

# Social Policy Institute

[www.employment.gov.sk/isp](http://www.employment.gov.sk/isp)

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

## "First Aid" for Slovakia: Updated report on the economic policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic

November 2020

Ondrej Buchel  
Štefan Domonkos  
Lucia Fašungová  
Branislav Hábel  
Marek Hlaváč  
Ján Komadel  
Marcela Veselková

### Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family and Social Insurance Agency who kindly provided the data for this report.



## Summary

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of the Slovak Republic introduced several measures to mitigate negative social and economic impacts of Covid-19. On March 25, 2020, the government introduced "pandemic nursing benefits", a special allowance to care for a family member in an extraordinary situation. The measure aims to help especially working parents of children up to 11 years of age during the nationwide lockdown of schools. On March, 31, 2020, the government approved the "First-Aid" package of economic measures to help employees, businesses and the self-employed, which was co-financed by the European Social Fund. Parallel to these measures, new legislation was introduced to enable the deferral or remission of social contributions of affected employers. The "First Aid Plus" scheme was launched in November 2020, extending the original scheme until the end of March 2021. The revamped scheme extends eligibility criteria to cover a broader range of affected employers, who will be entitled to increased assistance. This report focuses on the above-discussed measures in the portfolio of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

As of November 2, 2020, offices of labour, social affairs and family concluded approximately 124 thousand contracts with employers or self-employed persons affected by the emergency situation declared on March 12, 2020. Overall, the financial aid of almost 638.5 million euro was used to support approximately quarter of all jobs in Slovakia. To be more specific, the financial aid equalled to 486.6 million euro from March to June, 63.3 million euro in July, 54.2 million euro in August 2020 and 34.4 million euro in September (so far). The number of supported jobs (defined as person-months, employees or self-employed persons) equalled to 1.57 million in the period from March to June, 225 thousand in July, 191 thousand in August and 124 thousand in September (so far).

"First Aid" was paid mostly to large and micro enterprises. From the sectoral point of view, the aid was directed particularly to manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and construction, whose share on the total aid paid reached 63 % in September.

Most of the funds (47.5 % of the total financial contribution) were distributed under the Scheme 3B, i.e. flat contribution for the part of each employee's wage cost depending on the decrease of revenues. Compared to previous months, Scheme 1 for employers who were forced to shut down their operations based on the measures of the Slovak Public Health Authority was used less often on average and reached 10 % of the total financial contribution in September. The average contribution per worker decreased from 284 euro in August to 278 euro in September.

In addition to the financial aid distributed through "First Aid" schemes, changes were made to the social insurance system. New allowances (so-called pandemic nursing and sickness benefits) were created for employees affected by the school lockdown or by mandatory quarantine. As a result, there was a notable increase in the number of allowances to care for a family member. From March to October 2020, Social Insurance Agency paid 394 644 more nursing allowances compared to the same period of last year. The year-on-year increase in expenditures reached almost 132 million euro.

## “First Aid“ for employees, entrepreneurs, and self-employed

On March 31, 2020, the Government of the Slovak Republic passed the necessary legislative act regarding the “First Aid“, a set of economic measures designed with a goal of managing and dampening the impact of the coronavirus-related measures on the economy. Direct support and aid for employers and self-employed is managed through six measures (see Table 1) and co-financed by European Social Fund. Since then, the period for which the measures have been in force has been repeatedly extended in order to support the segments of the economy that continue being exposed to the decline in economic activity related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of July 15, 2020, the Government of the Slovak Republic has decreed that the measures will remain in force until September 30, 2020.<sup>1</sup> The "First Aid Plus" scheme was launched in November 2020, extending the original scheme from October until the end of March 2021. The revamped scheme extends eligibility criteria to cover a broader range of affected employers, who will be entitled to increased assistance. These changes will be documented in the future updates of this report.

Table 1 “First Aid” Schemes

Scheme	Date of Introduction	Eligible Claimant	Target Group	Conditions <sup>a, b</sup>	Contribution <sup>b</sup>
1	6 April 2020	Employer or self-employed (as employer)	Employee	Employers who were forced to shut down their operations based on the measures of the Slovak Public Health Authority; employers with furloughed workers.	80% of the employee's average salary (max. 1 100 €)
2	9 April 2020	Self-employed person	Self-employed person	Drop in revenues of at least 20% [10%]	180 € [90 €] to 540 € [270 €], depending on the extent of revenue drop
3A	17 April 2020	Employer or self-employed (as employer)	Employee	Activity affected by economic slowdown; employers with furloughed workers	Up to 80% of the employee's average salary (max. 880 €)
3B	21 April 2020	Employer or self-employed (as employer)	Employee	Employers that recorded a drop in revenues of at least 20% [10%]	180 € [90 €] to 540 € [270 €] per worker, depending on the extent of revenue drop, up to 80% of the average employee's wage
4A	23 April 2020	Self-employed person	Self-employed person		Flat contribution of 210 € [105 €]
4B	23 April 2020	Single-member private limited liability company	Single-member private limited liability company		Flat contribution of 210 € [105 €]

Note: Eligibility period: from March 12, 2020 on. <sup>a</sup> Conditions do not apply to the public sector <sup>b</sup> Eligibility requirements valid in March 2020 funding round in [] parentheses.

Table 2 documents the drawing of financial support as of October 30, 2020. We consider the data for the months from March 2020 to August 2020 to be close to their final values given that the application period for the August round of contributions ended on October 31, 2020. The data show that the total amount of paid contributions was the highest for the April round (almost 177 million euro) and the May round (almost 146 million euro), with the amounts paid for the subsequent rounds being substantially lower and decreasing each month.

<sup>1</sup> See the decision UV-14341/2020 by the Government of the Slovak Republic from July 15, 2020.

Data available on October 30, 2020 show a decrease in paid contributions of more than 14% between the July (63.3 million euro) and August rounds (54.3 million euro). In particular, between July and August, the contributions paid through the schemes 3A and 3B decreased by more than 6 million and 2 million respectively, which makes up for almost 90% of the total decrease. Nevertheless, payments made within the Scheme 3B make up to between 40% and 50% of the total sum paid each month and it is by far the most used scheme of the "First Aid" program. Preliminary data show that the downward trend in paid contributions has continued also in September (34.4 million euro), although this number is expected to increase given that the deadline for claims for the September round is November 20, 2020. In September, 47.5% of all payments within the "First Aid" scheme were made within the Scheme 3B.

**Table 2 Financial contributions within the "First Aid" program, as of October 30, 2020<sup>a</sup>**

Measure	Number of supported entities	Number of supported workers	Financial contribution	Average contribution per worker	Requested amount
<b>March 2020</b>					
1	13 695	65 591	18 721 161.40 €	285.42 €	18 742 360.38 €
2	39 554 <sup>b</sup>	39 554	9 914 266.07 €	250.65 €	9 936 202.96 €
3A	2 646	68 194	18 366 408.92 €	269.33 €	18 372 559.26 €
3B	12 584	186 122	34 772 579.06 €	186.83 €	34 809 061.96 €
4A	10 574 <sup>b</sup>	10 574	1 111 710.00 €	105.14 €	1 119 315.00 €
4B	968 <sup>b</sup>	968	101 745.00 €	105.11 €	104 475.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>80 021</b>	<b>371 003</b>	<b>82 987 870.45 €</b>	<b>223.69 €</b>	<b>83 083 974.56 €</b>
<b>April 2020</b>					
1	11 252	56 529	28 019 514.95 €	495.67 €	28 023 128.11 €
2	47 447 <sup>b</sup>	47 447	22 348 453.26 €	471.02 €	22 348 525.26 €
3A	4 542	103 291	44 081 777.55 €	426.77 €	44 144 635.40 €
3B	17 811	245 523	79 644 951.22 €	324.39 €	79 646 269.81 €
4A	12 264 <sup>b</sup>	12 264	2 578 605.00 €	210.26 €	2 578 605.00 €
4B	1 127 <sup>b</sup>	1 127	236 985.00 €	210.28 €	236 985.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>94 443</b>	<b>466 181</b>	<b>176 910 286.98 €</b>	<b>379.49 €</b>	<b>176 978 148.58 €</b>
<b>May 2020</b>					
1	4 048	24 834	10 341 967.40 €	416.44 €	10 342 020.71 €
2	41 420 <sup>b</sup>	41 420	18 554 161.85 €	447.95 €	18 554 171.85 €
3A	4 470	109 507	41 444 078.06 €	378.46 €	41 444 708.34 €
3B	17 576	273 827	73 563 826.46 €	268.65 €	73 640 366.49 €
4A	8 647 <sup>b</sup>	8 647	1 815 870.00 €	210.00 €	1 815 870.00 €
4B	996 <sup>b</sup>	966	202 815.00 €	209.95 €	202 815.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>77 127</b>	<b>459 201</b>	<b>145 922 718.77 €</b>	<b>317.78 €</b>	<b>145 999 952.39 €</b>
<b>June 2020</b>					
1	350	1 892	770 344.63 €	407.16 €	770 344.63 €
2	29 931 <sup>b</sup>	29 931	13 079 914.17 €	437.00 €	13 080 094.17 €
3A	3 327	79 518	24 657 417.27 €	310.09 €	24 657 418.99 €
3B	12 177	159 491	40 831 042.91 €	256.01 €	40 861 798.57 €
4A	5 966 <sup>b</sup>	5 966	1 253 310.00 €	210.08 €	1 253 310.00 €
4B	679 <sup>b</sup>	679	142 590.00 €	210.00 €	142 590.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>52 340</b>	<b>277 477</b>	<b>80 734 618.98 €</b>	<b>290.96 €</b>	<b>80 765 556.36 €</b>
<b>July 2020</b>					
1	80	474	292 478.71 €	617.04 €	292 478.71 €
2	23 801 <sup>b</sup>	23 801	10 416 901.98 €	437.67 €	10 416 901.98 €
3A	2 687	73 722	20 062 492.06 €	272.14 €	20 062 496.38 €
3B	9 693	121 558	31 353 348.78 €	257.93 €	31 357 403.74 €
4A	4 839 <sup>b</sup>	4 839	1 015 770.00 €	209.91 €	1 015 770.00 €
4B	555 <sup>b</sup>	555	116 130.00 €	209.24 €	116 130.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>41 655</b>	<b>224 949</b>	<b>63 257 121.53 €</b>	<b>281.21 €</b>	<b>63 261 180.81 €</b>
<b>August 2020</b>					
1	50	126	59 964.51 €	475.91 €	59 964.51 €
2	22 559 <sup>b</sup>	22 559	9 861 780.00 €	437.16 €	9 872 080.00 €
3A	2 399	51 323	14 008 477.16 €	272.95 €	14 008 505.16 €

## Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

3B	9 113	112 133	29 298 862.81 €	261.29 €	29 298 862.81 €
4A	4 347 <sup>b</sup>	4 347	912 870.00 €	210.00 €	912 870.00 €
4B	515 <sup>b</sup>	515	107 940.00 €	209.59 €	107 940.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>38 983</b>	<b>191 003</b>	<b>54 249 894.48 €</b>	<b>284.03 €</b>	<b>54 260 222.48 €</b>
<b>September 2020</b>					
1	38	123	49 025.00 €	398.58 €	49 025.00 €
2	20 174 <sup>b</sup>	20 174	8 709 960.00 €	431.74 €	8 709 960.00 €
3A	1 815	35 170	8 362 996.94 €	237.79 €	8 363 627.23 €
3B	5 756	63 778	16 330 017.57 €	256.04 €	16 333 910.21 €
4A	3 961 <sup>b</sup>	3 961	831 810.00 €	210.00 €	831 810.00 €
4B	486 <sup>b</sup>	486	102 060.00 €	210.00 €	102 060.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>32 230</b>	<b>123 692</b>	<b>34 385 869.51 €</b>	<b>278.00 €</b>	<b>34 390 392.44 €</b>

Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (COLSAF) information system. Note: <sup>a</sup>The data in the information system are of preliminary character and are to be further adjusted e.g. by transferring entities between measures. <sup>b</sup>Figures represent the number of supported self-employed persons. Based on the character of measures 2 and 4 we presuppose the number of supported entities to be equal to the number of supported workers (column 3).

In comparison to June 2020, the total amount of aid claimed for July 2020 and August 2020 has decreased. As of October 30, 2020, the amount paid for July 2020 has thus far been 63.2 million euro, which is a decrease of about 22% in comparison to June 2020. The majority of this decrease can be attributed to claims made within Scheme 3B category (decrease of 9.5 million euro, i.e., 23%), and Scheme 3A category (a decrease about 4.5 million euro, i.e., about 19 %). Consistently with this development, the share of contributions paid within Scheme 1 on the total amount paid for all “First Aid” measures has decreased from 22.3% for March 2020 to only a 0.1% for August 2020. Conversely, the largest share of paid contributions is from the Scheme 3B, about a half of total sum paid in each month.

Similarly to the decrease in the total amount paid in contributions, the amount of employees supported through the “First Aid” measures has been steadily decreasing between June 2020 and August 2020. The largest decrease in the number of supported employees was within the Scheme 3B (a decrease of more than 47 thousand, i.e., 24%) and within the Scheme 3A (more than 28 thousand employees, i.e., 35.5%). In June 2020, the number of employees supported through Schemes 3A and 3B reached 239 thousand. Consistent with the overall decrease in the amount of supported employees, the amount of employees and self-employed supported by Scheme 1 has decreased from 1 892 in June 2020 to 126 (93.5%) in August 2020. The average contribution per worker has decreased only by 2.1% from 290 euro in June 2020 to 284 euro in August 2020.

Table 1 in the Appendix contains the data on the structure of “First Aid” recipients categorized by the number of employees from micro-enterprises (at most 9 employees) to large enterprises (at least 250 employees) valid as of October 30, 2020.<sup>2</sup> Similarly to previous months, approximately two thirds of September’s support was claimed by micro-enterprises (including those without any employees) and by large enterprises. The remaining third was claimed by small and medium-sized enterprises. Compared to August, the share of the total amount claimed by micro-enterprises rose (from 31.2 % to 39.4 %), while the share of large enterprises fell (from a third in August to a fourth in September).

#### Box 1 Cumulative figures for March – September 2020

As of 2 November 2020, the total of paid financial contributions sums up to **638 461 846.70 euro**. The total contribution requested for the March – September 2020 period was estimated at 638 752 893.61 euro as of the same date and the number of applications for all measures was estimated at 128 446. However, we need to emphasize that the deadline for applications and statements regarding August’s aid was on 30 October 2020, and therefore the figures are not final as not all cases have been processed. More importantly, major adjustments are expected for September’s and October’s figures where applications are still open.

<sup>2</sup> Data Appenix is available at the web page of the Social Policy Institute:

<https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/ministerstvo/vyskum-oblasti-prace-socialnych-veci-institut-socialnej-politiky/analyticke-komentare/prva-pomoc-slovensku.html>

Data on the structure of “First Aid” recipients categorized by the type of economic activity (NACE), valid as of October 30, 2020, are available in Table 2 in the Appendix. The largest share of both the received aid and the number of supported employees was within the NACE category C – Manufacturing. The share of this sector on the total amount of received aid was as much as 39 %, representing 48.4 % of all workers. The share of the second most supported sector of the economy, wholesale and retail trade (NACE category G), has increased to 13.5 % month on month (from 12.4 % in August). Construction (NACE category F) accounted, according to September’s data, for 10.5 % of aid. More than 5 % of the total amount of received aid was received by enterprises from the sector of professional, scientific and technical activities (NACE category M), accommodation and food service activities (NACE category I), transportation and warehousing (NACE category H) and administrative and support services (NACE category N).

### Box 2 How long does it take to receive aid?

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting state of emergency presented an unprecedented challenge for the Slovak public sector in general and especially for the network of the Offices of labour, social affairs and family (OLSAFs). On top of their standard agenda, the Offices needed to quickly carry out significant amounts of additional tasks closely connected to the state of emergency and the ever changing epidemic conditions. These tasks included the provision of financial contributions within the “First Aid” program. As of 30 October 2020, the provision is paid within 6 working days from the moment of receiving the application or monthly statement.<sup>3</sup>

Entities that have applied for aid in one month and have a signed agreement are not required to sign new agreements for subsequent months. Instead they only need to present a monthly statement which makes the provision of aid for these entities administratively simpler and less time-consuming. The whole process is thus reduced to 2 - 5 working days.

Tables B1 and B2 show information about the duration of the processing for new applications and for monthly statements for the period from April to October connected to existing agreements from previous months. A significant reduction in the duration can be observed from mid-May when, in addition to new applications, the OLSAFs began to accept monthly statements connected to existing applications.

Table B1 Duration of the processing of aid provision (from receiving the application or statement to payment) <sup>a</sup>

Measure	Average processing time	
	Calendar days	Working days
1	10.30	7.11
2	5.82	4.19
3A	7.01	5.07
3B	7.04	5.10
4A	17.50	12.07
4B	21.48	14.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.05</b>	<b>5.03</b>

Source: COLSAF. Note: <sup>a</sup> Average processing time for applications and statements received until 18 October 2020 and processed by 30 October 2020 at the latest. The moment of registration in the COLSAF information system is considered as the date of receipt.

Table B2 The processing time is being reduced <sup>a</sup>

Week of receiving the application / statement	Average processing time	
	Calendar days	Working days
06 April - 12 April	20.87	13.17
13 April - 19 April	17.03	12.16
20 April - 26 April	17.93	12.11
27 April - 03 May	18.03	11.82
04 May - 10 May	15.64	10.94
11 May - 17 May	12.32	9.14
18 May - 24 May	6.10	4.61

<sup>3</sup> In an effort to eliminate the possible discrepancy between the date when the applicant sends the application and the date when it is registered in the information system, two days were added to the estimated duration of the process.

25 May - 31 May	7.66	5.67
01 June - 07 June	4.20	3.14
08 June - 14 June	3.97	3.02
15 June - 21 June	3.75	2.80
22 June - 28 June	4.50	3.24
29 June - 5 July	4.33	3.16
6 July - 12 July	2.84	2.17
13 July - 19 July	3.11	2.35
20 July - 26 July	3.42	2.63
27 July - 2 August	4.24	3.08
3 August - 9 August	2.33	1.83
10 August - 16 August	2.48	1.91
17 August - 23 August	2.69	2.00
24 August - 30 August	3.44	2.36
31 August - 6 September	2.80	2.04
7 September - 13 September	2.15	1.68
14 September - 20 September	2.34	1.71
21 September - 27 September	2.62	1.99
28 September - 4 October	2.79	2.17
5 October - 11 October	2.05	1.65
12 October - 18 October	2.51	1.95
<b>6 April - 18 October</b>	<b>7.05</b>	<b>5.03</b>

Source: COLSAF. Note: <sup>a</sup> Average processing time for applications and statements received until 18 October 2020 and processed by 30 October 2020 at the latest. The moment of registration in the COLSAF information system is considered as the date of receipt.

The average amount of received aid categorized by the size of the claimant and the sector of the economy has varied considerably. In September 2020, large enterprises received the lowest average contribution per worker (193.8 euro), while micro-enterprises received the largest average contribution per worker (368.0 euro). Categorized by the type of activity, the lowest average aid per worker (216.8 euro) was received by enterprises active in the sector of water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation (NACE category E), and the highest average amount of aid received per worker (371.8 euro) was received by enterprises active in the professional, scientific and technical activities sector (NACE category M).<sup>4</sup>

## Pandemic nursing benefits

The nationwide lockdown of schools from 16 March 2020 until further notice created a need for alternative childcare options for workers. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family reacted by establishing a new “pandemic nursing benefits” scheme, for which sickness-insured parents are eligible if they personally take care of a child up to 11 years of age, during the crisis situation (since 12 March 2020) related to the spread of COVID-19.<sup>5</sup>

The number of all nursing benefits paid in April 2020 rose by more than 400% compared to the same month of 2019. Because of the enormous increase in the number of applicants, some claims for March were not processed in April but were transferred to following months. This is illustrated by more than twice as large year-on-year increases in May and June (Table 3). The changes in expenditures for these nursing benefits are even more significant. In the light of gradual opening of kindergartens, primary and secondary schools throughout June 2020, the number of allowances paid in July fell compared to the previous month. However, the return to school was voluntary and based on parent choice. As a result, the number of allowances paid in July 2020 recorded a year-on-year increase of more than 330 percent and the expenditure still grew by almost

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this comparison, we abstracted away from including claimants, for whom it was impossible to determine their sectoral classification based on NACE or the size of the organization based on the number of employees.

<sup>5</sup> In case of children with long-term illnesses the age limit is up to 16 years. See Amendment to Act no. 461/2003 Coll. on social insurance through Act No. 63/2020 Coll.

1 100 percent. Subsequent decrease in the number of allowances has been driven by the mandatory school attendance from September 1 on. In October 2020, the year-on-year increase in the number of paid allowances reached the minimum of 23.9 %.

Table 3 Paid nursing benefits

Month	2019	2020	Change
<b>Number of allowances</b>			
March	25 297	24 854	-443 (-1.8 %)
April	15 690	80 407	64 717 (412.5 %)
May	13 918	149 855	135 937 (976.7 %)
June	13 477	131 851	118 374 (878.3 %)
July	13 015	56 264	43 249 (332.3 %)
August	10 350	26 217	15 867 (153.3 %)
September	10 170	24 060	13 890 (136.6 %)
October	12 781	15 834	3 053 (23.9 %)
<b>Expenditure</b>			
March	2 725 362.70 €	3 003 815.50 €	278 452.80 € (10.2 %)
April	1 704 749.80 €	15 462 513.04 €	13 757 763.24 € (807.0 %)
May	1 554 373.60 €	46 755 878.17 €	45 201 504.57 € (2 908.0 %)
June	1 475 014.00 €	45 373 924.08 €	43 898 910.08 € (2 976.2 %)
July	1 480 207.10 €	17 747 667.64 €	16 267 460.54 € (1 099.0 %)
August	1 286 073.66 €	7 569 461.65 €	6 283 387.99 € (488.6 %)
September	1 303 945.89 €	7 032 176.91 €	5 728 231.02 € (439.3 %)
October	1 454 382.10 €	2 539 028.03 €	1 084 645.93 € (74.6 %)

Source: Sirius information system (weekly data). Note: Paid allowances correspond to claims from preceding months.

## Pandemic sickness benefits

Anti-pandemic measures include compulsory isolation of persons who have confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. A “pandemic sickness benefit” was created for sickness-insured persons who are recognized by a physician as incapable for work due to quarantine measures or isolation.

Table 4 Paid sickness benefits

Month	2019	2020	Change
<b>Number of allowances</b>			
March	154 834	143 256	-11 578 (-7.5 %)
April	143 625	193 587	49 962 (34.8 %)
May	121 150	195 389	74 239 (61.3 %)
June	115 231	146 826	31 595 (27.4 %)
July	114 831	125 594	10 763 (9.4 %)
August	105 385	120 112	14 727 (14.0 %)
September	106 004	119 297	13 293 (12.5 %)
October	112 567	122 233	9 666 (8.6 %)
<b>Expenditure</b>			
March	39 278 114.75 €	43 000 851.38 €	3 722 736.63 € (9.5 %)
April	40 582 739.83 €	51 420 984.73 €	10 838 244.90 € (26.7 %)
May	37 332 972.71 €	61 535 957.75 €	24 202 985.04 € (64.8 %)
June	36 153 616.20 €	52 924 231.60 €	16 770 615.40 € (46.4 %)
July	34 957 463.48 €	44 764 626.43 €	9 807 162.95 € (28.1 %)
August	34 782 406.57 €	44 121 771.90 €	9 339 365.33 € (26.9 %)
September	34 418 007.32 €	43 146 794.07 €	8 728 786.75 € (25.4 %)
October	33 885 806.68 €	41 702 024.92 €	7 816 218.24 € (23.1 %)

Source: Sirius information system (weekly data). Note: Paid allowances correspond to claims from preceding months.

The year-on-year increase in the total number of sickness benefits is not as large as in the case of nursing benefits but significant changes can be observed nevertheless. This is due to the fact that the “pandemic

benefits” form a much smaller fraction of sickness benefits compared to nursing benefits.<sup>6</sup> Again, not all claims for March have been processed in April so the increase in April 2020 is around one third of the value of April 2019. The year-on-year increase in the number of allowances reached the peak of 61.3 % in May 2020 and gradually fell to 8.6 % in October 2020. However, due to worsening pandemic situation, the number of nursing allowances is expected to rise: in October 2020, physicians reported almost 49 000 cases of sick leave because of mandatory quarantine – the highest number yet.

### Deferral or remission of social contributions of affected employers

Ministry of Labour successfully pushed for legislative changes, which enable an employer or a self-employed person with mandatory sickness and pension insurance to postpone the payment of mandatory social insurance contributions for March 2020 to December 31, 2020, if their revenues decreased by more than 40 percent. Furthermore, employers and self-employed persons are not required to pay social insurance contributions for April 2020 if their establishment was closed due to a decision of the competent authority (Public Health Office of the Slovak Republic) for at least 15 days. This form of support was available also to public sector subjects. Table 5 lists the most recent data on the demand for the scheme of support.

Table 5 Deferral or remission of social contributions of affected employers<sup>a</sup>

Month	Claimant		Total
	Self-employed	Employer	
<b>Count<sup>b</sup></b>			
March 2020 (deferral)	6 010	6 918	12 928
April 2020 (remission)	17 049	21 901	38 950
May 2020 (deferral)	2 891	3 690	6 581
June 2020 (deferral)	1 309	1 449	2 758
July 2020 (deferral)	983	952	1 935
<b>Sum<sup>b</sup></b>			
March 2020 (deferral)	847 541,51 €	18 005 938,08 €	18 853 479,59 €
April 2020 (remission)	2 416 299,42 €	66 060 941,23 €	68 477 240,65 €
May 2020 (deferral)	460 347,10 €	20 207 034,02 €	20 667 381,12 €
June 2020 (deferral)	213 677,53 €	10 273 101,53 €	10 486 779,06 €
July 2020 (deferral)	158 476,65 €	3 655 316,34 €	3 813 792,99 €

Source: Social Insurance Agency. Note: <sup>a</sup> Data as of October 14, 2020 may be subject to future revision. <sup>b</sup> The data includes the public sector subjects according to ESA2010.

### Bibliography

Domonkos, Š., Fašungová, L., Hábel, B., Komadel, J., & Veselková, M. (2020). *Prvá pomoc Slovensku: priebežná správa o sociálnej pomoci pracujúcim a rodinám*. Cit. 3. 7 2020. Available at: [http://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/analyticke-centrum/analyticke-komentare/isp\\_2020\\_prva\\_pomoc\\_slovensku\\_final5.pdf](http://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/analyticke-centrum/analyticke-komentare/isp_2020_prva_pomoc_slovensku_final5.pdf)

Domonkos, Š., Fašungová, L., Hábel, B., Komadel, J., Veselková, M., & Vojtechová, B. (2020). *Prvá pomoc Slovensku: priebežná správa o sociálnej pomoci pracujúcim a rodinám (Aktualizácia)*. Cit. 2. 7 2020. Available at: ISP/MPSVaR: [https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/analyticke-centrum/analyticke-komentare/isp\\_2020\\_prva\\_pomoc\\_slovensku\\_20200615.pdf](https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/analyticke-centrum/analyticke-komentare/isp_2020_prva_pomoc_slovensku_20200615.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> In April 2020 “pandemic nursing benefits” formed around 80 % of all nursing benefits while “pandemic sickness benefits” formed only 10 % of all sickness benefits. Source: information system of the Social Insurance Agency.