

During the first three quarters of 2019, an increase of €26.9 million was reported in Social Security Benefits outlay when compared to 2018.

Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-September 2019

Social Security Benefits Expenditure

By the end of September 2019, Social Security Benefits amounted to €752.9 million. This is equivalent to a 3.7 per cent increase over 2018. Both Contributory and Non-Contributory spending rose during the period in question, with the former accounting for €26.3 million or 97.7 per cent of the total rise in social outlay.

Contributory Benefits outlay totalled €611.2 million, 4.5 per cent higher than 2018. This increment was due to a €20.8 million rise reported under Pensions in respect of Retirement, which resulted from a higher number of Two-Thirds pensioners. Further increases were registered in Pensions in respect of Widowhood (€3.8 million), Contributory Bonus (€2.1 million) and Other Benefits (€0.1 million). Conversely, Pensions in respect of Invalidity declined by €0.5 million (Table 2).

Non-Contributory spending amounted to €141.8 million, a 0.4 per cent increase from 2018. The biggest increases in Non-Contributory expenditure were reported under Disability Pension/Allowance (€2.2 million) and Old Age Pension (€1.9 million). In addition, there were also positive growths in In-Work Benefit, Medical Assistance (both €0.5 million) and Non-Contributory Bonus (€0.1 million). On the other hand, Total Social Assistance and Supplementary Assistance spending dropped by €4.2 million and €0.4 million respectively (Table 3).

Between July and September 2019, Social Security Benefits outlay reached €240.9 million, of which 81.3 per cent was spent on Contributory benefits. This represents an €11.9 million increase over the €229.0 million recorded during the third quarter of 2018. This was mainly the result of increases in the contributory Pensions in respect of Retirement (€7.6 million) and Widowhood (€2.8 million) (Tables 4 and 5).

Social Security Beneficiaries

By the end of September 2019, the Two-Thirds Pension registered the largest cohort of recipients at 50,562 persons, coupled with the biggest year-over-year rise of 2,129. In contrast, the National Minimum Widows' Pension reported the largest drop in beneficiaries with 623 less persons reported than the corresponding period of 2018 (Table 2).

The largest share of Non-Contributory recipients was registered under Children's Allowance (41,611), in spite of reporting the largest drop in beneficiaries at 1,482. On the other end of the spectrum, In-Work Benefit recipients exhibited the largest increase of 608, amounting to 4,625 persons (Table 3).

Quarter-wise was a similar story with the Two-Thirds Pension (49,493) and Children's Allowance (40,000) reporting the largest cohorts of Contributory and Non-Contributory beneficiaries respectively (Tables 4 and 5) ■

Table 1. Comparative Social Security Benefits: January-September

Description	Jan-Sep 2017	Jan-Sep 2018	Jan-Sep 2019	Jan-Sep 2019 / Jan-Sep 2018	
				Change	% change
				€ 000	
Contributory Benefits	561,693	584,870	611,196	26,327	4.5
Non-Contributory Benefits	141,490	141,129	141,750	621	0.4
Total Social Security Benefits	703,183	725,999	752,947	26,948	3.7

Chart 1. Social Security Benefits Expenditure: January - September 2002-2019

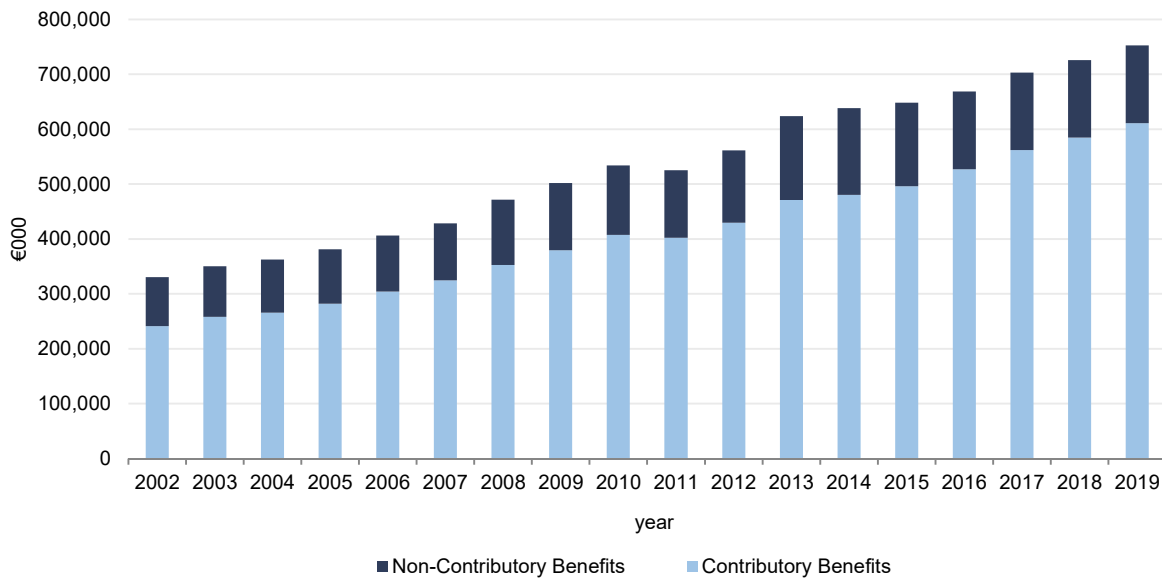


Chart 2. Social Security Benefits Expenditure by ESSPROS functions for January - September 2019

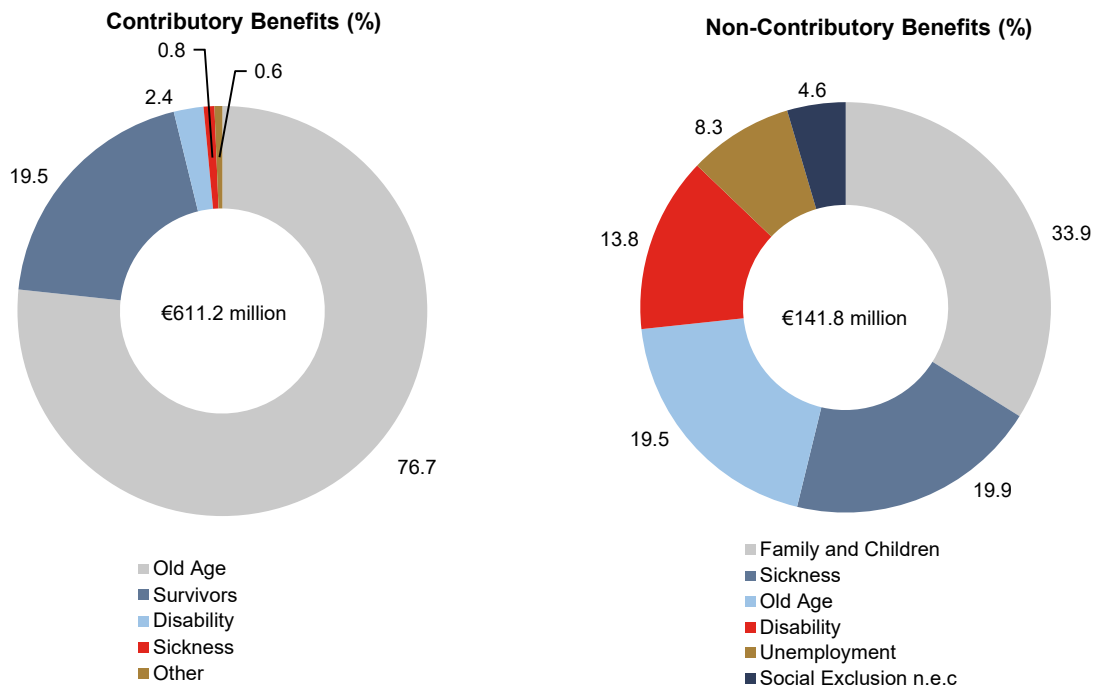


Table 2. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: January-September

Description	Jan-Sep 2017		Jan-Sep 2018		Jan-Sep 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	561,693	-	584,870	-	611,196
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	385,240	-	404,223	-	424,976
Retirement Pension	6,905	25,655	6,266	24,410	5,971	22,195
National Minimum Pension	6,359	25,498	6,432	26,715	6,444	26,882
Increased Retirement Pension	821	5,256	719	4,914	653	4,591
Two-thirds Pension	47,193	317,135	48,433	336,125	50,562	358,753
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,817	11,407	1,847	11,759	1,858	12,259
Decreased National Minimum Pension	59	288	60	299	63	296
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	15,446	-	15,186	-	14,665
Invalidity Pension	200	594	190	566	167	521
Increased Invalidity Pension	95	380	78	317	69	331
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,648	14,458	3,498	14,288	3,361	13,805
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension ¹	3	13	3	16	3	7
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	102,025	-	105,384	-	109,170
Widows' Pension	229	1,347	213	1,233	205	1,264
Early Survivors' Pension	1,799	11,276	1,841	11,699	1,891	12,310
Survivors' Pension	8,092	52,059	8,553	54,331	8,778	58,936
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,615	37,343	6,842	38,120	6,219	36,660
Pension of Widows with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	1,271	-	1,251	-	1,286
Injury Benefit	1,495	992	1,551	984	1,450	1,034
Injury Pension	254	234	241	223	233	210
Injury Gratuity	22	45	16	44	18	42
Other Benefits	-	8,323	-	7,814	-	7,939
Unemployment Benefit	985	505	874	446	886	609
Special Unemployment Benefit	177	143	142	93	131	96
Maternity Benefit	2,704	2,526	2,611	2,413	2,647	2,464
Sickness Benefit	15,882	4,431	16,584	4,172	16,227	4,133
Orphans' Allowance	18	94	15	66	12	52
Marriage Grant	2,228	618	2,230	624	2,060	583
Re-Marriage Gratuity ²	91	5	-	-	-	-
Bonus	-	49,389	-	51,012	-	53,160

¹ In May 2019, an amount was recouped from Government homes due to overpayments.

² After the first payment of 2017, the Re-Marriage Gratuity became inactive with recipients being converted to a Widows Pension.

Table 3. Comparative Social Security Non-Contributory Benefits: January-September

Description	Jan-Sep 2017		Jan-Sep 2018		Jan-Sep 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	141,490	-	141,129	-	141,750
Child Allowance	-	29,999	-	29,898	-	29,944
Childrens Allowance	42,777	29,102	43,093	28,647	41,611	28,570
Foster Child Allowance	173	897	182	1,252	181	1,374
Old Age Pension	-	20,137	-	22,344	-	24,265
Age Pension	5,070	16,871	5,012	16,803	4,949	17,341
Increased Carers' Allowance	387	1,964	775	4,134	1,077	5,457
Assistance Visually Impaired	336	1,301	353	1,407	381	1,467
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	14,566	-	16,559	-	18,732
Disability Child Allowance	1,319	1,060	1,437	1,203	1,588	1,636
Disability Assistance	57	189	116	344	160	476
Severe Disability Assistance	3,217	12,980	3,148	12,470	3,229	13,147
Increased Severe Disability Assistance	157	337	514	2,541	632	3,473
Total Social Assistance	-	48,038	-	43,018	-	38,802
Drug Addicts Allowance	60	54	52	27	50	36
Social Assistance	5,857	20,790	5,393	19,050	4,882	17,473
Carers' Allowance	288	959	249	781	255	766
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,177	10,866	2,899	9,991	2,665	9,349
Unemployment Assistance	1,857	4,669	1,309	3,571	1,021	2,993
Social Assistance Board ¹	5	4	1	-	4	4
Unemployment Assistance Taper	3,369	6,287	3,293	5,528	2,561	4,706
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,782	4,408	1,577	4,069	1,291	3,476
Medical Assistance	-	14,175	-	13,757	-	14,256
Sickness Assistance	12,535	14,081	12,369	13,671	12,068	14,189
Leprosy Assistance	28	49	24	42	23	42
Milk Grant	73	45	71	43	42	26
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary Assistance	24,717	6,820	24,585	6,858	23,868	6,475
In-Work Benefit	3,075	1,587	4,017	2,625	4,625	3,136
Bonus	-	6,168	-	6,071	-	6,139

¹ For confidentiality reasons, 2018 outlay for Social Assistance Board has been included under Unemployment Assistance.

Table 4. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: July-September

Description	July-Sep 2017		July-Sep 2018		July-Sep 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	178,233	-	184,809	-	195,907
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	118,912	-	123,749	-	131,367
Retirement Pension	6,715	7,620	5,959	7,514	5,000	6,698
National Minimum Pension	6,162	8,652	6,199	8,951	6,202	9,192
Increased Retirement Pension	764	1,573	663	1,500	597	1,406
Two-thirds Pension	46,249	97,164	47,328	101,725	49,493	109,740
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,727	3,812	1,734	3,973	1,772	4,237
Decreased National Minimum Pension	54	91	56	87	58	94
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	5,019	-	5,045	-	4,792
Invalidity Pension	183	196	168	190	150	170
Increased Invalidity Pension	83	110	75	114	66	107
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,359	4,707	3,274	4,737	3,086	4,515
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension ¹	3	5	3	4	2	-
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	39,275	-	40,853	-	43,678
Widows' Pension	222	517	203	457	201	486
Early Survivors' Pension	1,710	4,450	1,760	4,614	1,841	4,977
Survivors' Pension	7,738	20,252	8,056	21,251	8,537	24,005
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,288	14,056	6,351	14,530	5,777	14,209
Pension of Widows with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	432	-	447	-	446
Injury Benefit	598	338	643	354	585	369
Injury Pension	245	81	239	77	225	70
Injury Gratuity	6	12	5	16	3	8
Other Benefits	-	2,737	-	2,469	-	2,707
Unemployment Benefit	418	167	345	126	397	201
Special Unemployment Benefit	81	48	48	26	50	23
Maternity Benefit	1,039	803	813	714	956	877
Sickness Benefit	5,861	1,359	5,411	1,276	5,251	1,292
Orphans' Allowance	15	43	13	26	11	21
Marriage Grant	1,201	317	1,081	301	1,032	293
Bonus	-	11,858	-	12,247	-	12,917

¹ For confidentiality reasons, 2019 outlay for Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension has been included under National Minimum Invalidity Pension.

Table 5. Comparative Social Security Non-Contributory Benefits: July-September

Description	July-Sep 2017		July-Sep 2018		July-Sep 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	45,153	-	44,167	-	45,014
Child Allowance	-	10,042	-	9,955	-	10,060
Childrens Allowance	41,028	9,669	41,450	9,535	40,000	9,575
Foster Child Allowance	164	374	166	420	171	485
Old Age Pension	-	6,271	-	6,743	-	7,384
Age Pension	4,791	4,981	4,749	5,081	4,680	5,211
Increased Carers' Allowance	366	902	698	1,244	990	1,699
Assistance Visually Impaired	323	388	345	418	374	474
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	4,495	-	5,171	-	5,847
Disability Child Allowance	1,241	344	1,365	426	1,537	571
Disability Assistance	57	108	112	104	152	153
Severe Disability Assistance	3,096	3,851	2,953	3,782	3,139	4,000
Increased Severe Disability Assistance	154	192	507	859	625	1,123
Total Social Assistance	-	14,417	-	12,613	-	11,486
Drug Addicts Allowance	21	6	22	8	27	12
Social Assistance	5,326	6,089	4,763	5,568	4,335	5,141
Carers' Allowance	264	277	209	224	221	251
Social Assistance for Single Parents	2,881	3,199	2,577	2,936	2,370	2,756
Unemployment Assistance	1,217	1,494	952	1,090	755	938
Social Assistance Board ¹	1	-	1	-	2	-
Unemployment Assistance Taper	2,909	1,902	2,380	1,556	1,882	1,267
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,382	1,451	1,208	1,231	1,002	1,121
Medical Assistance	-	5,655	-	5,267	-	5,655
Sickness Assistance	11,989	5,623	11,814	5,237	11,497	5,627
Leprosy Assistance	27	19	23	16	22	16
Milk Grant	35	13	27	14	33	12
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary allowance	24,047	2,284	23,873	2,191	23,204	2,154
In-Work Benefit	2,424	745	2,893	1,001	3,155	1,151
Bonus	-	1,244	-	1,227	-	1,277

¹ For confidentiality reasons, outlay for Social Assistance Board has been included under corresponding Unemployment Assistance.

Methodological Notes

1. Expenditure data provided in this news release is extracted from the administrative records of the Social Security Department, and is based on the Government's Consolidated Fund.
2. Beneficiaries' data is obtained from the Department of Social Security Unique Beneficiaries Report.
3. The number of beneficiaries may not be aggregated since persons obtaining two or more different benefits during the same period are listed once under each benefit. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the annual number of beneficiaries is not equal to the sum of the quarters since beneficiaries obtaining the same benefit in more than one quarter are only counted once.
4. The functions provided in chart 2 are in line with the European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics (ESSPROS) Manual 2012 Edition (ISBN 978-92-79-24751-4). This methodology is mandatory for all EU Member States.
5. Expenditure data is not normally subject to revision, while beneficiaries data may be revised.
6. Figures may not add up exactly due to rounding.
7. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:
Statistical Database: <https://nso.gov.mt/statdb/start>
Glossary: https://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources_and_Methods/Unit_A2/Public_Finance/Pages/Government-Expenditure-on-Social-Security-Benefits.aspx
8. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.
9. A detailed news release calendar is available on:
https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx