agency (GIZ) and UNDP, intends to assist businesses in recovering from COVID-19. The emphasis is on assisting micro, small, and medium-sized businesses, particularly women entrepreneurs. The project includes finance for five industries: metal and wood processing, textile, garment and footwear, agricultural, tourism, and entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the project includes advisory services and investment incentives aimed at ensuring business continuity and the start-up of new companies (ILO, 2021).

3.3 Bulgaria

Measure: Measure 3-10

Group of the measure	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	Grants for SMEs to cover fixed costs and costs for salaries for up to 10% of the turnover but minimum 3000 BGN; maximum 10 000 BGN
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The measure was started in May 2020 and was open for application until September 2020. The approved companies had three months to report costs, eligible for the support, up to 10% of their annual turnover for 2019 but minimum 3000 BGN; maximum 10 000 BGN
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>The support was granted to applicants who meet the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) legal entities or sole traders registered under the Commercial Act or the Cooperatives Act. <p>(With the exception of persons registered under the Commercial Act or the Cooperatives Act, operating in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, including processing of fish and aquatic organisms; organizations and associations of organizations producing fishery and aquaculture products and other forms of association in these sectors.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) companies who were registered before July 1, 2019 and carried out economic activity in 2019. 3) Only applicants who meet the requirements for a micro or small enterprise under the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Act and the Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003 on the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (OJ) are eligible under this project selection procedure. OJ L 124, 20.5.2003, p. 36). <p>Applicants certify that they are a micro or small enterprise by filling in and submitting to the project proposals a Declaration of the circumstances under Art. 3 and Art. 4 of the SMEs Act.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Only candidates with at least BGN 30,000 "net sales revenues" reported in the Annual Tax Return for 2019 are eligible under the procedure. 5) they are not ineligible according to the demarcation line with other plans and programs, financed with EU funds. 6) Applicants who registered a decrease of at least 20% in

Project co-funded by European Union Funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)

	<p>turnover (net sales revenue) for April 2020, compared to the average monthly turnover (net sales revenue) in 2019.</p> <p>7) As of 31 December 2019, the applicant company is not in a difficult situation (within the meaning of the General Block Exemption Regulation - Article 2, item 18 of Commission Regulation (EU) №651/2014), but the applicant has experienced difficulties after this date as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic.</p> <p>Branches of legal entities registered in Bulgaria cannot participate in the project selection procedure because they lack independent legal personality.</p>
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	The measure was targeted at SMEs with specific turnover - at least BGN 30,000 (the amount granted was up to 10% of the net sales revenue, with a minimum 3000 BGN and maximum 10 000 BGN).
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	98 067 000 euro until 08.2021
What did work well?	The measure worked well as it allowed companies to cover their current operating costs and to overcome the consequences of the pandemic. The measure covered large number of companies – 23 602.
What did not work well?	<p>The measure was relatively slow to implement due to the time necessary for administrative checks. As a result, payments were delayed with 3-4 months.</p> <p>Companies that were registered just before the crisis (after 01.07.2019) and small companies with annual turnover below 30 000 BGN were not eligible for the grants.</p> <p>At the same time, they were among the most affected and most likely to go out of business as they did not have the reserves to sustain their activity.</p>
Good example related with the measure	No information

Measure: Measure 60/40

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for employees (salaries, paid leave, etc.)
Description of the policy measure:	Subsidies are paid to employer for to keep the employment; The grant covers 60% of the insurable earnings and the due contributions from the employer, in case of a reduction of the sales revenues with more than 20%.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The measure was officially introduced in July 2020 and continues with some changes in the requirements and amounts granted.

<p>Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc.)</p>	<p>Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</p>
<p>Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)</p>	<p>Applicants have to meet the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To be local physical persons or legal entities or their divisions, other organisationally or economically distinguished entities, as well as foreign juridical persons, that carry out their economic activity in Bulgaria. 2) Have declared decrease in their revenues as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for entities established before September 1, 2019 – by no less than 20% in the month preceding the month of submission of the application for payment of funds, compared to the same month of the previous calendar year; - for persons established after September 1, 2019 - by no less than 20 percent in the month preceding the month of submission of the application for payment of funds, compared to the average income for January and February 2020 3) have no obligations for taxes and compulsory social security contributions within the meaning of Art. 162, para. 2, item 1 of the Tax-Insurance Procedure Code to the state or the municipality before 1 January 2020, established by an act of a competent authority that has entered into force, and for which the employer has not taken any action for rescheduling, deferral or security; 4) have not been declared bankrupt or are not in bankruptcy proceedings or liquidation 5) keep the employment of the workers and employees, for which they have received funds, for an additional period, equal to the period for which these have been paid 6) do not terminate employment contracts of their employees on the grounds of art. 328, para. 1, items 2, 3 and 4 of the Labor Code during the period for which they are paid funds for maintaining employment 7) have not committed a violation of the Labor Code or the Law on labour migration and labour mobility during a period of 6 months before the date of submission of the application for payment of the funds for maintaining employment <p>Other specific criteria, according to the guidelines for applicants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8) Employers of all sectors of the economy are eligible, incl. employers ensuring their staff in sector I - "Hotels and restaurants" and economic activity with code 49.39 "Other passenger land transport, not elsewhere classified by the

	<p>Classification of Economic Activities (NACE.BG-2008), with the exception of those specified in Art. 1, para 5, item 2 of CMD 151/2020 sectors and economic activities (<i>fisheries and aquacultures, primary production of agricultural products, etc.</i>).</p> <p>9) Municipal units, activities or enterprises established by the order of art. 52 of the Municipal Property Act and referred to in Art. 3, para. 2, carrying out activities in sectors, other than those indicated as ineligible in art. 1, para 5, item 2;</p> <p>10) Employers receiving funds under 60/ 40 programme should pay their employees monthly remuneration, not less than the insurable earnings for the month, preceding the application; for the employees hired after June 1, 2020 - not less than the amount of the minimum insurance income for the position.</p> <p>11) Enterprises that receive support under CMD 151/2020 (amended and supplemented by CMD 278 of 12.10.2020) are not eligible to receive support for salaries and social security contributions under OPIC (Operational Programme Innovation and Competitiveness) and / or other measures that provide assistance for liquidity support of enterprises.</p> <p>Required documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application form; 2. List of the employees, for which the subsidy is requested; 3. Copy of Order / s for termination of work and / or introduction of part-time work, with included / attached list of employees (certified copy), as such documents are not required from employers in Sector I - "Hotels and restaurants" and economic activity with code 49.39 "Other passenger land transport, not elsewhere classified; 4. Declaration and Documents certifying a decrease in sales revenue in the month preceding the submission of the Application not less than 20% compared to a comparable month, depending on the date of establishment of the entity; 5. Tax return declaration for 2019 for the entities established before 01.01.2020; 6. Declaration for Minimum and State aid; 7. Declaration with bank account of the applicant.
<p>For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)</p>	<p>The measure is aimed at companies - employers whose turnover has decreased during the crisis. The aim of the wage subsidies is to support companies to be able to pay salaries and social contributions and to keep their staff.</p>
<p>Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies)</p>	<p>Amount of the subsidies for this measure: 731 505 000 Euro</p>

for this measure)	until 08.2021
What did work well?	<p>The measure worked well as it reached a large number of companies – 13 000 and helped preserve the employment of 300 000 employees.</p> <p>The measure was also open for companies established until the end of 2019. They could apply for subsidies on the basis of their revenues for January and February 2020.</p>
What did not work well?	<p>The measure was successful for the companies that managed to sustain their activity during the crisis and to be able to pay at least part of the salaries and insurable income.</p> <p>Those companies that were forced to close or work for long periods at reduced capacity due to the crisis, had to cut on their staff to stop incurring losses.</p> <p>Employers' unions continue to insist on the measure to cover 100 % the salaries of employees or at least 80 % of the salaries and insurable income in order to be more effective.</p>
Good example related with the measure	<p>For the most affected sectors of hotels and restaurants, tourism and transport, there was an opportunity to combine the measure 60/40 with another wage subsidies programme "Short-term employment support in response to the COVID pandemic", which granted lump sum compensation at the amount of 290 BGN to partially cover costs for salary and social securities. The received total monthly subsidy could not exceed 80% of the insurable earnings for the relevant month, preceding the application, and the social security contributions at the expense of the employer of the personnel who benefit from the measure.</p>

Measure: Interest-free loans for individuals on unpaid leave and self-employed

Group of the measure	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.
Description of the policy measure:	The program is created to support employed and self-employed individuals, farmers, and seasonal workers who have ceased activity due to the pandemic COVID 19.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The measure was first officially introduced in April 2020. Deadline for application 31.08.2021.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	The measure is provided by the Bulgarian Development Bank (BDB) and is implemented by several Bulgarian banks. BDB provides guarantee coverage in the amount of 80% of the principal of each of the loans under the measure.
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>Individuals on unpaid leave and self-employed</p> <p>1) Individuals who are on unpaid leave due to the pandemic.</p> <p>- The applicants have a total of at least 3 months of employment in the period between 01.01.2020, incl. the date of loan</p>

	<p>application and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social securities for the three months after 01.01.2020 have been declared / paid. <p>Documents: personal ID and documents from the employer (labour contract, an official note or order or other similar document establishing the unpaid leave); Declaration for paid social securities and Data declaration by the applicant.</p> <p>2) Self-employed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To work while exercising their activity as self-employed persons (Declaration for registration of self-employed person); - To have declared / paid their insurances contributions, due by them after 01.01.2020, for the period in which they have carried out activity; - to have ceased their activity due to the pandemic which is proved with a Declaration, submitted a declaration to the National Revenue Agency OR - to be able to prove reduction of their income due to the pandemic with at least 20% for a three month period compared for the same period in 2019 or 2020
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	<p>The measure is targeted at Individuals on unpaid leave and self-employed.</p> <p>The BDB program provides more opportunities for the inclusion of also seasonal workers and young people who started their employment in 2020, who have at least 3 months of employment between January 1st, 2020 and the loan application date.</p>
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	<p>The amount of subsidies is 250 mln. BGN until 16 August 2021</p>
What did work well?	<p>More than 52 555 credits for individuals and self-employed were approved.</p> <p>The programme provided immediate support to people who were left without income due to the pandemic.</p>
What did not work well?	<p>Although The Bulgarian Development Bank guarantees the loans, many of the banks, implementing the programme still required collateral from the applicants. Many applicants who were otherwise eligible according to the programme rules, were refused loans because they did not have collateral.</p>
Good example related with the measure	<p>For the most affected sectors of hotels and restaurants, tourism and transport, there was an opportunity to combine the measure 60/40 with another wage subsidies programme “Short-term employment support in response to the COVID pandemic”, which granted lump sum compensation at the amount of 290 BGN to partially cover costs for salary and social securities. The received</p>

	total monthly subsidy could not exceed 80% of the insurable earnings for the relevant month, preceding the application, and the social security contributions at the expense of the employer of the personnel who benefit from the measure.
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Measure: VAT relief

Group of the measure	Other type of support
Description of the policy measure:	Temporary decrease of VAT from 20% to 9% for specific sectors such as restaurant and catering services, books for physical and electronic media, baby feeders and baby hygiene materials.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The duration of the measure is from 01.07.2020 to 31.12.2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>There are requirements for the company to be registered and to operate in one of the supported sectors. There are also specific requirements regarding the goods and services offered:</p> <p>From 1 July 2020, the reduced rate of value added tax of 9% applies to hotel accommodations, books, restaurants and catering services, baby food and diapers. The rate of nine percent is temporary and is in force until December 31, 2021, according to the Law on Amendments to the Law on Value Added Tax (VAT Act).</p> <p>Publishers and distributors of books and textbooks, including electronic editions, benefit from the change in the VAT Act. The amendments also cover traders in children's products - baby food and small children, diapers and similar hygiene items, which are exhaustively listed in the new VAT Act.</p> <p>The tax rate is also reduced for those providing restaurant and catering services. The beer, wine and spirits they sell remain under the current tax regime.</p>
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	The measure is targeted mainly to the sectors of tourism and restaurants that were most seriously affected by the crisis and restrictive measures. The tax relief was then extended to books and baby food.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	

What did work well?	The measure provides immediate support to the sectors that were most severely affected by the restrictive measures and closures.
What did not work well?	At the beginning, the reduced tax rate was only applied for restaurants and they had to cover specific requirements like number of tables, staff etc. Services like food delivery at home or purchase at the restaurant as take away continued to be taxed the full 20% VAT. With the latest changes, from 1 December 2020, the reduced tax rate can be applied to as well to home delivery of food, prepared in restaurant.
Good example related with the measure	Representatives of the hotels and restaurant sector claim that more than 70% of the companies in the sector managed to stay in business because of the tax relief. Even though some of the restaurants had 45% reduction in their sales revenue because of the crisis, many of them managed to continue to work and keep their personnel.

3.4 Croatia

The COVID-19 disease epidemic left strong negative consequences on the economy, which directly affected the business of most entrepreneurs in Croatia. Therefore, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has adopted a number of measures to preserve economic activities, in order to make it easier for entrepreneurs to do business in the new circumstances and enable them to continue working while preserving jobs. Croatia quickly adopted 63 different economic measures and additional measures were announced beginning of April in order to preserve jobs and alleviate the impact of COVID-19.

Measure: Supporting the preservation of jobs

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for employees (salaries, paid leave, etc.)
Description of the policy measure:	Support in the amount of HRK 4,000.00 per employee, employers can apply during June
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	All employers who have registered their activity and registered with the HZMO insured system by 31 January 2021 could use the June measure for workers employed by 31 May 2021 at the latest. Applications for support for June were received from 24 June 2021 to July 23, 2021.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	The Croatian Employment Service
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms,	In order to receive support, employers will need to prove that in the period from April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020, they had a decrease in income / receipts compared to the same period in

etc.)	2019, based on the submission of a VAT form for the mentioned months. Alternatively, they will need to prove that in June 2021 they had a decrease in revenues / receipts compared to June 2019, based on the submission of the VAT form for June 2021 and June 2019 to the Tax Administration. VAT in comparable periods proves a decrease in revenue / receipts based on the table of a decrease in revenue / receipts.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Eligible employers: companies, crafts, family farms and natural persons who perform self-employment and who are insured on that basis and other business entities that perform activities in eligible sectors and on that basis are liable to income tax. Exceptionally, employers who operate or carry out activities in the Sisak-Moslavina County and legal entities in the sports system referred to in item 5 of this section need not be liable for income tax.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	The amount of a maximum of HRK 4,000.00 per month per full-time employee, ie a proportional part per employee according to the number of part-time hours according to the percentage of decline in income / receipts: from 40.00% to 44.99% - HRK 2,000.00 from 45.00% to 49.99% - HRK 2,500.00 from 50.00% to 54.99% - HRK 3,000.00 from 55.00% to 59.99% - HRK 3,500.00 of 60% and more - HRK 4,000.00 pension insurance contribution based on individual capitalized savings, ie the amount of the obligation of additional pension insurance contribution based on individual capitalized savings for the insurance period with an increased duration in proportion to the amount of support
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: COVID-19 loans for micro, small and medium enterprises

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.
Description of the policy measure:	As part of the measures for the measure, support for entrepreneurs in activities affected by coronavirus, the Croatian Agency for Small Business, Innovation and Investment provided the so-called COVID-19 loans for micro, small and medium enterprises, with an interest rate of 0.25% and a grace period of

	up to 12 months.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	This Financial Instrument shall enter into force on the date of its adoption and shall remain in force until the funds are used, a no later than 31.12.2021 years.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Fully funded by the European Regional Development Fund, implementation body: Croatian Agency for Small Business, Innovation and Investment.
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	The Entrepreneur submits to HAMAG-BICRO the completed Loan Application Form together with all other documentation listed in the List of Documentation for Application for a particular Program. The list of mandatory documentation as well as the required forms are part of the Program and are published on the official website of the Agency (https://hamagbicro.hr/financijski-instrumenti/kako-do-zajma/dokumentacija/). The completed loan application can be forwarded via the online application (https://prijava.hamagbicro.hr/w/Home/Login), or by mail, e-mail and in person to the addresses published on the official website of the Agency.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Micro, small and medium enterprises
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	Working capital - 100% of the loan amount up to HRK 380,000.00
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Measures to preserve economic activity and liquidity

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.
Description of the policy measure:	loan deferral loan rescheduling insurance premium subsidies - HBOR loans for entrepreneurs active in the field of culture and creative industries with the guarantee of HAMAG BICRO
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	30.3.2020.

<p>Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)</p>	<p>Government. In the implementation of these measures and the establishment of the system participate: Croatian National Bank (HNB) Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development (HBOR) HAMAG-BICRO Croatian Banking Association (HUB) Credit institutions - all banks in the Republic of Croatia FINA (Financial Agency)</p>
<p>Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)</p>	<p>Registration and registration of the applicant of the initial request on the portal MEASURES is enabled via the link: https://gospodarskemjere.fina.hr. To be able to apply, applicants need to pre-register on the MEASURES portal. To register on the MEASURES portal, the applicant enters several basic data, after which they receive a link to activate the password to the e-mail address. When preparing registration data, the applicant on the MEASURES portal gives consent for the processing of personal and other data for the purpose of processing his application. After successfully registering, the user can log in to the system and start entering data for the economic operator for whom he wishes to submit an initial request for the use of one of the measures. When submitting the initial request through the MEASURE portal, the applicant gives a statement guaranteeing the truthfulness and accuracy of the data, after which his application for the measure will be automatically submitted to the selected bank to the specific economic operator and the corresponding set of reported data. After the application of the initial request has been processed, the applicants continue the communication related to the realization of the request with the selected bank.</p>
<p>For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)</p>	<p>companies, crafts, family farms whose business activities are endangered or completely disabled in the circumstances of the epidemic</p>
<p>Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)</p>	
<p>What did work well?</p>	
<p>What did not work well?</p>	
<p>Good example related with the measure</p>	

3.5 Germany

Measure: Corona Soforthilfe

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	<u>Covid Emergency Aid in Baden-Württemberg</u> The emergency aid was granted in the first months of the Corona pandemic as an equitable benefit for small businesses and freelancers who found themselves in an existential emergency situation due to the Covid crisis and to settle the liabilities from the commercial material and financial expenses in the three months following the application. It could not be used to replace lost sales and profits.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	Stated in March 2020. The last application was possible on 31st of May 2020.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	State of Baden-Württemberg
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	The application process was uncomplicated, fast and electronic. The local chambers of commerce and industry and the skilled trades carried out the preliminary examination of the content of all applications - also for non-members of the chambers such as members of the liberal professions. They forward the applications to the L-Bank, which approved and disbursed the grants.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	The emergency aid supported commercial enterprises and self-employed persons, social enterprises, farmers, foresters and members of the liberal professions who found themselves in an economic situation that threatened their existence and suffered massive liquidity bottlenecks in spring 2020 as a direct result of the Covid pandemic.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	Funding is provided in the form of a one-off, non-repayable grant, initially for three months, of up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9,000 euros for solo self-employed persons and companies with up to five employees, ● 15,000 euros for enterprises with up to ten employees, ● 30,000 euros for enterprises with up to 50 employees.
What did work well?	possibility of obtaining liquidity in the short term
What did not work well?	-Not enough money for most of the entrepreneurs. -The settlement of Corona emergency aid poses major problems for many self-employed persons. Quite a few rules, the effects of which have only now become clear, lead to considerable repayment obligations.

Good example related with the measure	
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Measure: Bridging Aid III (German: Überbrückungshilfe III)

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	It supports companies in covering fixed operating costs if they have experienced COVID-related declines in sales. The Bridging Aid III supports enterprises, solo self-employed persons and self-employed members of the liberal professions of all sectors with an annual turnover of up to €750 million (the limit does not apply to enterprises in the retail trade, the event and culture sector, the hotel and catering industry and the pyrotechnics sector affected by closure orders based on a Federal-Länder decision, as well as to enterprises in the wholesale trade and the travel industry).
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	During the funding period 1 st of November 2020 to 30 th of June 2021. Applications are submitted through reviewing third parties. The application deadline is 31 st of October 2021.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Federal ministry
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	The application may only be submitted through a tax advisor, a certified public accountant, a lawyer or a certified auditor.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	For enterprises, solo self-employed persons and self-employed members of the liberal professions of all sectors with an annual turnover of up to €750 million and also non-profit companies and organizations. All companies with more than a 30% drop in sales are eligible for the tiered fixed cost reimbursement.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	<p>The bridging aid subsidizes fixed operating costs. The maximum subsidy amount is 10 million euros (previously 1.5 million euros or 3 million euros for Verbund companies) per month. Provided all the requirements of state aid law are met, a maximum of up to 52 million euros can be reimbursed for Bridging Assistance III.</p> <p>Reimbursed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -up to 100% (previously 90%) of eligible fixed costs in the event of a more than 70% drop in revenue -up to 60% of eligible fixed costs in the event of a 50- 70% slump in sales -up to 40% of eligible fixed costs in the event of a sales slump of at least 30%

What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Kurzarbeitergeld

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for employees (salaries, paid leave, etc.)
Description of the policy measure:	Short time allowance In the case of short-time work, some of the employees only work part of their usual working hours or stop working completely. In the case of short-time work, companies only have to pay for the hours worked and the employees' loss of earnings is partly compensated by short-time allowance. Short-time allowance is intended to provide quick and targeted help when companies with their employees have work stoppages due to the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic. These companies and their employees receive support in this special situation so that redundancies can be avoided as far as possible.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	Short-time allowance was introduced under this name in the Federal Republic of Germany with effect from 1 January 1957. Due to COVID special rules apply until the end of the year 2021 in order to facilitate the application.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Governance/ Bundesagentur für Arbeit
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	As a first step, employers should report work absences to the Employment Agency as soon as possible. Employers then calculate the short-time allowance and pay it to the employees and subsequently submit a claim for reimbursement to the Employment Agency. Applications can be submitted online or by post. There are forms available for this purpose. One is to report the short-time work and one to claim the money finally.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	For all companies that have registered or want to register short-time work due to losses and work absences from the corona pandemic. The federal government has simplified and expanded access to short-time work benefits: For companies that have started short-time work by September 2021, it is sufficient if at least 10% of the employees are affected by work loss for a company to apply for short-time work. Previously, it was one third of the employees. In addition, the short-time allowance was increased. Normally, it amounts to 60% (or 67% for parents) of the missing net pay. If workers on short-time work have a loss of pay of at

	least 50%, the short-time allowance is increased to 70% (or 77% for households with children) from the fourth month of receipt. From the seventh month, the short-time allowance increases to 80% (or 87% for households with children).
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	According to preliminary extrapolated data from the statistics of the Bundesagentur, cyclical short-time working benefits were paid to 1.59 million employees in June 2021. According to preliminary data, 4.7% of employees subject to social security contributions were on cyclical short-time work in June 2021, after 6.7% in May and 6.0% in October 2020. In April 2020, the month with the highest take.
What did work well?	Protected many companies from layoffs
What did not work well?	not for mini-jobbers and solo self-employed persons
Good example related with the measure	According to the latest study, the short-time allowance secured almost 2.2 million jobs during the pandemic. Six times as many as in the financial and economic crisis of 2008/2009.

Measure: Tilgungszuschuss Corona II

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.;
Description of the policy measure:	Covid II repayment subsidy With the Corona II repayment grant, regular repayment installments in the funding period 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021 are funded at a rate of 50%. Eligible for funding are the repayment installments accruing according to the repayment schedules in the first half of 2021 from the approval of loans. The maximum funding with the repayment subsidy is 300,000 euros per applicant - insofar as no lower maximum amount results in individual cases from the perspective of state aid law.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The application is possible since 25 June 2021 and ends on 31 October 2021.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government: Ministry of Economics, Labour and Tourism Baden-Württemberg
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	The application must be completed in full, printed out and signed by hand. In addition, Annex B (certificate on the amount of the repayment instalment eligible for funding) must be completed in full by the respective financing institution.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Companies and self-employed persons in the showman's trade, the event industry, the taxi and rental car trade as well as service companies in the sports, entertainment and recreation sector and sports clubs with their taxable, commercial business

	operations can apply for the Corona II repayment subsidy.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	Of the eligible total redemption rate in the funding period 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021 of the applicant company, 50 percent will be funded once, i.e.: Total repayment subsidy = 0.5 x total repayment rate of the period under consideration. The maximum subsidy is 300,000 euros per applicant - unless a lower amount results in individual cases from the point of view of state aid law.
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Startup BW Protect

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.;
Description of the policy measure:	"Start-up BW Pro-Tect" is an extension of the nationwide (Baden-Württemberg) unique early-stage funding "Start-up BW Pre-Seed" to crisis-ridden start-ups that have already successfully completed the first round of financing. It is granted like a convertible loan and can cover an initial capital requirement of up to 200,000 euros, 80% of which is financed by the state and 20% of which must come from private co-investors. In justified exceptional cases, the grant can also be up to 400,000 euros. The money is only repayable in case of success of the company.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The program has been in place since spring 2020 and has been extended until end of September 2021.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government: Ministry of Economics, Labour and Tourism Baden-Württemberg
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	Startups can apply via certain support partners (e.g. bwcon). The project partners are checking the project and discuss it with the ministry. It is important that the startup has an investor who also invests at least 20%. In addition, certain documents such as pitch deck, annual financial statements, etc. must be submitted.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Especially for startups in Baden-Württemberg. The additional liquidity requirement must have arisen due to negative effects caused by the Corona pandemic. The start-up must have been founded no more than five years ago.

Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	Reimbursable grant of up to 200,000 euros, in rare cases up to 400,000 euros.
What did work well?	-Since the launch of the program more than 140 start-ups have been supported with Start-up BW Pro-Tect -supports startups in the early stage -A lot of startups are getting successful within this program -less risk because the startups have to pay it back just in case of success
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Other measures are the followings:

- Reduction of VAT: From 1 July until 31 December 2020, the VAT rate is to be reduced from 19 percent to 16% and for the reduced rate from 7% to 5%
- Child bonus for families: One-time parents will receive 300 euros per child. For single parents, the allowances will be doubled.

3.6 Hungary

Measure: Moratorium on loan repayments for the general public and entrepreneurs

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.;
Description of the policy measure:	
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	Start date: mid-March 2020. Planned deadline: 31.12.2020. Extended deadline: July 2022 (Officially not confirmed yet) ⁶
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	It can be requested to loan the moratorium on the official online page of the bank, official mobile app of the bank or personally in the bank office
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs)	It is valid for both general public and entrepreneurs

⁶ <https://24.hu/fn/gazdasag/2021/09/07/hitelmoratorium-meghosszabbitasa-2022-julius/>
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from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	
What did work well?	The coronavirus epidemic is detrimental to several industries, affecting a significant portion of the population, both entrepreneurs and workers. One of the financial consequences of this is that it is more difficult for debtors to repay their loans; therefore, this measure was taken to prevent them from falling into this situation. Temporary deferred repayment therefore helps debtors to more easily resolve temporary financial difficulties that arise.
What did not work well?	One of the disadvantages of a credit moratorium is that the term will be longer, so debtors' credit will not run out when it was originally planned. In addition, at the end of the moratorium, they will have to reckon with a higher total amount to be repaid than if they had been repaid throughout the moratorium.
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Suspended KATA⁷ for small businesses

Group of the measures	Other support measures
Description of the policy measure:	
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	March 2020 – August 2020
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	The official document was available for download on the Hungarian government's relevant page.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	The government has included tourism, hospitality, the entertainment industry, gambling, the film industry, event management, the performing arts and sports services, TAXI drivers, among others.
Financial dimension of the support	The government suspended the payment of KATA for

⁷ KATA: Item - based tax on low - tax enterprises

measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	entrepreneurs, and the amount of KATA is typically HUF 50,000 or optionally HUF 75,000 per month. The suspension was valid for 4 months.
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Assignment VAT reduced to five percent

Group of the measures	Other support measures
Description of the policy measure:	
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	2020 autumn (second wave)
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Restaurants for food delivery service.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Tax and contribution reductions⁸

Group of the measures	Other support measures
Description of the policy measure:	
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	Spring 2020
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	The Secretary of State emphasized that the support period could be 3 months, in order to preserve jobs, the employer must undertake to retain the number of employees from the time the application is submitted and to maintain it for at least one month after payment.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	According to the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, the program is open to employees employed under the Labor Code who have been employed by the employer without interruption during the period between the declaration of the emergency and the submission of the application, even in the "home office".
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	The rate of reduction of working time may be at least 30 per cent but not more than 50 per cent, however, working time may not be reduced to less than 4 hours per day on average. The subsidy should take into account the employee's net monthly base wage, and the state subsidy could be 70 percent of the wage calculated for the time lost in proportion to the reduction in working hours.
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

⁸ <https://koronavirus.gov.hu/cikkek/bodo-sandor-tobb-szazezer-munkahely-megorzeset-szolgalja-bertamogatasi-program>

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3.7 Moldova

Measure: GOVERNMENT DECISION No. 213 from 01-04-2020

Group of the measures	Other support measures
Description of the policy measure:	<p>GOVERNMENT DECISION No. 213 from 01-04-2020⁹ for taking responsibility for the draft law on the establishment of measures to support citizens and entrepreneurship during the state of emergency and the amendment of regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the full subsidy from the public budget of the salary taxes in the case of the employees, whose activity was stopped, following the decisions within the state of emergency. For the employees of the economic agents indirectly affected, 60% of the salary taxes will be recovered. reducing the VAT rate for enterprises operating in the HoReCa industry from 20% to 15%. compression of 6 separate taxes into 3 Exemption from patent payment of patent holders who ceased their activity due to the state of emergency; Restitution of social contributions in a fixed amount for patent holders, self-employed persons, individual entrepreneurs who have ceased their activity during the state of emergency; <p>Postponement of the deadline for payment of local taxes for economic agents that have ceased their activity according to the Decisions of the Exceptional Situations Commission</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	April 2nd 2020
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	SMEs, startups, self-employed
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	

⁹ https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=121083&lang=ro

What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Extending the implementation period of the VAT refund program

Group of the measures	Other support measures
Description of the policy measure:	<p>The amount of the VAT refund will be the minimum amount of the following amounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount of VAT for deduction in the subsequent period, registered for the last fiscal period regarding VAT; • the amount paid of the income tax, of the compulsory state social insurance contributions due by the employer, of the compulsory health insurance premiums in the form of a percentage contribution due by the employee for the fiscal period and / or the fiscal periods corresponding to the period January-May 2021 inclusive. <p>The cumulative amount of the subsidy during the VAT Reimbursement Program¹⁰ will not exceed the amount of VAT for the subsequent period, reflected in the VAT return for the December 2020 fiscal period.</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	April 8 2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	SMEs
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	
What did work well?	

¹⁰ https://gov.md/sites/default/files/2_dispozitia_cse_08.04.2021.pdf
https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=125272&lang=ro

What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Extension of the Interest subsidy program

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc
Description of the policy measure:	
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	April 23rd, 2020 Extended according to the Disposition no.2 of April 8, 2021 ¹¹ of the Commission for Exceptional Situations of the Republic of Moldova
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	SMEs who contracted loans during May 1, 2020- May 31, 2021 inclusive; SMEs whose incomes declared in the fiscal reports, ascertained according to the financial accounting data for the fiscal period 2020, are lower than those obtained and declared for the fiscal period 2019.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

¹¹ https://gov.md/sites/default/files/2_dispozitia_cse_08.04.2021.pdf
https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=122054&lang=ro

3.8 Romania

Measure: The Nonrefundable Grants Programme – 1st Measure

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	The Nonrefundable Grants Programme, approved through 130/2020 Statute and run by the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment (MEEMA) through the Operational Programme – Competitiveness 2014-2020, allows authorized natural persons, micro, small and medium enterprises to access grants from European funds, with a total value of 1 billion euro through three funding schemes.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The programme was approved on 11.09.2020 and was approved until 30.06.2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	MEEMA and European Regional Development Fund
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>Micro grants are awarded to the following categories of applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) SMEs that prove through filled financial statements that they do not have employees under individual employment contracts on December 31st 2019; b) Natural authorised persons (PFA) and NGOs with economic activities c) PFA and/or medical offices involved(CMI) in transporting, equipping, evaluating, diagnosing and treating COVID-19 patients <p>Micro grants are awarded to the applicants pass the following cumulative conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Current/operational activities were carried out for at least one year before applying, with the exception of PFA/CMI for which the start date of the activities can be up to February 1st 2020 b) Have a turnover in the year previous to the application date of at least the RON equivalent of 5.000 euro c) Are active for a period of at least 6 months after the micro grant is awarded d) Were not in a state of difficulty on December 31st 2019 e) Do not exceed the 800.000 euro limit over 3 consecutive years
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	PFA, Micro enterprises, SMEs
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies	Micro grants with fixed under the form of unit cost: RON equivalent of 100.000.000 euro out of which 85.000.000 euro from non-refundable european funds and 15.000.000 euro from

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for this measure)	<p>state budget; The value of a micro grant is 2.000 euro and is awarded one time as a lump sum. Micro grants can be used for the following expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Raw material, stocks and other materials necessary for current/operational activities b) Current and late debts toward current suppliers, including towards public utilities providers c) Contracted rent d) Acquisition of services and repairs necessary for current primary activities with the exception of consulting, research and other services not directly related to current activities e) Acquisition of medical protective gear, including disinfectant against the COVID-19 virus f) Acquisition of stock items, including capital items necessary to resume current activities g) Acquisition of equipment, tools, machinery, technology necessary to resume current activities h) Payments for debts to the state budget <p>Applicants will file a personal liability statement through which they agree that the micro grants will be used only as permitted.</p>
What did work well?	1st Measure: 59%, respectively 29.250 processed requests, 19.600 approved requests, and 17.271 paid requests
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: The Nonrefundable Grants Programme – 2nd Measure

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	The Nonrefundable Grants Programme – 2nd Measure The Nonrefundable Grants Programme, approved through 130/2020 Statute and run by the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment (MEEMA) through the Operational Programme – Competitiveness 2014-2020, allows authorized natural persons, micro, small and medium enterprises to access grants from European funds, with a total value of 1 billion euros through three funding schemes.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The programme was approved on 11.09.2020 and was approved until 30.06.2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	MEEMA and European Regional Development Fund

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<p>Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)</p>	<p>Working capital grants are awarded to the applicants pass the following cumulative conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have a state of emergency certificate b) Have registered an operational profit from their current activity, in one of the previous two years from the date of the application, proven through financial statements c) Can participate (co finance) towards the working capital with a minimum of 15% of the value of the grant when the working capital grant is used d) Were not in a state of difficulty on December 31st 2019 e) Maintain, or as the case may be, supplement the number of existing employees on the application date for a minimum of 6 months from the moment the financial aid is given f) Do not exceed the 800.000 euro limit <p>The working capital grant is awarded in a lump sum and is awarded based on a percentage of the turnover, being intended for SMEs whose activities were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic or whose activities were restricted or reduced through military statutes during the state of emergency and/or during state of alert.</p> <p>Working capital grants are awarded to SMEs in the following fields: restaurants, hotels, cafes, food industry and other similar activities, transport, tourism, publishing, libraries and bookstores, creative industries, events, and other fields in which current activities were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic or were restricted or reduced through military statutes during the state of emergency and/or during state of alert</p>
<p>For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)</p>	<p>SMEs</p>
<p>Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)</p>	<p>2nd Measure - Working capital grant, under the form of unit cost: RON equivalent of 907.031.250 euro out of which 765.000.000 euro from non-refundable European funds and 142.031.250 euro from state budget.</p> <p>The value of the aid is set as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) SMEs that had a turnover between 5.000 - 13.500 euro for the year 2019, are awarded a 2.000 euro grant b) SMEs that had a turnover between 13.501 - 1.000.000 euro for the year 2019, are awarded a grant of 15% of the turnover c) SMEs that had a turnover of over 1 million euro for the year 2019, are the maximum value for the grant, 150.000 euro <p>The value of the working capital grants does not include the co financing of the applicant, representing a minimum of 15% of the</p>

	<p>value of the grant. The grant is awarded in a lump sum and can be used for the following expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Raw material, stocks and other materials necessary for current/operational activities b) Current and late debts toward current suppliers, including towards public utilities providers c) Contracted rent d) Acquisition of services and repairs necessary for current primary activities with the exception of consulting, research and other services not directly related to current activities e) Acquisition of medical protective gear, including disinfectant against the COVID-19 virus f) Acquisition of stock items, including capital items necessary to resume current activities g) Acquisition of equipment, tools, machinery, technology necessary to resume current activities <p>Applicants will file a personal liability statement through which they agree that the grants will be used only as permitted</p>
What did work well?	2nd Measure: 17%, respectively 19.527 processed requests from a total of 22.226, 16.749 approved requests, and 3.764 paid requests
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: HORECA 2021

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	The HoReCa 2021 programme is a state support scheme according to ES 224/2020, destined for SMEs from the Hospitality Industry – Restaurants, Pensions, Hotels, Travel Agencies, and Tourist Guides. Through the programme 20% of the losses recorded in 2020, compared to 2019, can be recovered, but not exceeding 800.000 euro.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The support scheme is open until December 31 st and payment for the approved funds will be done by June 30 th 2022, within budgetary limits.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	MEAT (Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism)
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms,	The eligible companies are licensed travel agencies that provide activities, tourist reception plans that include food and lodging according to specific activity codes.

<p>etc.)</p>	<p>Applicants must pass the following cumulative conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The applicants must not in a state of difficulty according to EU Rule 651/2014 and/or were not in a state of difficulty on December 31st 2019, but have faced difficulties or entered a state of difficulty at a later time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. <p>An exception is made in the case of small and micro enterprises that were in a state of difficulty on December 31st 2019 if they are not subjected to a collective insolvency procedure and have not received rescue or restructuring aid.</p> <p>In order to for the state aid to be awarded it is necessary that, when submitting the application, the companies mentioned above that have received rescue aid to have paid back or stop the aid, and those that received restructuring aid to not be the subject of a restructuring plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Do not exceed the 1.800.000 euro limit c) To not be the subject of a decision emitted by the European Commission/another state aid supplier/Competition Council in order to reclaim a state aid/minimis grant d) Has not declared insolvency on the application date e) Maintain current activities, for which financing was obtained, for at least 6 months from the date of the first state aid payment valued at 200.000 euro or less or for at least 12 months from the date of the first state aid payment valued higher than 200.000 euro, with the exception in the case of restrictions imposed through normative acts in order to prevent COVID-19 spread. The time in which activities are suspended due to restrictions is not taken into account for the 6 or 12 months period f) Have filed their financial statements for the past two years (2019 and 2020)
<p>For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)</p>	<p>SMEs from the Hospitality Industry – Restaurants, Pensions, Hotels, Travel Agencies, and Tourist Guides</p>
<p>Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)</p>	<p>The maximum value of the state aid is 800.000 euro / enterprise. The funds are calculated as gross values, before deducting income and other taxes. The grant is valued at a maximum of 20% of the base value, resulted from carrying out activities in 2020 compared to 2019.</p> <p>The support scheme budget is estimated at the RON equivalent of 500 million euro from the state budget, approved through 15/2021 2021 State Budget Law, with commitment credits valued at 2.500.000.000 RON.</p> <p>The state estimates that a number of 73.211 applicants will receive state aid, 15.168 of which are lodging facilities, 52.583 are restaurants and catering facilities and 5.460 travel agencies.</p>

What did work well?	
What did not work well?	HORECA programme is slowly starting to move forward and according to the latest data published by MEAT (Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism). Until 20.08.2021, 937 cases have been approved. Accordingly, 12 cases have been rejected, and for over 2.000 cases additional clarification has been requested.
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: ES 132/2020 – new support measures for employees and employers

Through this normative act new subsidies, paid from unemployment benefits budget, are added to compensate wage losses as a result of reducing the working hours of the employees (which is applied to apprentices or day workers, under certain conditions) or income losses for self-employed people. Furthermore, for remote work, employers benefit from a 2.500 RON subsidy for each employee in order to acquire IT goods and services necessary for remote work, if the employee was switched to remote work during the state of emergency for at least 15 working days.

As such, one of the modifications made to ES 132/2020 benefits employers whose activities were temporarily reduced due to the state of emergency, granting them the possibility to reduce the working time by up to 50% for their employees according to their collective or individual employment contracts.

It is important to mention that reducing the work hours is done by the employer, for a period of at least 5 consecutive working days, while the employer is forced to offer the work schedule for the whole month. Also, reducing the work hours can be applied for employees working in shifts and for uneven work schedules.

Measure: IMM INVEST ROMANIA

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.
Description of the policy measure:	It was created to support the business environment, facilitating access for SMEs to financing in order to ensure liquidities necessary to continue economic activities, by accessing one or more investment loans and/or one or more lines of credit for working capital, guaranteed by the National Loan Guarantee Fund for SMEs (FNGCIMM) through the Ministry of Public Finances.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The programme was approved on July 24 th 2020. The maximum length for the funding is 120 months for investment loans and 36 months for loans/lines of credit used to fund the working capital (with a maximum extension of 36 months);

	The programme has been extended until December 31 st 2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc.)	Ministry of Finance through the National Loan Guarantee Fund for SMEs
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>The applicant must meet the eligibility criteria of the funding institution and, cumulatively, the following main criteria:</p> <p>a. Is not in a state of difficulty and in a litigious case, as a defendant, with the Ministry of Public Finances and/or the partnering loan institution</p> <p>b. Is not late on loans, including leasing loans, when applying for the grant or if the applicant is late on loans they are registered under A, B, C categories in the Loan Risk Database (CRC)</p> <p>c. Is not prohibited to write checks when the loan is approved and does not have a history of major incidents with promissory notes within the previous 6 months from the application date in the Payment Incidents Database, with the exception of major banking incidents regarding promissory notes and/or executed checks starting from March 16th 2020, during the state of emergency, state of alert and a month after they ended.</p> <p>d. Provides the loan institution collateral that, in case the of investment loans together with the state guarantee and the legal mortgage on the assets financed through the loan, covers 100% of the loan, proportional with the guarantee percentage. For lines of credit used for funding the working capital a legal mortgage is instituted on the balances of all the open bank accounts of the applicant at the loan institution, proportional to the guarantee percentage.</p> <p>e. No insolvency was declared against the applicant.</p> <p>f. Applicants from the following fields are not eligible: gambling, producing or selling weaponry, ammunition, explosives, alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, protection and private investigation.</p>
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	Micro, small and medium enterprises
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	<p>The state can guarantee up to 90% of the loans financed at one of the partner banks.</p> <p>No interest rate, guarantee commission or other granting costs. Through the state aid the interest rate owed by the applicants are covered for the first 8 months of the loan and the administration and risk fees are fully subsidies for the duration of the loan</p> <p>No early payment fees are applied.</p> <p>The value of the loans can be up to 10 million RON for investments and up to 5 million RON for working capital.</p> <p>Regarding lines of credit for working capital:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state guarantee can be up to 80% of the loan value • The financing period can be up to 36 months with the possibility to extend the period by another 36 months • The interest rate, composed of quarterly Robor +2,5% / year, is fully subsidised from the state budget • Granting, monitoring and administration costs are covered from the state budget <p>Regarding investment loans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state guarantee can be up to 80% of the loan value, excluding interest rates, fees and other charges • The financing period can be up to 72 months with the possibility to extend the period by another 18 months • The interest rate, composed of quarterly Robor +2% / year, is fully subsidised from the state budget • Granting, monitoring and administration costs are covered from the state budget <p>The funds obtained by the programme cannot be used to refinance current loans</p>
What did work well?	
What did not work well?	<p>During the first two months of the programme, 4.106 loans were awarded, with a funding value of approximately 3,72 billion RON and a guaranteed value of approximately 3,05 billion RON. In 2020, the capital infusion brought through IMM INVEST programme was over 15 billion RON, by awarding over 25.500 state guaranteed loans.</p> <p>According to data from the National Loan Guarantee Fund for SMEs (FNGCIMM), in the month of June 2021, 20% of the allocated funds of 14 billion RON 20% have been used. At that date, the amount guaranteed by FNGCIMM for IMM INVEST was almost 2.7 billion RON, while the financed amount, approved loans and funds available in SMEs accounts was 3.3 billion RON. According to FNGCIMM this year will also see a rate of 87% towards the current activity of financing liquidity. In this area the funding value for IMM INVEST is raised to 2.8 billion RON. The guarantee made available by the Fund is of 2.4 billion RON.</p>
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: AGRO I.M.M. INVEST 2021

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc.
Description of the policy measure:	AGRO IMM INVEST, a sub programme of IMM INVEST ROMANIA support measure, created to help farmers and enterprises in the field of agriculture, fishing, aquaculture and the food sector to benefit from state aid in the form of preferential governmental guarantees for investment loans and lines of credit for working capital.

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When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	24.06.2020 – 31.12.2021
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Ministry of Finance through the National Loan Guarantee Fund for SMEs
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>The grant is awarded to SMEs with average market capitalization, as well as farmers from the field of agriculture, fishing and aquaculture and the food sector.</p> <p>Applicants must pass the following cumulative conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Is not in a state of financial difficulty b) Is not in a litigious case, as a defendant, with the Ministry of Public Finances and/or the partnering loan institution c) Is not late on loans, including leasing loans, when applying for the grant or if the applicant is late on loans they are registered under A, B, C categories in the Loan Risk Database (CRC) d) Is not prohibited to write checks when the loan is approved and does not have a history of major incidents with promissory notes within the previous 6 months from the application date in the Payment Incidents Database, with the exception of major banking incidents regarding promissory notes and/or executed checks starting from March 16th 2020, during the state of emergency, state of alert and a month after they ended. e) Provides the loan institution collateral that, in case the of investment loans together with the state guarantee and the legal mortgage on the assets financed through the loan, covers 100% of the loan, proportional with the guarantee percentage. For lines of credit used for funding the working capital a legal mortgage is instituted on the balances of all the open bank accounts of the applicant at the loan institution, proportional to the guarantee percentage. f) No insolvency was declared against the applicant. g) Does not have unpaid taxes and other administrative budget debts towards the central fiscal body <p>The lines of credit for working capital, respectively the investment loans, can be used only for their intended purposes and cannot be used to refinance other current loans of the applicant.</p>
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	SMEs with average market capitalization, as well as farmers from the field of agriculture, fishing and aquaculture and the food sector
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	Through this grant a nonrefundable component valued at a maximum of 10% of the guaranteed funding, under the following limits:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120.000 euro for each enterprise in the fields of fishing and aquaculture • 100.000 euro for each enterprise in the fields of production of primary agriculture products • 800.000 euro for each enterprise in the food sector <p>The programme consists in awarding a state guarantee in the favor of each approved applicant that requests funding for working capital or investments in the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) State aid can be granted to SMEs that process and sell agriculture products under the condition that the state aid is not to be fully or partially transferred to primary producers, the value of the state aid cannot be set by base price or quantity of the acquired products from the primary producers or those entered on the market by said SMEs 2) For the fields of agriculture, fisheries and aquacultures the following rules apply: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The value of the state aid awarded to primary producers of agriculture products cannot be established based on the price or quantity of the products entered on the market b. State aid offered to fisheries and aquacultures does not fit in any aid categories mentioned in EU Rule 717/2014 3) In the case of investment loans awarded to applicants in the field of agriculture, fishing, aquaculture and the food sector, at the beginning of the funding period, the loan institution can award, at the request of the beneficiary, a grace period of maximum 24 months, and the loan can be repaid in at least two payments per year <p>The budget for AGRO IMM INVEST programme is 1.000.000.000 RON</p>
What did work well?	According to the National Loan Guarantee Fund for SMEs AGRO IMM INVEST is the most funded grant support measure in Romania for 2021.
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

As other type of support could be presented the following measures:

1. SMEs are permitted to delay the payment for utilities – electricity, heating, water, phone services and internet, as well as to delay rent payments for their headquarters and secondary offices, if during the decreed state of emergency they halted their activity, partially or completely, based on the decisions put forth by competent public authorities and have the state of emergency certificate issued by the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment (up until this point the certificate requirements have not been published).

2. Regarding the ongoing contracts, other than those listed in the previous point, SMEs can invoke force majeure only if they can prove that they have tried to renegotiate the contract, in order to adapt the clauses to the new situation. Proof of this can be given only with documents communicated between the parties in any format, including electronic format.

Force majeure is presumed when SMEs obtain a state of emergency certificate, which proves the fact that their activity had been affected by an action of an authority that was applying the protective measures to prevent and fight the pandemic determined by the COVID-19 infection. The presumption can be overturned by the interested parties through any means of proof.

3. The penalties incurred for execution delays by SMEs related to signed contracts with public authorities are not applicable during the state of emergency.

4. Sole beneficiary statement – the deadline to file the statement is delayed by three months starting from the end date of the state of emergency established through the 195/2020 Decree regarding the start of the state of emergency in Romania. During the state of emergency filing the statement is suspended.

5. Restructured fiscal obligations

- Extended deadline for the debtor that wants to restructure their budgetary obligations. The debtor was required to notify the competent fiscal agency, in regards to their intent, until the July 31st 2020, compared to March 31st 2020;
- At the same time, the deadline to request the restructuring of budgetary obligations was extended until October 31st 2020, compared to July 31st 2020.

Fiscal measures

- According to the EGO 29/2020 regarding support for the business environment, outstanding fiscal obligations beginning from the start of the emergency order and unpaid until the end of the measures will not have late fees and interest applied to them – the measure was closed 30 days after the end of the state of emergency, while currently Romania is under a state of alert;
- The deadline for building, land ownership and transport tax has been extended until June 30th 2020, maintaining the 10% allowance, until the same date, if the tax is paid in full.

7. Law 19/2020 related to the granting of paid leave to parents states that paid leave can be awarded to one of the parents in order to take care of their children when the schools that the children are attending are temporarily closed due to extreme weather conditions or other extreme situations decreed by competent authorities.

The applicants must pass the following cumulative requirements:

- Their children must be at most 12 years old, or 18 years old in case of children with disabilities

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- Their place of employment does not allow for remote work

Parents in these situations are awarded paid time off until schools are no longer closed.

Each PTO day is valued at 75% of the pay for a workday, but not higher than 75% of the national median gross wage workday.

The law is applied to parents employed in both the private and public sectors.

8. During the state of emergency, one of the benefits awarded to employees that can be sustained from social services budget are technical unemployment benefits valued at 75% of the national median wage.

The ES 92/2020 states the following:

- Starting from June 1st 2020, employers whose employees benefited from ES 30/2020 regarding protective measures against COVID-19 virus, as well as those whose employees contracts were suspended under Law 53/2020 of the Employment Law, that did not benefit from art 9 of ES 30/2020 regarding the state of emergency or state of alert, are awarded 41,5% of wage subsidy for 3 months, covered by social services budget for unemployment, but not higher than 41,5% of national median wage.
- Employers benefiting from the wage subsidy are obligated to maintain their employees until December 31st 2020, with the exception of seasonal workers

3.9 Slovenia

Measure: Cost/revenue compensation under #PKP1

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for costs/ revenue compensation
Description of the policy measure:	<p>Act Determining the Intervention Measures to Contain the COVID-19 Epidemic and Mitigate its Consequences for Citizens and the Economy - On April 2nd, 2020, Slovenian government passed the Act, which regulated the interventions aimed at mitigating consequences for both citizens and economy, caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 Epidemic, as part of the Protikoronski paket (Anti-Corona package) #PKP1, which came to power on April 11th, 2020.</p> <p>The PKP had been upgraded, with the latest #PKP8 coming to power on February 5th, 2021, followed also by the Act on Intervention Measures to Assist the Economy and Tourism Sector (July 2021),</p> <p>The packages determined various measures in different fields, from financial subsidies to companies, to stimulations for population, including costs/revenue compensation.</p>

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	<p>For the cost/revenue compensation #PKP1 introduced the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-employed, silent partners, farmers and religious workers could apply for Universal Basic Income (exempt from PDI payments). • Self-employed in culture who are contributing to the public interest in culture had the right for covering the costs for SST prolonged until August 31.
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The timeframe of #PKP1 was March 13, 2020 until May 31, 2020 – with the possibility of prolongation.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<p>There were several measures that did not require an application, however, for UIB and exemption of social transfer payments DID REQUIRE and APPLICATION.</p> <p>The self employed had to provide a statement that they are unable to carry out their business activities or that the activities have significantly reduced due to the epidemic.</p> <p>The statement was based upon their own assessment of business.</p> <p>Only those self-employed whose income (self-assessment) will be reduced for more than 10% in comparison to 2019 (or if they weren't operating in 2019, in comparison to first three months of 2020).</p>
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	<p>The UIB was given specifically to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-employed who are unable to conduct their business and were paying social transfers into Pension and Disability Insurance (PDI), including silent partners of Ltd. companies if they were insured in the PDI as the silent partners, - Farmers, who are included into the PDI.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	<p>The above-mentioned subsidies of #PKP1 were valued between 100 and 200 EUR for a single case.</p> <p>The UIB was set at 700€ per month and it was exempt from payments into PDI.</p>
What did work well?	The UIB was the only source of income for many self-employed people, especially in industries that were connected to tourism (such as tourist guides), recreational or educational activities (fitness trainers, language courses), entertainment and event organizers (magicians), and similar.
What did not work well?	
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Employment compensation under #PKPs

Group of the measures	Measure subsidies for employees (salaries, paid leave, etc.)
<p>Description of the policy measure:</p>	<p>Act Determining the Intervention Measures to Contain the COVID-19 Epidemic and Mitigate its Consequences for Citizens and the Economy - On April 2nd, 2020, Slovenian government passed the Act, which regulated the interventions aimed at mitigating consequences for both citizens and economy, caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 Epidemic, as part of the Protikoronski paket (Anti-Corona package) #PKP1, which came to power on April 11th, 2020.</p> <p>The PKP had been upgraded, with the latest #PKP8 coming to power on February 5th, 2021, followed also by the Act on Intervention Measures to Assist the Economy and Tourism Sector (July 2021),</p> <p>The packages determined various measures in different fields, from financial subsidies to companies, to stimulations for population, including costs/revenue compensation.</p> <p>For the subsidies for employees #PKP1 introduced the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers were exempt of paying SST, for all employees for are working (covered by the state), • Salary compensation for workers, who are temporarily laid off (80% of salary) is completely paid for by the state, • Employers were exempt of paying SST for all temporarily laid off workers, • Emergency bonus of 200EUR for all working employees, whose last salary was lower than the sum of 3 minimal monthly salaries in RS. <p>With the introduction of #PKP3 additional measures were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidized shortened working time - in case a worker would get reduced worktime (5-20 hours per week instead of regular 40), the state would cover the difference • Prolongation of subsidies for workers who are temporarily laid off <p>With the introduction of #PKP4 additional measures were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolongation for salary compensations for temporarily laid off workers • Salary compensations for workers in quarantine • Salary compensations for workers with children in quarantine <p>With the introduction of #PKP5 additional measures were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UBI for self-employed and farmers for the time they

	<p>were in quarantine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher UBI (1.100 EUR) per month • The conditions for obtaining UBI have changed (loss of income compared to 2019 over 20%) • Parent, absent from work, due to childcare of a child that is in 1-5 grade of elementary school (remote online education) can claim a subsidy of 80% for absence from work. <p>With the introduction of #PKP6 additional measures were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies that have not used up to 800.000 EUR of state aid, could claim 100% coverage of workers salary compensations, while others, up to 80% (the criteria was self-assessment and a statement from the company). • Furthermore, the companies (also self-employed) received easier terms for paying added value tax. • Companies and farmers who suffered losses higher than 30% compared to 2019 could receive additional subsidies. <p>With the introduction of #PKP7 additional measures were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All people who were working and their last salary didn't exceed the double minimal salary in December 2020 received an additional 200 EUR bonus from their employer, except workers employed in companies that are directly funded by the state budget. The Financial Office reimbursed payments in March 2021 (upon company proving the payment was made before mid-February 2021). <p>With the introduction of #PKP8 additional measures were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers could apply for a subsidy of 50 EUR for paying raised minimal salary to workers.
<p>When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe</p>	<p>The timeframe of #PKPs was March 13, 2020 until May 31, 2020 – with the possibility of prolongation.</p>
<p>Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)</p>	<p>Government</p>
<p>Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies that had liquidity issues prior to December 31st, 2019, were not eligible for the subsidies. • Employers who were financed 70% or more from the national budget in 2019 cannot apply for the subsidies. • Financial and insurance companies classified under K in the NACE cannot apply for subsidies. • Only those employers whose income (self-assessment) will be reduced for more than 10% in comparison to 2019 (or if

	<p>they weren't operating in 2019, in comparison to first three months of 2020).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial limits were set for the companies, for the total amount of public aid (800.000 EUR per individual company; 120.000 EUR per individual company in fishery; 100.000 EUR per individual company producing primary products of agriculture).
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	<p>This was a general measure for all employers (with exceptions noted above).</p> <p>A specific measure was for parents of children in elementary school – which applied also for young women entrepreneurs (but was not exclusive to them).</p>
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	<p>With a large number of people being temporary laid off and their subsidy being calculated based on individual contracts. OECD calculated that 4,5% of national GDP was focused on providing income support for workers.</p>
What did work well?	<p>The measure of paying the salary compensation for workers who were temporarily laid off prevented the collapse of industry that already faced the loss of income and would have been financially burdened by compensations, leading to a larger number of bankruptcies of companies.</p>
What did not work well?	<p>The self-assessment criteria for the 10% loss of income were based on previous years and based on the predictions, companies asked for national subsidies. However, as the situation was uncertain, there were difficulties in making prediction, thus many companies complain about having to pay back subsidies, due to having loss lesser than 10% (even if the reduced loss was partly due to temporary laid off workers, thus reducing company costs).</p>
Good example related with the measure	

Measure: Financial instruments under #PKPs

Group of the measures	Measure governmental guarantees/low interests, etc
Description of the policy measure:	<p>Act Determining the Intervention Measures to Contain the COVID-19 Epidemic and Mitigate its Consequences for Citizens and the Economy - On April 2nd, 2020, Slovenian government passed the Act, which regulated the interventions aimed at mitigating consequences for both citizens and economy, caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 Epidemic, as part of the Protikoronski paket (Anti-Corona package) #PKP1, which came to power on April 11th, 2020.</p> <p>The PKP had been upgraded, with the latest #PKP8 coming to power on February 5th, 2021, followed also by the Act on Intervention Measures to Assist the Economy and Tourism</p>

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	<p>Sector (July 2021), The packages determined various measures in different fields, from financial subsidies to companies, to stimulations for population, including costs/revenue compensation.</p> <p>For the government guarantees, low interests, belayed payments, et. #PKP1 introduced the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STT that should be paid in the April, May or June 2020 were be prolonged until March 2022. • Payments of loans based on state aid can be delayed for 12 months, with the state covering 25% of delayed costs for contracts where the delay was agreed upon, or 50% for companies that their activities were temporarily prohibited. • In case where a company has to pay a public body, the payments can be delayed for 60 days. • State guarantee for a part of delayed payments of loans with commercial banks. <p>In the #PKP2, state guarantees could be given for up to 70% of the principal amount for big companies and up to 80% for SME in case of liquidity loans, with the loan not being higher than 10% of income in 2019 and with the duration of less than 5 years.</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The timeframe of #PKPs was March 13, 2020 until May 31, 2020 – with the possibility of prolongation.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies that had liquidity issues prior to December 31st, 2019, were not eligible for the subsidies. • If the company was conducting business that was temporary prohibited (for example: hairdresser), the state took up 50% of the costs of delayed payments, otherwise 25%. The basis was that the contract was prolonged through a mutual agreement between the bank and the company.
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	The measure targeted companies, having a bigger impact on companies that had to stop working, because their activities were temporarily prohibited.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	The total amount of the guarantees depends on individual loan contracts, however, OECD has calculated that 4,5% of GDP was issued in guarantees, with liabilities being deferred for 12 month period.
What did work well?	Companies (especially SMEs) and self-employed individuals, including many ventures of young women, that were unable to

	conduct their business (for example: hairdressers, tourist guides, ect.) and had an absolute loss of income, were already depending on state aid (UIB) to provide income. They could not cover their financial obligations (such as loan payments), therefore the delay in payment was crucial to their existence.
What did not work well?	Due to delayed payments of loans, the banks became very reluctant of providing new loans to companies, making it extremely difficult to start a new business and use some of the opportunities that appeared due to the new situation (for example: delivery services).
Good example related with the measure	Altogether, around 5 billion EUR were used this far for the 8 PKP, with the #PKP9 being prepared for autumn 2021, so the process is still ongoing.

Measure: Other type of support under #PKP2

Group of the measures	Other type of support
Description of the policy measure:	<p>Act Determining the Intervention Measures to Contain the COVID-19 Epidemic and Mitigate its Consequences for Citizens and the Economy - On April 2nd, 2020, Slovenian government passed the Act, which regulated the interventions aimed at mitigating consequences for both citizens and economy, caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 Epidemic, as part of the Protikoronski paket (Anti-Corona package) #PKP1, which came to power on April 11th, 2020.</p> <p>The PKP had been upgraded, with the latest #PKP8 coming to power on February 5th, 2021, followed also by the Act on Intervention Measures to Assist the Economy and Tourism Sector (July 2021),</p> <p>The packages determined various measures in different fields, from financial subsidies to companies, to stimulations for population, including costs/revenue compensation.</p> <p>Within #PKP2 introduced in April 2020, an additional measure was introduced: Tenants of government or municipality owned business buildings do not have to pay rent during the pandemic.</p>
When it was officially introduced? duration of the measure, timeframe	The timeframe of #PKP2 was March 13, 2020 until May 31, 2020 – with the possibility of prolongation.
Who does provide the support? (national/ regional/ local level, social partner, etc)	Government/ municipalities
Requirements for application for the measure (documents, terms,	There were no special requirements, the owner stopped charging rent.

etc.)	
For whom is targeted the measure (e.g. startups, self-employed, SMEs from specific sectors, employees, SMEs with specific turnover. etc.)	The measure was for all companies that were renting offices (or other business premises) in buildings that were owned by the state or municipalities.
Financial dimension of the support measure (amount of the subsidies for this measure)	The financial dimension was not calculated, it is based on individual contracts between owners and companies renting publicly owned premises.
What did work well?	This measure helped smaller businesses, especially in city centers, which could not conduct business or had their business reduced.
What did not work well?	Due to delayed payments of loans, the banks became very reluctant of providing new loans to companies, making it extremely difficult to start a new business and use some of the opportunities that appeared due to the new situation (for example: delivery services).
Good example related with the measure	Altogether, around 5 billion EUR were used this far for the 8 PKP, with the #PKP9 being prepared for autumn 2021, so the process is still ongoing.

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