

Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A Real-Time Review of Country Measures

A “living paper”, version 1 (March 20, 2020, updated 3pm EDT)

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Key findings

- As of March 20, 2020, a total of 45 countries have introduced, adapted or expanded social protection programs in response to COVID-19. Responses are present in all regions, except Africa.
- The most widely used measures include cash transfers (30 programs), followed by wage subsidies (11), subsidized sick leave (10), and various forms of subsidized social security contributions and unemployment insurance.
- A total of 13 new cash transfer programs have been introduced, like for example in Bolivia, India, Iran and Peru. A universal, one-off cash payment to all citizens will occur in Hong-Kong and Singapore. New in-kind schemes have also been launched, such as food vouchers in Taiwan and Seattle in the United States.
- Countries are adapting existing social assistance programs in various ways, by for instance:
 - anticipating payments of future cash transfer programs, like in Colombia and Indonesia;
 - ensuring additional payments, often on a one-off basis (e.g., Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Turkey);
 - providing more generous benefit levels (e.g., China);
 - increasing the coverage of existing cash schemes (e.g., Brazil) and public works (Uzbekistan);
 - enhancing agility by suspending conditionalities in the UK and Italy;
 - providing innovative design solutions, such as school feeding programs delivering food directly to children's homes or nearby centers (Jamaica and India's Kerala state) or adapting their financing (Japan).
- Income support in the form of childcare vouchers or allowances were provided in Italy, Poland and South Korea. Other social assistance programs include support for homeless populations as planned in Spain; utility subsidies waiving fees for basic services are present in El Salvador; and wavers for loans and other financial obligations (e.g., Bolivia).
- Many countries provide cash benefits to crisis-affected self-employed workers (e.g., Ireland, Portugal, New Zealand) and those in the informal sector (India).
- Some countries (e.g., Netherland) are reducing work time among the wage employed, combined with paid sick leave.
- Sweden is reducing the administrative time required for sick-leave payments, while Switzerland is doing so for the unemployment insurance process.
- Delivery innovations are also emerging in Jordan (new cash program using same registration form of existing schemes), Japan (uploading transfers on phones), and Romania (enhanced electronic processes for benefits).

About this review

This “living paper” contributes to the global knowledge on how countries are responding to the pandemic by documenting real-time actions in a key area of response – that is, social protection measures planned or implemented by governments.

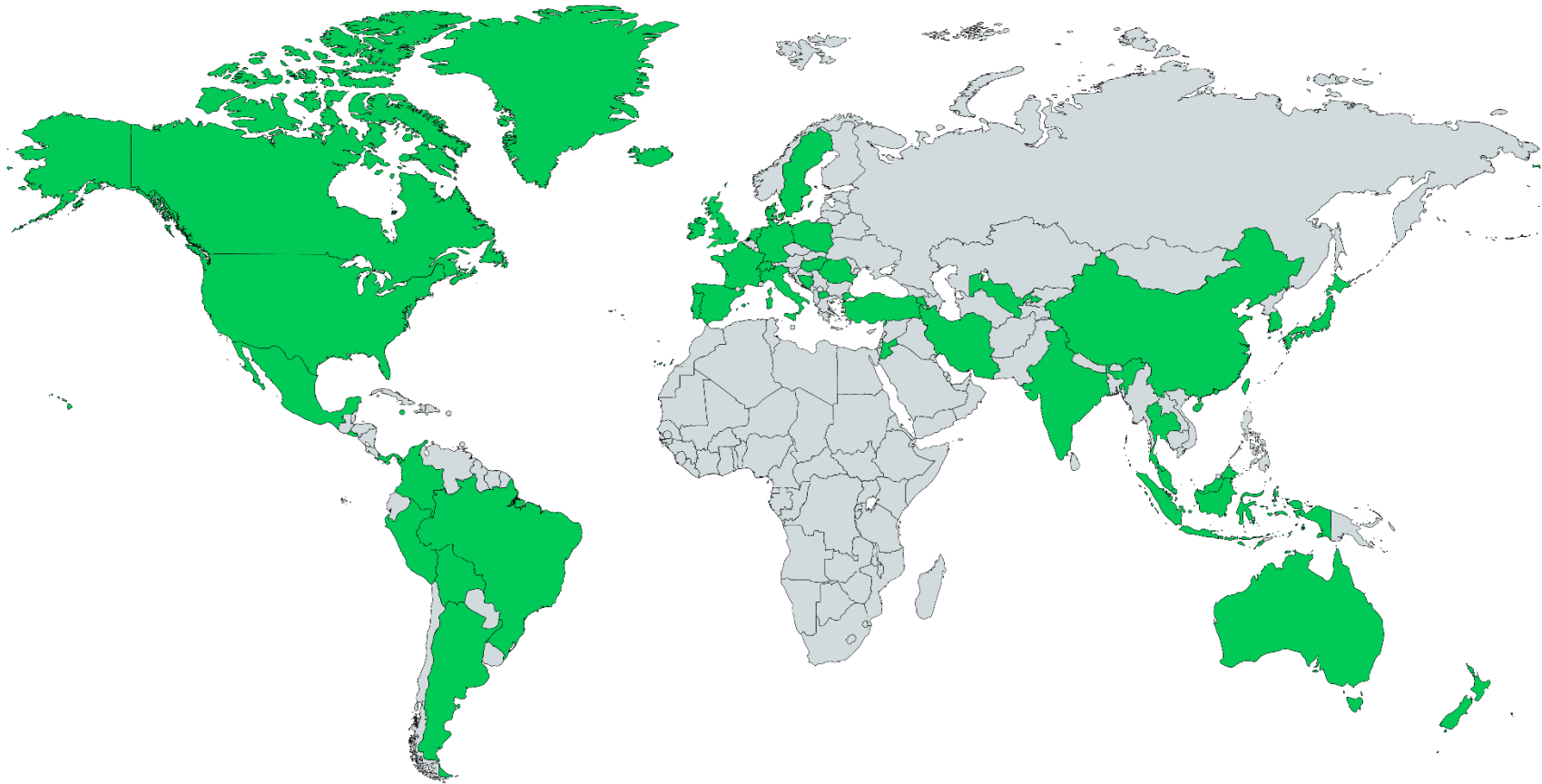
For the purpose of this review, we organized interventions by social assistance, social insurance and labor market programs. For the latter measures, we deliberately focused on supply-side programs (e.g., mostly wage subsidies and other activation programs). In most cases, data sources include official information published in government websites, while in many cases we reported information from global and national news outlets. In some cases, information was provided directly by country-based experts, while the full database was validated and integrated by regional and country social protection teams at the World Bank. Overall, findings should be considered preliminary and interpreted with caution.

Moving forward, the information on country-level measures presented in this review will be continuously verified, triangulated and enriched, *with updated versions of this review being released on a weekly basis (i.e., every Friday)*. This would help provide a “situation room” with a view to inform decisionmakers, practitioners and the broad public about the most recent policy and operational developments in the sphere of social protection responses to COVID-19.

The reminder of the note zooms into a country-by-country examination of measures in tabular form. This mentioned structure by social assistance, insurance, and labor interventions is accompanied by more granular reporting of specific schemes and their summary description. Sources are provided as weblinks in footnotes.

For information or clarifications on the text, as well as suggestions for including additional experiences, please contact Ugo Gentilini (ugentilini@worldbank.org).

Countries with planned or ongoing social protection responses to COVID-19 as of March 20, 2020 (n =45)



Source: based on compilation of information by the authors (as of March 20, 7am EDT time)

Argentina	Social assistance	Additional cash transfer for social assistance beneficiaries	<p>The National Social Security Administration (ANSES) will disburse a special lump sum benefit of up to 3,000 pesos (\$47), or for an amount equivalent to the monthly non-contributory benefit for more than 9 million beneficiaries. The latter include retired persons, contributory and non-contributory pensioners, children benefiting from child benefits (Asignación Universal por Hijo (AUH) – and pregnant women (those benefiting from Asignación Universal por Embarazo).</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beneficiaries of the non-contributory system (including those from Pension Universal para el Adulto Mayor, PUAM): 1,597,100 people beginning April. Cost estimated at 4.7B pesos - Beneficiaries of the contributory system: those who receive the minimum pension (15,892 pesos) will receive an additional 3,000 pesos for April only. This concerns 2,774,465 beneficiaries and an expenditure estimated at 8.3B pesos - Beneficiaries who receive a pension of more than 15,892 pesos and up to 18,892 pesos will receive an additional benefit equal to the difference to reach 18,892 pesos. This concerns 277,252 beneficiaries and with an expenditure estimated at 416M pesos - Beneficiaries of AUH include 4,357,227 minors and other beneficiaries (more for children with disabilities,) and with an expenditure estimated at 14B pesos. (In other words, benefits will be doubled for March) - Women who receive the universal maternity benefit will also receive this payment.¹
	Social insurance		See measures above for support to recipients of contributory pensions
	Labor markets		
Armenia	Social assistance	Cash transfers	The government will provide \$300M to businesses and citizens. Aside from support to firms, this includes \$60M as extra social assistance payment to the Armenian citizens. ²
	Social insurance		

¹ <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/economia/quienes-cuando-cobraran-bono-extraordinario-anunciado-anses-nid2344443>

² <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/30495643.html>

	Labor markets	Wage subsidy	A total of \$50M will be allocated to firms in the form of partial reimbursement of loans taken to cover the salaries of their workers
Australia	Social assistance	One-off cash transfer of \$750 for seniors, veteran, and low-income people	The government will provide a one-off \$750 payment to social security, veteran and other income support recipients and eligible concession cardholders. This measure will assist around 6.5 million Australians. Around half of those that will benefit are pensioners. There will be one payment per eligible recipient. For example, if a person qualifies for the one-off payment in multiple ways, they will only receive one payment. The payment will be tax-free and will not count as income for Social Security, Farm Household Allowance, and Veteran payments. ³ The measure, which will start on 31 March 2020, will cost \$ 4.7B and is part of the wider a \$17.6B stimulus package (representing 0.9 percent of annual GDP).
		One-off cash transfer of \$250 for individuals and up to \$1,000 for families (Tasmania)	The State Government will provide emergency relief payments to Tasmanians as part of a \$420M package, also providing relief to affected businesses. This one-off emergency relief payments of \$250 for individuals and up to \$1,000 for families who are required to self-isolate by public health as a result of coronavirus. This will be available to casual workers and those on low incomes. Funding for this measure will be uncapped ⁴ .
	Social insurance	Changes in pensions deeming rates	The government has also outlined changes to the pension deeming rate, with an average benefit of \$8.42 a fortnight, or \$219 a year to age pensioner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lower deeming rate will be cut from 1% to 0.5% for financial investments up to \$51,800 for single pensioners and \$86,200 for pensioner couples. - The top rate, which only impacts about 40% of payment recipients with deemed assets, will decrease from 3% to 2.5%. - Under the new rates, payment recipients whose income is assessed using deeming could receive up to \$62 a fortnight for couples or \$1,612 extra a year, and up to \$50 a fortnight for singles or \$1,300 a year.⁵
	Labor markets		
Bolivia	Social assistance	New cash program to compensate missing school feeding meals	The government introduced the Bono Familia program, which seeks to contribute to feeding children of low-income families who will not have school breakfast during this time of quarantine. An amount of 500 Bolivianos

³ https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/Overview-Economic_Response_to_the_Coronavirus.pdf

⁴ http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/ministerial_statement_covid-19_response_measures

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/jul/09/deeming-rates-explained-how-they-work-and-why-pensioners-want-them-changed>

		Waiving mortgages and other financial obligations	(US\$ 72.6) will be paid for each child in elementary school. The benefit will be delivered in April. ⁶ Families (and companies) that cannot meet financial obligations are exempt from paying their mortgages and credits. This relief will apply for 2 months
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Social assistance	Cash transfers	In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), individual local governments are providing significant sums to assist the elderly and families with low or no income (\$250,000 thus far from Sarajevo municipality Stari Grad). Plans are underway for larger-scale assistance.
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets	Unemployment benefits expanded for employees who lost their jobs due to COVID-19 outbreak	It is estimated that 100,000 people (out of the total number of 500,000 employed) will lose their jobs. A total of 5.5 million EUR is available for 2020, but this could increase to another 10 million EUR to support job retention and/or increase unemployment benefits. BiH has 33 million EUR allocated for 2020 for activation programs which may be reallocated for immediate assistance to unemployed.
Brazil	Social assistance	Coverage of the Bolsa Família program increased by 1M households	On 15 March 2020, Brazil will inject R \$147.3B in the economy. The government is allocating R\$3 billion for the Bolsa Familia program for adding 1 million families. ⁷
		Transfer to all informal workers who do not receive cash transfers	The government has decided to distribute vouchers of R \$200 to all workers who don't have a formal job and don't receive resources from the two flagship cash transfer programs in Brazil – Bolsa Familia and BPC. The benefit will be distributed through Cadastro Unico, the national registry. ⁸
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Canada	Social assistance		

⁶ <https://www.noticiasfides.com/nacional/politica/gobierno-crea-el-bono-familia-flexibiliza-pago-de-adeudos-y-prohibe-corte-de-servicios-basicos-403922>

⁷ <https://g1.globo.com/economia/noticia/2020/03/16/ministerio-da-economia-anuncia-novas-medidas-para-reduzir-impacto-do-coronavirus-veja-lista.ghtml>

⁸ <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2020/03/contra-pandemia-governo-vai-distribuir-r-200-para-trabalhadores-informais.shtml>

	Social insurance	Sick leave benefits	The usual one-week waiting period will be waived for people who are in quarantine or have been directed to self-isolate and are claiming for Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits (estimated cost of \$5M). Eligible workers with no or limited paid-leave benefits through their employers can apply for up to 15 weeks of employment insurance if they cannot work for medical reasons such as cancer, a broken leg, or in this case, being quarantined in a public-health threat. The current EI payment is 55 percent of earnings up to a maximum of \$573 a week. ⁹
	Labor markets		
China	Social assistance	Increase in Dibao cash transfer coverage and benefits	The latest government policy directive (6 March 2020) instructed local governments to increase the coverage and benefits of Dibao, in particular, extending social assistance programs to cover families affected by the COVID-19 and falling into poverty. Examples are available at local level (information collected by WBG): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the Hubei province, RMB 500 for urban Dibao recipients and RMB 300 for rural Dibao recipients were transferred as temporary living allowance subsidies. - In Chongqing, a transfer of twice the monthly Dibao amount was introduced to some recipients if they were infected as temporary assistance. - In Shenzhen, the amount of cash transfer as temporary assistance could range between 2-18 times of the local Dibao threshold based on the individual recipient's situation. - In Guangxi, the benefit level of Dibao recipients was increased from RMB 210 to 230 monthly in rural areas, and RMB 370 to 390/month in urban settings. - In Wuhan, temporary assistance was also provided to the quarantined migrant population with difficulties for an amount of RMB 3000. As of 13 March, it supported 5839 people with a transfer of RMB 16.1M.
	Social insurance	Temporary waiver or reduction of employers' social insurance contributions	Between February and June 2020, all enterprises enrolled in China's Social Security Schemes are exempt from making employer contributions to pension, unemployment, and work-related injury insurance schemes. ¹⁰ For instance, this is the case of the Hubei province. For other provinces and cities (except Hubei),

⁹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

¹⁰ <https://home.kpmg/cn/en/home/insights/2020/02/china-tax-alert-15.html>

			micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises are exempt from making employer contributions to pension, unemployment, and work-related injury insurance schemes. Large enterprises may reduce employer contributions to pension, unemployment, and work-related injury insurance schemes by 50%.
	Labor markets		
Colombia	Social assistance	One additional cash payment to beneficiaries of flagship schemes	The following measures are put in place (for around 300.000 million COP, or \$75M): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One additional cash payment to 2.6M households that are beneficiaries of Familias en Acción. - One additional cash payment to 204,000 beneficiaries of Jóvenes en Acción. - One additional cash payment to the 1.5M beneficiaries of Adulto Mayor
		Anticipating and scale-up of the VAT Transfer to the Poor Program	This measure consists of anticipating the implementation of the VAT Transfer to the Poor Program that is expected to distribute 3% of the funds collected as VAT to the most vulnerable families. This program was scheduled to start on January 2021, with a pilot of 100.000 families; however, now it will start in April 2020 and will include around 1M people.
		Utility subsidies	Water services are provided free of charge for families in a state of vulnerability. ¹¹
		Waiving mortgages and other financial obligations	Financial relief measures will be provided to individuals and families (and all-sized enterprises) that are not able to pay their financial obligations. This relief will be active for around two months. The measure includes the possibility to freeze all credit payments, including mortgages, car loans, credit cards, etc. (For firms: it will provide mechanisms to enterprises in need of refinancing or extend the duration of their obligations)
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		

¹¹ <https://www.colombia.com/actualidad/nacionales/ivan-duque-anuncia-medidas-economicas-a-causa-del-covid-19-264409>

Denmark	Social assistance		
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets	Wage subsidy covering 75% of wages (\$3400) per worker/month	The Danish government would cover 75% of employees' salaries if firms committed not to lay off workers. This program will last for three months, or until 9 June 2020. The subsidy will cover a maximum of 23,000 Danish krone/month (\$3,418). ¹²
El Salvador	Social assistance	Utility subsidies	The government has granted a waiver for utility bills payments for COVID-19 positive people for three months. Utilities include electricity, water, telephone, and internet. ¹³
	Social insurance	Paid leave for at-risk groups	The government has ordered private companies to ensure quarantine of particular worker categories, including those older than 60 years of age, pregnant women or those with preexisting conditions. These workers would receive a paid sick leave for 30 days. ¹⁴
		Other forms options for paid leave	Private companies (expect those in the food, medical and other key sectors) that decide to send all of their workers home on paid leave will be eligible for further government support. ¹⁵
Labor markets			
France	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Sickness benefit	Up to 20 days compensation for people in isolation. People placed in isolation will benefit from "sick leave and daily benefits" of up to 20 days without "waiting period". The measure also applies to parents whose children are subject to isolation and who cannot, therefore, go to work. This is a derogatory procedure which was adopted by a decree signed on 31 January.
	Labor markets		
Germany	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Subsidized social insurance contributions	Social insurance contributions that employers must normally pay for their workforce will be fully reimbursed by the Federal Employment Agency. ¹⁶
	Labor markets		
Hong-Kong	Social assistance	One-off cash injection to all 7M adult residents	To stimulate the economy, Hong Kong decided to give HK\$10,000 (\$1,280) cash handouts for all permanent residents over the age of 18. This measure,

¹² <https://www.euractiv.com/section/coronavirus/news/danish-corona-hit-firms-get-state-aid-to-pay-75-of-salaries/>

¹³ <https://twitter.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1240409234854088705>

¹⁴ <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/haiti/article241249651.html>

¹⁵ <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/haiti/article241249651.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/issues/kabinett-kurzarbeitergeld-1729898>.

		Additional benefits	<p>which involves a cost of about \$71 billion, is expected to benefit about 7 million people ¹⁷.</p> <p>Additional benefits are also announced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extra 1-month allowance of standard CSSA payment, Old Age Allowance, Old Age Living Allowance, or Disability Allowance. Similar arrangements will apply to Work Incentive Transport Subsidy ¹⁸ - Pay one month's rent for lower-income tenants living in public rental units ¹⁹
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Hungary	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Subsidized social insurance contributions	Sectors particularly affected by the crisis (tourism, hospitality, entertainment, sport, cultural services, personal transportation/taxi companies) are exempting employers from paying social security contributions. Employees' contributions are significantly reduced until 30 June; also, the health insurance premium is reduced to the statutory minimum
	Labor markets	Labor regulation and loan repayment moratorium	A plan to relax labor regulations and facilitate collective negotiations. There is also a loan repayment moratorium (both principal and interest) for both private individuals and companies until the end of the year. ²⁰
Iceland	Social assistance	Planned measures to increase consumption via benefits	Tentative plans that would include a focus on stimulating private consumption via tax reduction or increased benefits ²¹ .
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
India	Social assistance	Home delivery of school feeding meals (Kerala)	The Kerala state government will deliver food ingredients for mid-day meals to over 300,000 children studying in 33,115 <i>anganwadis</i> (rural child care center) closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the moment, they are delivering such food items necessary for ten days. Before the end of such period, the materials required for the next ten days will be packed and

¹⁷ <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202002/26/P2020022600420.htm>

¹⁸ <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202001/03/P2020010300231.htm>

¹⁹ <https://www.budget.gov.hk/2020/eng/nt.html>

²⁰ Information on Hungary is based on media reports tracked by the WBG.

²¹ <https://www.government.is/news/article/?newsid=a17058af-62d6-11ea-9455-005056bc530c>

		Cash for informal workers (Uttar Pradesh)	delivered. The materials are being packed and distributed by the teachers themselves. ²² The state of Uttar Pradesh will provide compensation to poor workers via online payments if they lost their job due to the pandemic. Vegetable vendors, construction workers, rickshaw pullers, autorickshaw drivers, and temporary staff at shops will be targeted by this measure ²³ .
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Indonesia	Social assistance	Expansions of e-food vouchers by 33% for six months Additional cash transfers	The government provided extra funding for the Affordable Food Program to help 15 million low-income households buy staple foods. Such additional funding was for 4.6 trillion rupiahs (US\$324 million). As part of the overall stimulus package, low-income households will also receive 200,000 rupiahs (US\$13.97) per month in financial benefits, an increase from 150,000 rupiahs (US\$10), for the next six months ²⁴ .
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Iran	Social assistance	Cash transfers for 3 million families	Iran is planning to support around 3 million lower-income families with no permanent jobs with cash transfers up to 6 million rails (around \$400) in 4 stages ²⁵ .
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Ireland	Social assistance	Supplementary benefits to the newly-unemployed	<i>COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment</i> : this program aims to compensate people who lost their job due to COVID-induced economic contraction. A benefit of €203 per week will be paid. This new payment quickly delivers income support to the unemployed (be they self-employed or employees) for six weeks. It is designed to provide income security for a period during which the unemployed can apply for a full Jobseekers payment.

²² <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/covid-19-anganwadis-shut-kerala-govt-home-delivers-mid-day-meal-supplies-kids-120151>

²³ <https://news.trust.org/item/20200318171315-hrvio/>

²⁴ <https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/indonesia-unveils-stimulus-package-to-combat-coronavirus-impact/>

²⁵ <https://mobile.reuters.com/article/amp/idUSKBN21410M>

	Social insurance	Sick pay, illness benefit and	<i>COVID-19 Enhanced Illness Benefit</i> : this program compensates those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or are medically certified to self-isolate as a result of COVID-19. Eligible people will be paid at a rate of €305 per week (as compared with the normal Illness Benefit rate of €203). This is available to employees and the self-employed. ²⁶
	Labor markets		
Italy	Social assistance	Childcare vouchers	The “Cura Italia” (Cure Italy) stimulus – a package of 25 billion euros (\$28.3 billion) –includes a 13.5-billion-euro package to support families and workers. It offers funds to private-sector workers to pay for babysitters via a childcare voucher of up to €600 for workers with children below the age of 12 who decide not to take the parental leave. The voucher can reach up to €1,000 for workers in the health sector.
		Suspension of conditionalities in flagship cash transfer scheme	The decree suspends all conditionalities related to the Guaranteed Minimum Income program, or Reddito di Cittadinanza (RdC or Citizens' Income), for two months. The measure was introduced to minimize the movement of beneficiaries (to social services or to public employment services, where they are expected to sign a social inclusion pact or a labor pact, respectively). To minimize the movement of beneficiaries, the Ministry is also planning to relax the rules of the use of the RdC card to allow for online purchases. ^{27 28}
		One-off cash transfer for low-income workers	Workers with income less than €40K are entitled to a nontaxable benefit of €100 for March 2020.
	Social insurance	Extension of parental leave	Parents of children younger than 12 are allowed to take leave for up to 15 (combined) days starting from 5 March 2020 while receiving 50% of the salary paid by the state. Workers would have their absence from quarantine work considered as sick leave, with the costs paid by the state. ²⁹ Paid leave increases by 12 days for each month in March and April 2020.
Labor markets	Wage subsidies for 80% of the wage for nine weeks	To discourage layoffs during the crisis, employees of companies that have interrupted their activities will be entitled to receive a benefit in the amount of	

²⁶ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/eca524-covid-19-information-for-employees/>

²⁷ <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/16/italy-supports-coronavirus-hit-economy-pm-hails-italian-model.html>

²⁸ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-10/conte-calls-on-ecb-to-do-whatever-it-takes-against-coronavirus>

²⁹ <https://www.time24.news/i/2020/03/italian-government-proposes-vouchers-for-babysitters-and-payment-of-80-of-wages-in-response-to-coronavirus-3-15-2020-world.html>

			80% of the salary paid by the state. The measure would be valid for up to nine weeks – and no longer than August 2020.
	Labor markets	Firing suspension	Suspension of all firing procedures begun after 23 February.
Jamaica	Social assistance	Delivery of school feeding meals	The Ministry of Education will be providing nutritional support through Nutrition Products Limited to students as part of the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH) – a flagship cash transfer scheme. This applies to the period that they will be out of school over the next two weeks. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under the food support plan, snacks comprising baked products, fruit juices, milk, and water will be distributed for students on PATH at the primary and secondary levels. - Certain schools will be used as distribution points for two weeks, and later the private sector (food suppliers, supermarkets) will be used to distribute food packages at specific drop off points in each community.³⁰
		Special cash transfers	A direct transfer will be made to workers who lost their jobs. ³¹
		Anticipating cash payments under flagship scheme	PATH payments will be paid earlier than scheduled to cope with recipients with economic shock. ³²
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets	Wage subsidies	Several incentives are planned to mitigate employment losses, including direct transfers to businesses to maintain employees. ³³
Japan	Social assistance	Planned cash payments to households	Japan is working on a new spending package of up to 20 trillion yen (\$190 billion), part of which will include cash payouts to households. ³⁴
		Free school feeding meals (Osaka)	Osaka plans to offer free lunches for all students at city government-run elementary and junior high schools from April to help ease the financial strain

³⁰ <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20200316/education-ministry-providing-food-path-students-amid-school-closure>

³¹ <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20200316/education-ministry-providing-food-path-students-amid-school-closure>

³² <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20200316/education-ministry-providing-food-path-students-amid-school-closure>

³³ <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20200316/education-ministry-providing-food-path-students-amid-school-closure>

³⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-economy-stimulus/japan-vows-bold-step-to-beat-virus-fallout-signals-big-spending-package-idUSKBN2100GP>

			on households caused by the spread of the coronavirus. The program would save parents between 50,000 yen (\$470) and 60,000 yen per child each year, he said. The city estimates the annual cost of covering all 165,000 students at 7.7 billion yen, with funding for fiscal 2020 starting April coming from a reserve fund. The city plans to continue the program beyond the next fiscal year and discuss details such as how to secure funding for fiscal 2021 and beyond. ³⁵
	Social insurance	Subsidized leave	The employment Adjustment Subsidy qualifications are relaxed to support business impacted by the novel Coronavirus infection. This move is to support employers who are suffered from the business downturn but maintain employment by paying leave allowance and letting employees take partly paid leave, rather than firing them. The subsidy reimburses two-third for an SME employer or a half for a large enterprise of the leave allowance. The subsidy is, however, capped at an upper limit, which is JPY 8,335 a day per employee on leave as of late February 2020. ³⁶
	Labor markets		
Jordan	Social assistance	Anticipating payments of flagship cash transfer scheme New cash transfer program	The Jordanian National Aid Fund (NAF) announced the following measures to combat the economic impact of COVID-19 outbreak: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making the payment for the current beneficiaries of the National Aid Fund (NAF) cash transfer program for March 2020 [around 100,000 households]. The payment will start on Monday 23 March. - Making the Quarter 1 2020 payment of the current beneficiaries of the NAF expansion program who were enrolled in Year One 2019. [around 24,000 households]. Payment to be made early April. - Completing the enrolment of additional 25,000 households beneficiaries of Year Two of the NAF expansion Takaful Program to make the payment in April 2020. The government is considering online enrolment and digital payment. NAF started the registration of the Bread Subsidy Cash Compensation Program, which targets 70 to 80% of the population with a small amount of money annually. This started early March 2020, and the government plans to

³⁵ <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20200318/p2g/00m/0na/020000c>

³⁶ <https://en.an-japan.com/2020/02/27/emp-subsidy/>

			make payments between April-November 2020. Registration is using the same form of the Takaful Program ³⁷ .
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Malaysia	Social assistance	Anticipating payments of flagship cash transfer program	Malaysia announced the economic stimulus package on 27 February 2020, including expanding payment for Bantuan Sara Hidup (BSH) program. Starting on 16 March, the "Phase 2" of the RM200 payment expected in May 2020 will be initiated by March 2020. The BSH payments amounting to RM760 million will benefit 3.8 million BSH households. ³⁸ Also, BSH 2020 recipients will receive an additional RM100 to be credited to the registered bank account as well as RM50 e-cash, which will be disbursed in May 2020. Adding that will involve RM500 million, which will benefit an additional five million BSH recipients. ³⁹
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Mexico	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Anticipating payment of pensions	On 18 March 2020, Mexico announced an advance of 4 months of pension to older adults scheduled for the end of March. Usually, pensions are delivered in two months. Under the new measures, instead of the regular 2,670 pesos (account for two months) older people will receive double that amount ⁴⁰ .
	Labor Markets		
Netherlands	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Special unemployment payment and reduced work time	Employers can apply for a permit for a reduction in working time (werktijdverkorting) at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, i.e., employees will temporarily work on a reduced schedule. Employees can receive a temporary unemployment benefit for hours not worked, while they remain fully employed. The permit is valid for a period of a maximum of 6 weeks and can be extended for a maximum total period of 24 weeks. Employers must meet the following conditions: (i) the company has been

³⁷ <https://www.petra.gov.jo/Include/InnerPage.jsp?ID=131465&lang=ar&name=news&fbclid=IwAR336VPt349-96-tplk4NhsqXnVuoPI728Q- mNiYIK --B-MJ-i5aa1s#.XnlqcoftuZ9.facebook>

³⁸ <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2020/03/16/pm-workers-forced-to-take-unpaid-leave-to-receive-cash-assistance-of-rm600-a-month>

³⁹ <https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=ms&u=https://bsh.hasil.gov.my/&prev=search>

⁴⁰ <https://plumaslibres.com.mx/2020/03/18/anuncia-amlo-que-adelantan-4-meses-de-pago-a-pension-de-adultos-mayores-por-coronavirus/>

			affected by a situation that does not fall under the ordinary business risks (such as COVID-19); (ii) during a period of 2 to 24 weeks sales are at least 20% lower than normal. ⁴¹
	Labor markets		
New Zealand	Social assistance	Low-income households receiving a \$25 per week benefit increase and a doubling of the Winter Energy Payment	New Zealand's government has announced a spending package NZ\$12.1 billion (equivalent to 4% of GDP) in an attempt to fight the effects of Covid-19 on the economy. The package includes, among others, a \$2.8 billion income support for the most vulnerable, including a permanent \$25 per week benefit increase and a doubling of the Winter Energy Payment for 2020
	Social insurance	Subsidized sick leave	This includes \$126 million for leave and self-isolation support. Those required to self-isolate or care for someone who is sick will receive the same amount as wage subsidy (see below). It will be paid to employers to pass onto their employees who need to self-isolate for 14 days.
	Labor markets	Wage subsidies, including up to \$585/week	A total of \$5.1 billion in wage subsidies was committed for affected businesses in all sectors and regions. Full-time workers (more than 20 hours/week) will receive \$585/week under the scheme, with \$350 paid to part-time workers. The subsidy is paid as a lump sum and covers 12 weeks per employee. The maximum each business can receive is set at \$150,000. The wage subsidies will apply to all employers in New Zealand – including self-employed people – providing they do not already work from home and cannot perform their jobs remotely ^{42 43} .
North Macedonia	Social assistance		
	Social insurance		The government is subsidizing social contributions for employees in companies from sectors of tourism, transport, catering and other affected companies, for April, May, and June of 2020, with a subsidy of contributions per employee up to 50% of the average salary paid in 2019.
	Labor markets		
Panama	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Paid sick leave	Paid leave for those in quarantine or recovery (limited specifics available)

⁴¹ <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/employment-alert-covid-19-netherlands-39563/>

⁴² <https://treasury.govt.nz/news-and-events/news/covid-19-economic-package-announced>

⁴³ <https://workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/emergencies/2020/coronavirus.html#null>

	Labor markets	Anticipate leave for older workers and other measures	On 13 March 2020, the government approved the Executive Decree that allows temporary modification of working days; the use of teleworking according to existing legislation and the nature of work; special consideration with workers over the age of 60; and other measures related to labor mobility and compensation. ^{44 45}
Peru	Social assistance	Anticipating payments of old age cash transfer (non-contributory pension)	The Peruvian Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (Midis), through the Supreme Decree, ordered the double payment to the users of the social programs Pensión 65 and Contigo to avoid contagion by exposure to queues or crowds of people. Thus, in the next bi-monthly payment in advance they will also receive the payment of the two subsequent months. The double payment of financial support is applied in these social programs by grouping populations at high risk for coronavirus, such as older adults who may have some type of pre-existing disease. The Pension 65 program reaches 557,000 older people, including 40,000 with severe disabilities. ⁴⁶
		One-off cash transfer	On 16 March 2020, the Peruvian Council of Ministers approved an exceptional payment of about US\$107 for each vulnerable family to be affected during the 15-day quarantine period (9 million vulnerable people) ⁴⁷
		Cash transfer	The government launched a subsidy of nearly \$100 to 3M million poor households to stay home (special scheme is names “I will stay at home”)
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Poland	Social assistance	Childcare allowance	Parents have an additional 14 days of childcare allowance for childcare up to the age of 8 if the nursery, children's club, kindergarten, or school the child attends is closed due to the coronavirus. Cash is payable to parents or legal guardians of children. The allowance is available from 12 March to 25, and the period of payment of additional care allowance (14 days) is not included

⁴⁴ <https://www.mitradel.gob.pa/acciones-preventivas-de-contagio-de-covid-19-en-espacios-laborales-seran-obligatorias/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.mitradel.gob.pa/ejecutivo-regula-temporalmente-las-modificaciones-a-la-jornada-de-trabajo-ante-pandemia-de-covid-19/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.gob.pe/institucion/midis/noticias/108918-midis-ejecuta-estrategia-preventiva-para-usuarias-y-usuarios-de-programas-sociales-ante-el-coronavirus>

⁴⁷ <https://andina.pe/ingles/noticia-peru-government-approves-economic-bond-for-vulnerable-population-788501.aspx>

			in the general limit of 60 days, which are entitled to care for a sick child under 14 years of age. ⁴⁸
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets	Wage subsidies and working time flexibility	Employers meeting specific criteria concerning turnover decline could lower employee's working time to 80% (and get 40% of average wage covered by the state, with firms covering the remaining 40%). In case of significant problems, companies can use economic stoppage with wages reduced to 0.5 of regular level; Poland will cover almost half of the remuneration. In addition, One-person companies and people working based on civil law contracts could get up to 80% of minimum wage.
Portugal	Social assistance	Cash transfer for six months to self-employed workers	Portugal announced plans on 13 March 2020 to provide financial support for the self-employed in the amount of 438 euros for 6 months. It is created for those who have to stay at home to accompany their children up to 12 years old in the amount of 1/3 of the average salary ⁴⁹ .
	Social insurance		
	Labor market	Wage subsidies for workers with children less than 12 years old	Portugal announced plans on 13 March 2020, to provide exceptional financial support for employees who have to stay at home to accompany their children up to 12 years old in the amount of 66% of the basic remuneration (33% paid by the employer, 33% paid by Social Security) ⁵⁰
Romania	Social assistance	Cash transfers suspend conditionalities (and online benefit process activated)	All social assistance benefits can now be claimed electronically (e-mail, online applications). School attendance conditions have been relaxed.
	Social insurance	Paid leave for workers with children less than 12 years old	The Romanian Parliament passed a law ⁵¹ that allows one of the parents who is taking care of children less than 12 years old (whose schools have closed in the context of the Covid outbreak) to have paid leave. This includes paid leave at 75% of the salary per working day, but not more than 75% of the gross average salary at the national level (RON 5,163).

⁴⁸ <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/dodatkowy-zasilek-opiekunczy---pytania-i-odpowiedzi>

⁴⁹ <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/gc22/comunicacao/noticia?i=governo-toma-medidas-extraordinarias-para-responder-a-epidemia-de-covid-19>

⁵⁰ <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/gc22/comunicacao/noticia?i=governo-toma-medidas-extraordinarias-para-responder-a-epidemia-de-covid-19>

⁵¹ https://legislatiamuncii.manager.ro/a/26294/legea-nr-19_2020-zile-libere-pentru-parinti-pe-perioada-cat-sunt-inchise-scolile-si-gradinitile-stare-de-urgenta.html

		Temporary unemployment benefits	Employees will receive a temporary unemployment benefit supported from the Unemployment Social Insurance Budget and European Funds for the days not worked while remaining fully employed (technological unemployment) in the amount of 75% of the gross income, but not more than 75% of the gross average salary at the national level (RON 5,163). To benefit from the unemployment support, employers must meet one of the following conditions: (i) the company has ceased activity due to the COVID-19 situation and have an emergency state certificate; (ii) the company reduced their activity because of COVID-19 outbreak and could not pay salaries. In this case, the employers will have up to 75% of staff covered by technical unemployment benefits.
	Labor market		
Singapore	Social assistance	One-off cash payout of S\$100-300, depending on income, for all residents aged 21+	The government allocated \$1.6B to manage the crisis. The package includes up to S\$300 cash for adult Singaporeans, and S\$100 more for each parent with a child below 21.
		Vouchers and other transfers	Measures include utility rebates doubled, S\$100 for passion card top-up for all seniors, and S\$100 supermarket vouchers for lower-income. ⁵²
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
South Korea	Social assistance	Childcare vouchers	The government will issue vouchers with 2.4 trillion won to low-income households as they shift from child daycare to homecare. ⁵³
	Social insurance	Childcare leave	South Korea has allocated a nearly 20 trillion won support package to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak. This includes giving parent employees up to 5 days of childcare leave along with the pay of 50,000 won per day, respectively ⁵⁴ .

⁵² <https://www.gov.sg/article/cushioning-the-impact-of-covid-19>

⁵³ <http://english.moef.go.kr/pc/selectTbPressCenterDtl.do?boardCd=N0001&seq=4852>

⁵⁴ http://english.moef.go.kr/popup/20200302_policyFocus/popup.html

	Labor markets	Wage subsidies and jobseeker allowances	The government may provide wage support for small merchants and increase job seekers' allowance for young adults and reintroduce job seekers' allowance for those from low-income households
Spain	Cash transfers	Childcare benefit Cash transfers to compensate school feeding program closures Support for homeless populations	Spain has introduced a family benefit to pay for parents who have to take care of their children during the closing of classrooms by Covid-19 and when their company cannot offer them alternatives. More details are to be released. ⁵⁵ Family support in the form of 25 million euros will ensure the basic nutrition of children where schools have closed ⁵⁶ Measures for homeless persons provided through social services include hygiene kit, food, and drinks, information about prevention measures. ⁵⁷
	Social insurance	Extension of social insurance for work accidents	A legal decree permits periods of isolation or infected workers as an exceptional situation assimilated to a work accident (temporary incapacity). This applies to the self-employed person or an employee who is registered with any of the Social Security regimes and will cover the date from which the worker is in isolation or illness. Sick leave is issued after that date. This is also extended to personnel under the Special Schemes for Civil Servants.
	Labor markets		
Sweden	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Faster sick leave process	Sweden abolished the qualifying day of sickness due to coronavirus. The decision means that workers will get sickness benefits from the moment they have to be absent from work due to illness, and the state rather than employers will foot the bill for the cost of the first day. Swedish law usually guarantees sick pay from the second day of illness, but concerns had been raised that employees would turn up at work despite feeling ill in order not to

⁵⁵ <https://elpais.com/economia/2020-03-11/escriva-anuncia-una-prestacion-extraordinaria-para-los-padres-que-tengan-que-cuidar-a-sus-hijos.html>

⁵⁶ <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2020/03/13/pdfs/BOE-A-2020-3580.pdf>

⁵⁷ <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2020/03/13/pdfs/BOE-A-2020-3580.pdf>

			lose out on the first day's salary. The new proposal went into effect from 11 March 2020. ^{58 59}
	Labor markets		
Switzerland	Social assistance		
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets	Faster unemployment insurance process	Unemployment insurance funds can claim up to CHF 8B for short-time work allowances. The waiting period for short-time work will be reduced to one day from March until 30 September 2020. This means that companies only have to bear one day's lost work independently before they are entitled to unemployment insurance support.
		Anticipate compensation for temporary workers	The Federal Council has instructed SECO to extend the right to short-time work compensation to employees with temporary employment contracts and temporary workers by 20 March. Such expansion requires an amendment to the law. ⁶⁰
Taiwan	Social assistance	Vouchers for supermarkets and shops	The Government of Taiwan provided NT\$2 billion (\$66.1M) of coupons to be used at night markets, shops, and restaurants ⁶¹ .
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets		
Thailand	Social assistance		
	Social insurance	Subsidized social security contributions	The Thai cabinet approved a 400-billion baht package on 10 March 2020 to reduce the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak. The package is designed to benefit low-income earners (14.6 million), farming households (7.2M), SMEs facing liquidity shortfalls (3 million) and first-time home buyers, consumers, and savers through a couple of measures. Tax measures will include a reduction in the rate of contributions to the social security fund of employers and employees from the rate of 5% to 0.1% of wages for 3 months (and maintain the same contribution rate of the government at 2.75% of wages and reduce the contribution amount of the insured people while the government pays the same amount).

⁵⁸ <https://www.thelocal.se/20200311/sweden-changes-sick-pay-rules-to-help-fight-coronavirus>

⁵⁹ <https://www.krisinformation.se/en/news/2020/march/abolished-qualifying-day-of-sickness-due-to-corona-virus>

⁶⁰ https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/de/home/Arbeit/neues_coronavirus.html

⁶¹ <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3875674>

	Labor markets	Wage subsidies	SMEs can deduct three times of expense incurred by salary payment from April 2020 to July 2020 for the employees who are members of the Social Security Office and receive a salary of 15,000 baht/person/month. The SMEs have to maintain the same level of employment during that period as to the number insured under social security end-December 2019. ⁶²
Turkey	Social assistance	Support to families in need	The Turkish government has announced an additional 2 billion Turkish Lira (\$300M) for financial aid to families in need according to criteria defined by the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services
	Social insurance	Various subsidies to social security contributions (and retirement bonus)	The Turkish government has adopted the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Postpone for six months the VAT withholdings and Social Security Insurance for April, May, and June for selected sectors - Minimum pension salary will be increased to Turkish Lira 1,500 (US\$230) - A holiday bonus will be paid earlier (Holiday is on 24 April 2020). A holiday bonus was planned to be paid to retirees just before the religious holiday. But it will be paid earlier (at the beginning of April 2020) to support the income of the retirees. - Retirement bonus will be directly deposited to the Bank accounts of the retirees. Retirement bonus is distributed by the Banks to encourage retiree people to receive their pensions from their Banks. To get this bonus, the retiree had to go to the Bank Branch. But now, the bonus will be deposited to their Bank accounts.
	Labor markets	Wage subsidies and work allowances	Turkey has also implemented some measures to support the labor markets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum wage support will continue. Minimum wage support is the subsidy to employers per employee. This support was first implemented in 2016 (mainly due to the sharp increase in the minimum wage) then continued in the following years as well. It will continue in 2020, as well. - Facilitate and accelerate the process to benefit from the Short-term Work Allowance. Short-term Work Allowance provides income support for workers whenever business is slowed down or suspended as a result of a general, sectoral or regional crisis or another coercive

⁶² <https://thethaiger.com/coronavirus/400-billion-baht-stimulus-announced-to-boost-thai-economy>

			<p>condition. The allowance provides 1,752 TL/month (around \$271) for those that receive minimum wage in the last 12 months. The allowance can be provided for a maximum of 3 months and can be extended to 6 months through a Presidential decree.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The compensatory working period will be increased from 2 to 4 months. Compensatory working is worker compensating for the decrease or stop in working hours due to coercive reasons. The employer can request for an increased number of working hours by a daily maximum of 3 hours to compensate for this loss, for a maximum of 2 months after the decrease in working hours has occurred. This duration is now increased to 4 months under the Coronavirus measures to increase employment sustainability.
UK	Social assistance	Adapting conditionalities on the universal child credit program	For the duration of the outbreak, the requirements of the Universal Child Credit Program will be temporarily relaxed for those who have COVID-19 or are self-isolating according to government advice. People will be able to claim Universal Credit and access advance payments upfront without the current requirement to attend a job Centre if they are advised to self-isolate. ⁶³
	Social insurance	Subsidized sick leave	<p>The UK's £12 billion package (0.6% of the GDP) included adjusting the Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid by the employers and refunded by the state. It will now be available for eligible individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 or those who are unable to work because they are self-isolating in line with Government advice. SSP will be made available from day one when self-isolating, instead of day four⁶⁴. This is in addition to the change that SSP will be payable from day one instead of day 4 for affected individuals.</p> <p>The self-employed or people earning below the Lower Earnings Limit of £118 per week can now more easily claim Universal Credit or Contributory Employment and Support Allowance (Contributory Employment and Support Allowance will be payable, at a rate of £73.10 a week if you are over 25, for eligible people affected by COVID-19 or self-isolating in line with advice from Day 1 of sickness, rather than Day 8)⁶⁵</p>
	Labor markets		

⁶³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19>

⁶⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sick-pay-from-day-one-for-those-affected-by-coronavirus>

⁶⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19>

US	Social assistance	One-off universal payment under consideration \$800 food voucher to over 6,000 families (Seattle)	A possible one-off UBI payment to all Americans is under consideration, with design details not yet available (including duration, transfer size, and possible eligibility restrictions). A final proposal is expected imminently. ⁶⁶ The city of Seattle will provide \$5 million in grocery vouchers to help families impacted by a coronavirus. This includes \$800 per vouchers to 6,250 families to help them buy food, cleaning supplies, and other household goods at Safeway supermarkets during the coronavirus pandemic. The program will benefit “eligible families who are currently enrolled in City-supported child care programs and food assistance programs.” The grocery vouchers will be distributed in two \$400 installments by mail. The funding will come from Seattle’s sugary beverage tax revenues. ⁶⁷
	Social insurance	Paid family and sick leave	The Families First Coronavirus Response Act allows parents who are caring for children whose schools have closed to have a maximum of 12 weeks of paid family leave. This includes two weeks of paid sick leave at 100% of the person’s normal salary, up to \$511 per day. It would also provide up to 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave at 67 percent of the person’s normal pay, up to \$200 per day. Gig and self-employed workers also get these benefits in the form of a tax credit. ⁶⁸
	Labor markets		
Uzbekistan	Social assistance	Increase in benefit coverage, allowances and public works	Support low-income families include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase in the number of recipients of benefits by at least 10% or to 60,000 people, including through the Council of the Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan. - a 100% allowance for temporary disability - an expansion of public works (\$21M)
	Social insurance		
	Labor markets	Trainings	Among the measures, the government is strengthening the Welcome to Job (Ishga Markhamat) mono-centers and vocational training centers. And support for labor migrants is rendered by organizing their vocational and language training.

⁶⁶ <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2020/3/17/21183627/trump-steve-mnuchin-checks-to-americans-cash>

⁶⁷ <https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/17/us/seattle-vouchers-coronavirus-trnd/index.html>

⁶⁸ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/03/16/paid-sick-leave-coronavirus-house-bill/>

		Wage subsidies	Interest-free loans for the payment of wages to employees of business entities that have suspended their activities in connection with the announcement of quarantine
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