

## **Audit Report 10/2021**

### **“Covid-19: Weaknesses in defining the scope and management of the one - time cash assistance program for non-subsidised long-term unemployed”**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Hellenic Court of Audit investigated the implementation of the Labor Employment Organization (OAED) program for the one-time cash assistance to those registered as long-term unemployed and not receiving other allowances. The program audited was implemented on the basis of two joint ministerial decisions, issued in response to the negative impact of the pandemic on the labor market, and its total budget was approximately 120.000.000 €.

The audit led to the following findings:

- 1.** The ambiguity of the regulatory framework at issue, concerning the terms of eligibility for granting the cash assistance, led to differing interpretations during its implementation. Thus, the program ended up being not sufficiently targeted at the most vulnerable among the long-term unemployed.
- 2.** Despite the overall reliability of the OAED Integrated IT System, the procedure of granting the cash assistance lacked safeguards for the prevention of undue payments, owing to specific weaknesses related to the allocation of duties among the Organization’s co-competent units and the insufficient customization of the IT System.
- 3.** The sample audit of underlying transactions identified a certain number of undue payments.
- 4.** A significant number of potential beneficiaries did not apply for the cash assistance; as a result, they were not granted any financial support.