

Government €160m boost to COVID-19 business grants

From [Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment](#)

Published on 9 February 2021

Last updated on 9 February 2021

- **new Scheme targets businesses currently ineligible for CRSS and other sector specific grants**
- **wholesalers, suppliers, caterers and events companies down 75% or more in turnover expected to benefit**
- **€10m extra for companies developing and making PPE and equipment used in fight against COVID-19**

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Leo Varadkar TD today (Tuesday 9 February) announced €160m for measures to help businesses during the pandemic. These were agreed by Cabinet today.

The government has put in place a comprehensive package to help businesses and workers during the pandemic, including the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP), the Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS), low-cost loans, the deferral and warehousing of tax liabilities and the waiver of commercial rates.

An additional €10m will be allocated to the COVID-19 Products Scheme to help in the fight against the virus. Firms researching or manufacturing PPE, sanitisers, tests, equipment or other medicinal products which are relevant to COVID-19 are eligible for funding of up to 50% of their capital costs.

The Tánaiste announced today that a new €60m Scheme, called the COVID-19 Business Aid Scheme (CBAS) is being developed to provide grants to businesses ineligible for the government's other existing schemes designed to help with fixed costs. Wholesalers, suppliers, caterers and events companies down 75% or more in turnover will benefit.

The government also approved an additional €90m for the Sustaining Enterprise Fund, which offers funding of up to €800,000, with €200,000 or 50% in non-repayable grants to eligible manufacturing and internationally traded services companies. The Fund has protected 22,000 jobs across the country to date.

The Tánaiste Leo Varadkar TD said:

"The government today agreed to do more to help businesses respond to the economic challenges arising from the pandemic with a particular focus on firms that do not qualify for

the weekly CRSS grant from the Revenue Commissioners or existing sectoral schemes in areas like the arts, transport and tourism.

"The government has sought to help as many businesses as possible through wage subsidies and the many different grant and loan schemes we have put in place. A new Scheme, the CBAS, will help some businesses that aren't eligible for existing grants, largely due to the fact that the premises they operate from have not been closed to the public. We estimate that this will help approximately 7,500 businesses. While the grant is modest it will be of substantial assistance to smaller businesses with some of their fixed costs like rent, utilities and security. For example, wholesalers, suppliers, caterers, office-based businesses and events companies down 75% or more in turnover will qualify. We are finalising the details and it will be open for applications shortly.

"We've seen huge demand for the Sustaining Enterprise Fund, which is there to support our manufacturers and exporters which have experienced a drop in orders. The Scheme has protected 22,000 jobs all across the country to date and we hope this €90m will secure many more.

"We're also putting more money into the Life Sciences sector. This will help companies making PPE and other COVID-19 related products to expand thereby increasing supply and reducing our dependence on imports."

The Minister of State for Employment Affairs and Retail Businesses Damien English TD said:

"These additional direct financial supports for qualifying businesses, are a tangible reassurance that Government are engaging, listening and responding to their needs as the pandemic continues to impact on their operations. Businesses want to get back to what they do best – to be in a position to trade unhindered by COVID-19, to be profitable and to expand their operations once again. So, along with the range of measures already in place across Government, we are firmly focused on the post pandemic scenario for the economy, for business and for a jobs led recovery. We will continue to engage with businesses, stakeholders and across Government to support the growth and development of ambitious firms who are determined to grow and expand into the future."

The Minister of State for Trade Promotion Robert Troy TD said:

"Today's announcement is a welcome one and follows continued work with officials, industry representatives and businesses over the past number of months. The introduction of the COVID-19 Business Aid Scheme will act as a further aid for enterprises as part of the suite of enterprise measures that are already in operation.

"Micro and small businesses are particularly vulnerable to the economic effects of COVID-19. Many businesses, even while closed, continue to incur costs without being able to generate revenues. While not a silver bullet, the COVID-19 Business Assistance Scheme (CBAS) will help address some of the needs of businesses as we navigate the ongoing public health crisis, and keep viable businesses in operation and jobs in the economy."

Julie Sinnamon, CEO of Enterprise Ireland said:

"I'm delighted to welcome the additional €100m in funding approved by Government today. The additional €90m for the Sustaining Enterprise Fund will provide much needed liquidity to help the sustainment and recovery of companies who have been impacted by COVID-19. Furthermore, the additional €10m approved for the COVID-19 Products Scheme will enable innovative companies across Ireland to make the necessary investments to develop new products in response to COVID-19."

ENDS

Notes

Provisional criteria for COVID-19 Business Aid Scheme (CBAS)

- the scheme would be available to companies, self-employed, sole traders or partnerships;

minimum turnover of €50,000

- are not owned and operated by a public body
- the business is not eligible for CRSS or Fáilte Ireland Business Continuity Scheme
- they are in receipt of a rates bill from their local authority for business which operates from a building, or similar fixed physical structure on which business rates are payable (mobile premises, or premises which are not permanently fixed in place, do not meet the definition of business premises nor do premises on which no rates are payable)
- the business must have a current eTax Clearance Certificate from the Revenue Commissioners
- the turnover of the business over the claim period is estimated to be no more than 25% of the:

- average weekly turnover of the business in 2019; or

- the projected average weekly turnover of the business for 1 January to 30 June 2021 for businesses that commenced after 1 November 2019; and

- the business intends to resume trading in full once government restrictions are eased

Sustaining Enterprise Fund

The Sustaining Enterprise Fund was sanctioned by the EU under the Temporary Framework for State Aid.

The purpose of the Sustaining Enterprise Fund (SEF) is to sustain eligible manufacturing and internationally traded services companies, employing 10 or more employees which have been impacted by a 15 per cent or more reduction in actual or projected turnover or profit, and/or have a significant increase in costs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To deliver on this, the objectives of the scheme are to:

- ensure eligible companies have access to the necessary liquidity

- sustain business so that companies can return to viability and contribute to the recovery of the Irish economy

The SEF is open to companies who are clients of Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Údaras na Gaeltachta and non-client companies who meet the employment and activities eligibility criteria.

Expansion of the Sustaining Enterprise Fund (SEF) that was part of the government's July Stimulus with the additional €90 million of funding will allow the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment through the agency Enterprise Ireland to continue to meet the demand and provide critical support for many enterprises as they navigate the COVID-19 challenge.

Further information on the Sustaining Enterprise Fund (SEF) is available at: [Sustaining Enterprise Fund - Enterprise Ireland](#)

COVID Products Scheme

The COVID Products Scheme has been developed under a new European Commission Temporary Framework that allows additional aid to be granted by EU Member States to companies that are developing or producing medicinal and other products used in the fight against COVID-19. The scheme is delivered through IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland.

The scheme allows for targeted State support to facilitate the research and development of COVID products, to enable the construction or upgrading of testing and upscaling infrastructures that contribute to the development COVID-19 relevant products, as well as to support the production of products needed to respond to the pandemic.

The Scheme is solely focused on COVID-19 related products, including:

- relevant medicinal products and treatments and their intermediates, active pharmaceutical ingredients and raw materials
- medical devices and hospital and medical equipment, including PPE and necessary raw materials
- disinfectants and their intermediary products and raw chemical materials necessary for their production
- track and trace, temperature monitoring and relevant COVID-19 responsive services
- process innovations targeting an efficient and streamlined production of the above

The additional €10 million of funding will allow for more of the excellent projects from a recent Call by Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland to be funded.

Further information about the COVID Products Scheme is available at:

- [IDA Ireland](#)
- [Enterprise Ireland](#)