
European Commission: self-employed, “strong impact of crisis on jobs and incomes”

The European Commission has today published the “Quarterly Review on Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE)” with a thematic focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the self-employed. A strong reduction in working hours and severe income losses are the most obvious consequences. The review also highlights the mechanisms introduced by national social protection systems, which “typically provide lower coverage and compensation for the self-employed”. The measures introduced are “temporary”, such as short-time work schemes and support in “many different forms” under the SURE instrument. Overall, the review shows that “job-saving measures proved effective and improved the resilience of the labour market”. Proof of this is that the number of people in employment increased moderately and unemployment remained stable in the last months of 2020. “In most countries and across a broad range of sectors, the self-employed have experienced particularly steep cuts in working hours and income”, said Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights Nicolas Schmit. “SURE has been a very successful instrument in protecting jobs and incomes, including for the self-employed”.

Gianni Borsa