



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

May 5, 2021

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

Carla.Qualtrough@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Information Request: IR0595

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 access to data on individuals who claimed and received the maximum 15 weeks of Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits for the 2014 to 2020 period. I need the following details by year and by sex:

1. The total number of claimants broken down by income brackets.
2. The number of claimants that only made an EI sickness claim.
3. The number of claimants that had a combined (concurrent or consecutive) EI sickness and EI regular claim;
  - a. Please provide a further breakdown of the number of claimants that ended their benefit period with EI sickness.
4. The number of claimants that had a combined (concurrent or consecutive) EI sickness and other EI (e.g., maternity or parental) claim;
  - a. Please provide a further breakdown of the number of claimants that ended their leave with EI sickness.

5. The average weekly benefit amount per week per claimant;
  - a. Please provide a further breakdown of the average weekly benefit amount per week per claimant if working on a claim.
  - b. Please provide a further breakdown of the average weekly benefit amount per week per claimant excluding those working while on claim

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 **May 19, 2021**. 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.

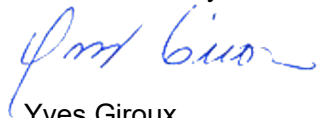
Should you or your staff have any questions about this information request, the analyst responsible, Nora Nahornick can be contacted directly at [Nora.Nahornick@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Nora.Nahornick@parl.gc.ca), 613-294-1763.

Attached is a reply form. It too should be filled out and returned by May 19, 2021, 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 IR0595