

Ms Susan Bartlett

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29 July 2020

Dear Ms Bartlett

Ref: FOI2020/26658

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your enquiry of 2 July 2020, which we have considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOI Act).

You asked for the following information:

"Please can you let me know how many people were denied access to the seiss during the covid29 pandemic because of the 50/50 rule and how many of these were because they had a works pension"

Following a search of our records we can confirm that HM Treasury does not hold the information you have requested. However, on the first part of your question, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) published analysis of Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) data for 2017-18 which suggested that 5.75 million individuals were deemed as having some form of self-employment in 2017-18, and 1.73 million received less than half of their total income from self-employment trading profits. To be helpful, we have provided a link to this below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/895420/NS_Table_3_6_1718.xlsx

On the second part of your question, it may be helpful for us to set out the Government's position on this issue.

The self-employed are very diverse and have a wide mix of turnover and profits, with monthly and annual variations even in normal times, and in some cases with substantial alternative forms of income too. The design of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), including the eligibility requirement that an individual's trading profits must be no more than £50,000 and at least equal to their non-trading income, means it is targeted at those who need it the most, and who are most reliant on their self-employment income.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has said there will be no further extension or changes to the SEISS. However, individuals receiving more than half their income from pension income may still be eligible for other elements of the unprecedented financial support provided by the Government. The SEISS is one element of a comprehensive package of support for individuals and businesses, including Bounce Back loans, tax deferrals, rental support, increased levels of Universal Credit, mortgage holidays, and other business support grants. On 8 July, the Government also introduced the new Plan for Jobs which

will make available up to £30 billion to assist in creating, supporting and protecting jobs. More information about the full range of business support measures is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us. Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Information Rights Unit

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