



OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER
BUREAU DU DIRECTEUR PARLEMENTAIRE DU BUDGET

August 31, 2020

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion
140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, QC
K1A 0J9

Carla.Qualtrough@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Information Request: IR0541

Dear Minister Qualtrough:

As you are likely aware, the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) provides independent and non-partisan analysis to the Senate and to the House of Commons about matters related to the nation's finances and the economy, the estimates, certain other government documents, and the cost of proposals. In carrying out my mandate, I often require information held by government departments and Crown corporations and I am entitled to free and timely access – subject to limited exceptions – to such information under section 79.4 of the *Parliament of Canada Act*.

I am currently undertaking an analysis pursuant to paragraph 79.2(1)(a) of the *Parliament of Canada Act*, which mandates the PBO to prepare reports analyzing the following federal government documents: (i) a budget tabled by or on behalf of the Minister of Finance; (ii) an economic and fiscal update or statement issued by the Minister of Finance; (iii) a fiscal sustainability report issued by the Minister of Finance; (iv) the estimates of the government for a fiscal year.

For this analysis, I am requesting the following information:

1. Data segmented in cross-tabulations by (i) the regional rate of unemployment (increments of 1%) and (ii) the number of hours of insurable employment in qualifying period (35-hour increments):
 - a. For all Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries:
 - The number of EI beneficiaries
 - Average benefit per week
 - Minimum benefit per week
 - Average number of weeks of benefits
 - Maximum number of weeks of benefits
 - Average number of weeks of qualifying earnings
 - b. For EI beneficiaries receiving less than \$400 in benefits per week:
 - The number of EI beneficiaries
 - Average benefit per week
 - Average number of weeks of benefits

- Maximum number of weeks of benefits
2. Information segmented by the number of hours of insurable employment in qualifying period (600 hours and more; less than 600 hours and equal or more than 120 hours) for EI beneficiaries receiving Maternity benefit and/or (regular/extended) parental benefit:
- The number of beneficiaries
 - Average benefit per week
 - Minimum benefit per week
 - Average number of weeks of benefits

In order to provide the analysis to parliamentarians in a timely manner, I ask the information to be provided to my office no later than **September 11, 2020**. If access to the requested information cannot be granted by that date, a response must be provided by you or your deputy minister as soon as possible.

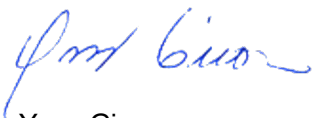
Should you or your staff have any questions about this information request, the analyst responsible, Eskandar Elmarzougui can be contacted directly at Eskandar.Elmarzougui@parl.gc.ca, 613-797-5698.

Attached is a reply form. It too should be filled out and returned by September 8, 2020, whether or not you provide access to the requested information. Should you refuse to provide access to the requested information, you or your deputy minister must provide a written justification for the refusal as required under section 79.41 of the *Parliament of Canada Act*.

The response letter will be posted on the PBO website and, therefore, it should not be marked "confidential". As well, the requested information should be attached separately. If this information is confidential, please clearly mark it as such, either on the electronic spreadsheet or the hard copy version.

Providing timely and effective analysis to the Senate and House of Commons and promoting greater budget transparency and accountability are the PBO's primary objectives. The degree to which this is possible depends, to a large extent, on free and timely access to quality information held by government departments. In doing so, you are assisting us in better serving the Senate, the House of Commons, and their members.

Yours sincerely,



Yves Giroux
Parliamentary Budget Officer

c.c.: Antoine Brunelle-Côté, Privy Council Office, Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet,
Liaison Secretariat for Macroeconomic Policy
Graham Flack, Deputy Minister, Employment and Social Development Canada

Attachment: Reply form for IR0538