

Macedonia: Update from the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia

<http://www.ssm.org.mk/en/no-wage-cuts-public-and-private-sector>

Based on the arguments elaborated by the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia and the unions affiliated in CCM, with the new measures adopted by the Government today, there will be no reduction in the salaries of the employees in the administration and the public sector, thus preventing possible cuts in the salaries in the private sector, for which CCM warned in the past period as a possible threat.

The measures presented today by the Prime Minister, Oliver Spasovski were harmonized and agreed among the social partners on the session of the Economic and Social Council that was held today, March 31, 2020.

At the session, the social partners jointly stated that the main priority in this specific period is the health and lives of workers and citizens, but that the situation must not be allowed to become labor market crisis as well and the burden to be on the back of the workers.

The constructive social dialogue and the ability of workers' representatives to put forward their proposals and solutions to this situation is a key tool in these specific moments through which we can all contribute to preserving the dignity of the workers and at the same time to help the Macedonian economy.

We appeal to all to help and to follow the recommendations of the Ministry of Health and the Government, so that we can quickly overcome the situation with COVID-19, thereby staying healthy and safe and preventing implementation of additional measures.

The set of the economic measures include:

1. Financial support for the private sector. Financial support for April and May, in the amount of 14,500 MKD per employee (minimum wage). The financial support does not apply to those who received a net salary higher than 39,000 MKD. The same number of employees should be retained by September 2020. This measure also covers media sector.
2. Help to the athletes/ sport workers. The government will provide a minimum wage of 14,500 MKD
3. Minimum wage to 141 people from the art sector will be provided.
4. Monthly salary for citizens who have been unemployed in amount of 50 percent of their monthly net salary for the last 6 months, and for those who have been unemployed during the crisis, for 24 months.
5. All elected and appointed officials on national and local level will receive a minimum wage of 14,500 MKD.
6. Presidents, members of Management and Supervisory boards of the executive and local governments, and council presidents will not receive any compensation during the crisis.
7. Fee of 7,000 MKD for persons who are part of the informal economy.
8. The Enforcement law is suspended until June 2020.
9. Delay of loans to banks within period of six months.
10. Reduction of installment and reprogramming of loans to financial companies.

11. Postponed lease payments for people using social housing. While for the companies will separate decision on rent payments shall be adopted.
12. Additional interest-free loans of additional EUR 8 million for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises depending on the number of employees.
13. 50 million euro loans from development banks.
14. Bankruptcy proceedings are forbidden during a crisis and six months thereafter.
15. Compulsory use of the first part of the holiday leaves until May 31st.
16. Establishment of a COVID-19 Solidarity Fund.
17. Reduction of copyright agreements by state institutions.