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E-000665/2021

Answer given by Ms McGuinness
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.6.2021)

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission has adopted a number of measures to ensure that banks can continue to lend to households and businesses. Together with actions taken by governments and central banks, these measures have helped ensure that banks' lending volumes remained stable.

The Commission notably engaged with the financial sector and consumer and business organisations to promote best practices¹ in the application of relief measures.

Borrower relief measures in the context of the COVID-19 crisis have been introduced by Member States. Therefore, they can differ in content and duration, based on their economic and legal situation. As mentioned by the Central Bank of Ireland², the approach chosen by the Irish authorities aims to support borrowers on a case-by-case basis.

Unlike missed payments, payment breaks do not automatically translate into lower credit rating for consumers. The individual credit rating depends on the specific situation of each borrower. Banks' risk assessment continues both for clients who request payment breaks as well as for those who do not apply for relief measures.

The Commission continues to monitor the economic impact of the crisis, and remains engaged³ with the financial sector, consumer and business organisations to support consumers and businesses who face financial difficulties.

¹ Roundtable meetings with stakeholders on 28 May and 29 June 2020 followed by the publication of the 'Best practices in relation to relief measures offered to consumers and businesses in the context of the Covid-19 crisis': https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/business_economy_euro/banking_and_finance/documents/200714-best-practices-mitigate-impact-pandemic_en.pdf

² <https://www.centralbank.ie/news/article/statement-regarding-eba-decision-to-reactivate-guidelines-on-payment-moratoria>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2019-2024/mcguinness/announcements/speaking-points-commissioner-mairead-mcguinness-3rd-roundtable-videoconference-stakeholders-covid-19_en