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INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY ASSOCIATION
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INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG FÜR SOZIALE SICHERHEIT

Good Practices in Social Security

Good practice in operation since: 2015

Registration by SMS of employees who work less than ten days in home services

Certificate of Merit with Special Mention, ISSA Good Practice Award – Europe competition 2019

Social Security Institution
Turkey

Summary

With this project, we aimed to ensure insurance registration (which has been quite troublesome) and collect contributions by short message service (SMS). Through this, we have been able to inform the insured person, register the daily insurance premium, and reflect this on the operator's (employer) telephone bill. The transaction amount is reflected on the mobile bill of operator and transferred to the Social Security Institution of Turkey (Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu – SGK) by the mobile telecommunication companies, namely, Turkcell, Vodafone or Türk Telekom. This makes premium collection easier.

Moreover, the SMS project expands coverage, prevents and tightens the informal or black market in this field, and makes access to services easier by no longer needing notifications of workplace declaration, recruitment registration statements, monthly premium and service certificates for premium accrual and payments, and declarations of separation from employment.

The issue or challenge

What was the issue or challenge addressed by your good practice? Please provide a short description.

The new law (Law 5510, Annex 9) and this project have created a need for a new approach due to the increase in the number of people who work in home services arising from the new controversial flexible job market. The urbanization process in Turkey, especially with the acceleration of migration from small places to cities, is making many women work in day careers as child and caregivers, and informal work in domestic services is also spreading to illegal foreign nationals.

The most important problems of people working in home services are: (a) the determination of their working hours, (b) the behaviour they are exposed to, (c) the uncertainty of their wages, (d) low wages despite working in dangerous conditions, and (e) the health and safety risks that workers in home services are exposed to. Women who are day workers need social security and it is important that the family who are going to be cared for provide for their insurance.

Addressing the challenge

What were the main objectives of the plan or strategy to resolve the issue or challenge? List and briefly describe the main elements of the plan or strategy, focusing especially on their innovative feature(s) and expected or intended effects.

We noticed that traditional legal framework has some obligations of notification which make it truly difficult for people who work in household services to be covered, such as: (a) declaration of workplace registration, (b) recruitment registration statement on the insured person, (c) monthly premium and service certificate for premium accrual and payments, and (d) declaration of separation from employment if the insured leaves work. Given this, we decided to cover these individuals by SMS to make the system simple, effective and practical and minimize the drudgery of paper documentation.

Targets to be achieved

What were the quantitative and/or qualitative targets or key performance indicators that were set for the plan or strategy? Please describe briefly.

Our main performance indicator is the coverage of individuals who work for less than ten days in household services. Before the new law which entered into force in 2015, there was no insurance liability for these individuals. At the beginning of the project, the main challenge and main target was to get these individuals insured and to broaden coverage. Over time, we observed that after workers in household services have been insured at least, their consciousness for social insurance pushes them to be registered and insured when they work.

Evaluating the results

Has there been an evaluation of the good practice? Please provide data on the impact and outcomes of the good practice by comparing targets vs actual performance, before-and-after indicators, and/or other types of statistics or measurements.

According to data, when the project entered into force in April 2015, a total of 3,015 individuals were registered and insured by SMS. By end-2016, the number increased to 4,972 and in July 2018 to 5,950. Since this sector is very vulnerable to currency shock to which the cost of services is strongly linked, the currency experience of Turkey in 2018 could have limited the coverage increase. Nonetheless, these numbers clearly show that the SMS project has made a significant contribution both in getting these individuals insured and in widening coverage.

Lessons learned

Based on the organization's experience, name up to three factors which you consider as indispensable to replicate this good practice. Name up to three risks that arose/could arise in implementing this good practice. Please explain these factors and/or risks briefly.

Individuals who did not have a chance to be covered in the past are now able to be covered.

It validates this as a good practice and can be a pioneering practice in terms of covering those with flexible employment that is becoming widespread in our age which could unfortunately lead to non-coverage.

It can be seen that when bureaucracy is reduced, individuals are directed to insure and legally register work, and the informal or black market can be minimized with practical solutions such as our SMS application.

It is an important development to secure the people's right to social security and to register those who work in flexible jobs such as home services which has become widespread in Turkey for the last ten years.