

In 2015, the outlay on social security benefits increased by €15.5 million when compared to the previous year.

Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-December 2015

Social Security Benefits Expenditure

Total social security benefits amounted to €868.4 million in 2015, reflecting a 1.8 per cent increase when compared to 2014. The increase in expenditure was due to a €22.6 million rise in Contributory Benefits outlay. On the other hand, Non-Contributory Benefits expenditure decreased by €7.1 million (Table 1).

Contributory Benefits outlay amounted to €668.2 million, 3.5 per cent higher than 2014. The rise in outlay was mainly due to a €20.4 million rise in Pensions in respect of Retirement (Table 2). Conversely, Non-Contributory Benefits decreased by 3.4 per cent during 2015, totalling €200.2 million. A €9.7 million decline in Children's Allowance was the main reason behind such decrease, due to an extra payment being effected in 2014 (Table 3).

In the fourth quarter of 2015, the outlay on social security benefits increased by €6.0 million, to €220.4 million. A rise in outlay was recorded for Contributory Benefits (€7.0 million) due to a €6.3 million increase in Pensions in respect of Retirement (Table 4). On the other hand, Non-Contributory Benefits expenditure declined by €1.0 million following a similar decline in Social Assistance outlay (Table 5).

Social Security Beneficiaries

For the first time this news release provides information on the number of beneficiaries for each benefit. It is important to note that 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. Likewise, the annual number of beneficiaries is not equal to the sum of quarters since beneficiaries obtaining the same benefit in more than one quarter are counted once.

In 2015, Social Security Contributory beneficiaries consisted mainly of people earning Two-Thirds Pensions (43,432) and Sickness Benefit (19,346). When compared to 2014, Two-Thirds Pension beneficiaries increased by 2,109, while Unemployment Benefit recorded the highest decline in beneficiaries by 663 (Table 2).

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In the Non-Contributory Benefits category Children Allowance and Supplementary Allowance registered the largest cohorts of beneficiaries in 2015 with 43,246 and 24,891 respectively. The largest increase in beneficiaries was recorded under Unemployment Assistance Taper (1,513), while the biggest drop was in Social Assistance (3,044). The one-time Child Supplement Benefit was disbursed to 13,976 beneficiaries, whereas the new In-Work Benefit was paid out to 1,359 persons (Table 3) ■

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Table 1. Comparative Social Security Benefits: January-December

Description	Jan-Dec 013	Jan-Dec 014	Jan-Dec 015	Jan-Dec 2015 / Jan-Dec 2014	
				Change	% change
Contributory Benefits	624,928	645,628	668,203	22,575	3.5
Non-Contributory Benefits	189,529	207,280	200,178	-7,102	-3.4
Total Social Security Benefits	814,457	852,908	868,381	15,473	0.1

Chart 1. Social Security Benefits Expenditure: 2000-2015

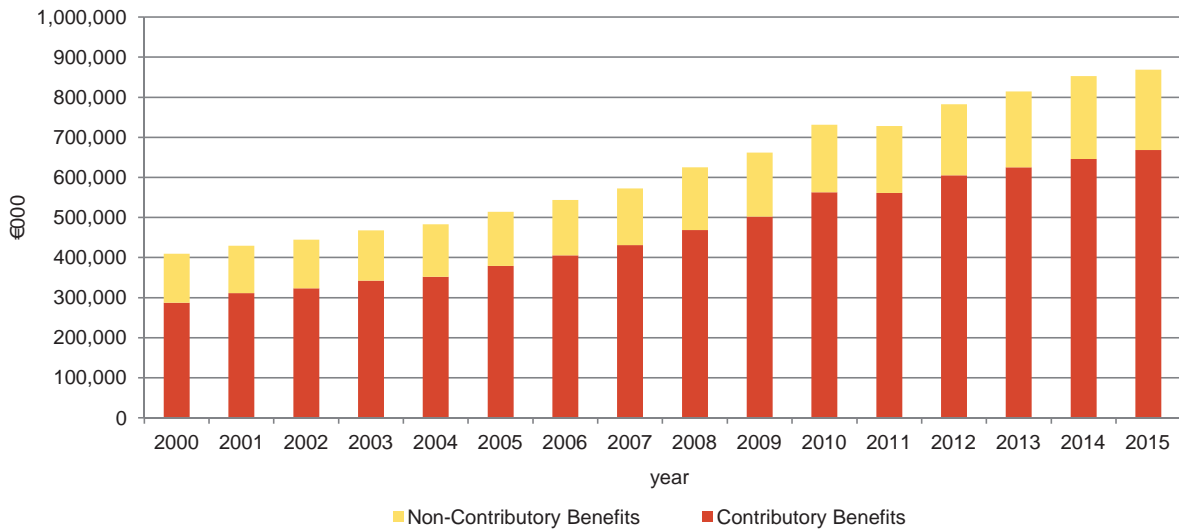
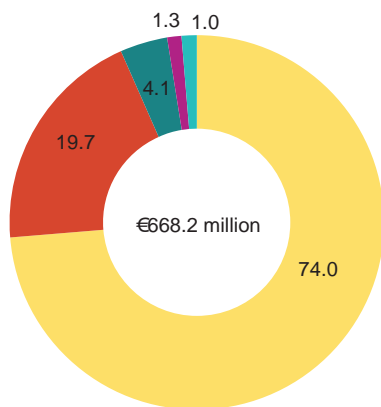


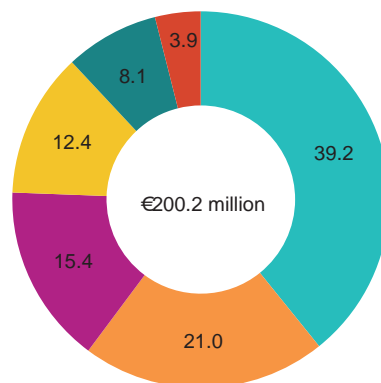
Chart 2. Social Security Benefits Expenditure by ESSPROS functions for 2015

Contributory Benefits (%)



- Old Age
- Survivors
- Disability
- Sickness
- Other

Non-Contributory Benefits (%)



- Family and Children
- Sickness
- Unemployment
- Old Age
- Disability
- Social Exclusion n.e.c

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

Description	Jan-Dec 2013		Jan-Dec 2014		Jan-Dec 2015	
	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000
Contributory Benefits	-	624,928	-	645,628	-	668,203
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	410,958	-	424,427	-	444,806
Retirement Pension	7,069	42,652	6,916	42,529	6,787	31,946
National Minimum Pension	5,769	29,601	5,752	29,781	5,867	31,035
Increased Retirement Pension	1,885	9,828	1,063	7,082	959	7,174
Two-thirds Pension	39,511	313,289	41,323	330,199	43,432	359,044
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,913	15,174	1,843	14,476	1,873	15,268
Decreased National Minimum Pension	74	415	67	361	54	338
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	25,533	-	25,498	-	24,332
Invalidity Pension	428	1,759	370	1,597	298	1,162
Increased Invalidity Pension	138	677	135	696	131	730
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	4,294	23,065	4,327	23,173	4,174	22,409
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	6	32	6	31	6	31
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	113,246	-	116,302	-	118,362
Widows' Pension ¹	249	7,579	227	8,384	221	1,662
Early Survivors' Pension	1,810	12,739	1,650	12,665	1,697	13,290
Survivors' Pension	6,846	48,929	7,127	53,109	7,373	58,165
National Minimum Widows' Pension	7,205	43,723	6,844	42,084	6,826	45,245
Pension of Widows with Children ²	42	276	9	60	1	-
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	1,572	-	1,592	-	1,563
Injury Benefit	1,910	1,168	1,973	1,168	1,885	1,155
Injury Pension	290	344	291	349	278	345
Injury Gratuity	34	60	42	75	34	63
Other Benefits	-	14,163	-	13,255	-	12,945
Unemployment Benefit	3,242	1,754	2,840	1,588	2,177	1,236
Special Unemployment Benefit	956	940	747	721	488	446
Maternity Benefit	3,649	3,051	3,378	3,006	3,582	3,327
Sickness Benefit	20,394	7,191	19,189	6,556	19,346	6,413
Orphans' Allowance	16	84	19	89	17	83
Marriage Grant	2,962	780	3,153	849	3,248	881
Re-Marriage Gratuity	70	363	80	446	90	559
Bonus	-	59,456	-	64,554	-	66,195

¹ Widows' Pension outlay includes welfare payments for 2013 and 2014.

² For confidentiality reasons, 2015 expenditure for Pension of Widows with Children is included under Widows' Pension.

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

Description	Jan-Dec 2013		Jan-Dec 2014		Jan-Dec 2015	
	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	189,529	-	207,280	-	200,178
Child Allowance	-	43,353	-	51,435	-	41,662
Childrens Allowance	45,955	41,729	44,340	49,821	43,246	40,170
Foster Child Allowance	225	1,624	215	1,614	204	1,492
Old Age Pension	-	21,879	-	23,259	-	23,520
Age Pension	5,137	20,281	5,328	21,370	5,420	21,611
Carers Pension	153	682	148	705	134	573
Blind Pension	220	916	245	1,183	283	1,336
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	12,786	-	14,107	-	15,329
Disability Child Allowance	947	802	1,020	1,321	1,168	1,271
Disability Pension	1,991	9,952	2,023	10,364	2,105	10,683
Severely Disability Pension	437	2,032	507	2,423	707	3,374
Total Social Assistance	-	75,317	-	79,648	-	75,937
Drug Addicts Allowance	77	34	62	29	65	26
Social Assistance	9,241	36,582	10,020	39,258	6,976	28,454
Social Assistance for Carers	345	1,143	358	1,185	329	1,134
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,467	14,658	3,585	14,940	4,009	16,107
Unemployment Assistance	6,119	22,861	5,924	22,454	4,816	17,091
Social Assistance Board	37	40	23	29	26	37
Unemployment Assistance Taper	-	-	588	1,201	2,101	5,441
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	-	-	1,403	551	2,442	6,584
In-Work Benefit ¹	-	-	-	-	1,359	1,062
Medical Assistance	-	18,364	-	18,842	-	18,239
Sickness Assistance	13,547	18,232	13,645	18,709	13,260	18,112
Leprosy Assistance	33	75	34	76	32	67
Milk Grant	113	57	116	58	113	60
Tuberculosis Assistance ²	1	-	1	-	0	0
Supplementary allowance	26,533	6,840	25,901	8,879	24,891	7,375
Child Supplementary Benefit ³	-	-	-	-	13,976	7,836
Bonus	-	10,989	-	11,110	-	10,280

¹ Paid for the first time in April 2015.

² For confidentiality reasons, Tuberculosis assistance outlay is included under Leprosy assistance.

³ Paid for the first time in September 2015.

Table 4. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: October-December

Description	Oct-Dec 2013		Oct-Dec 2014		Oct-Dec 2015	
	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000
Contributory Benefits	-	153,747	-	165,257	-	172,247
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	95,513	-	99,243	-	105,573
Retirement Pension	6,644	10,027	6,472	10,191	6,411	7,482
National Minimum Pension	5,424	6,985	5,501	6,897	5,577	7,498
Increased Retirement Pension	989	1,703	898	1,552	852	1,566
Two-thirds Pension	38,448	73,025	40,275	77,222	42,329	85,242
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,698	3,681	1,708	3,306	1,761	3,710
Decreased National Minimum Pension	64	92	52	75	49	75
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	5,909	-	5,766	-	5,539
Invalidity Pension	357	382	304	387	232	246
Increased Invalidity Pension	112	150	115	99	117	164
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,943	5,368	3,872	5,274	3,702	5,122
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	5	8	6	7	5	7
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	34,814	-	35,365	-	36,090
Widows' Pension ¹	223	2,000	215	2,512	213	495
Early Survivors' Pension	1,532	3,726	1,611	3,971	1,668	4,157
Survivors' Pension	6,623	16,309	6,899	16,312	7,057	17,813
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,574	12,729	6,518	12,569	6,447	13,624
Pension of Widows with Children	32	50	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	430	-	427	-	416
Injury Benefit	624	335	645	318	614	325
Injury Pension	281	79	277	79	264	78
Injury Gratuity	9	17	12	30	7	13
Other Benefits	-	3,736	-	3,458	-	3,059
Unemployment Benefit	1,253	454	1,028	354	734	273
Special Unemployment Benefit	379	238	228	138	168	89
Maternity Benefit	1,160	901	988	825	876	747
Sickness Benefit	6,908	1,774	6,997	1,743	6,835	1,519
Orphans' Allowance	16	27	16	28	15	26
Marriage Grant	786	208	939	253	824	224
Re-Marriage Gratuity	68	134	75	117	88	180
Bonus	-	13,346	-	20,997	-	21,570

¹ Widows' Pension outlay includes welfare payments for 2013 and 2014.

Table 5. Comparative Social Security Non-Contributory Benefits: October-December

Description	Oct-Dec 2013		Oct-Dec 2014		Oct-Dec 2015	
	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	37,059	-	49,077	-	48,113
Child Allowance	-	1,331	-	10,327	-	9,855
Childrens Allowance ¹	18,511	1,132	40,217	10,069	40,775	9,547
Foster Child Allowance	212	199	184	257	188	309
Old Age Pension	-	5,203	-	5,457	-	5,523
Age Pension	4,866	4,815	5,014	5,044	5,016	5,075
Carers Pension	130	168	123	154	95	122
Blind Pension	213	219	231	259	278	326
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	2,830	-	3,288	-	3,766
Disability Child Allowance	882	26	953	287	1,107	358
Disability Pension	1,940	2,330	1,988	2,425	2,060	2,515
Severely Disability Pension	422	474	489	576	696	893
Total Social Assistance	-	18,447	-	18,599	-	17,694
Drug Addicts Allowance	25	5	23	6	30	7
Social Assistance	7,967	9,031	8,013	8,515	5,643	6,372
Social Assistance for Carers	292	258	301	277	276	253
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,207	3,427	3,176	3,449	3,255	3,519
Unemployment Assistance	4,863	5,720	4,298	5,215	3,194	3,797
Social Assistance Board	6	5	13	12	10	8
Unemployment Assistance Taper	-	-	537	573	1,867	1,729
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	-	-	1,402	550	1,710	1,576
In-Work Benefit ²	-	-	-	-	1,336	432
Medical Assistance	-	5,639	-	5,713	-	5,588
Sickness Assistance	12,928	5,598	12,791	5,669	12,352	5,552
Leprosy Assistance	33	23	33	27	29	20
Milk Grant	54	18	56	17	45	16
Tuberculosis Assistance ³	0	0	1	-	0	0
Supplementary allowance	23,683	123	23,167	1,784	23,949	2,037
Child Supplementary Benefit ⁴	-	-	-	-	84	118
Bonus	-	3,486	-	3,909	-	3,532

¹ For 2013, the number of Children's Allowance beneficiaries does not include flat rate recipients as it was paid in an earlier quarter.

² Paid for the first time in April 2015.

³ For confidentiality reasons, for 2014 Tuberculosis assistance outlay is included under Leprosy assistance.

⁴ Paid for the first time in September 2015.

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 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.
4. Expenditure data is not normally subject to revision, while beneficiaries data may be revised.
5. Figures may not add up exactly due to rounding.
6. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:

Statistical Database: <http://nso.gov.mt/statdb/start>

Glossary: http://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources_and_Methods/Unit_A2/Public_Finance/Pages/Government-Expenditure-on-Social-Security-Benefits.aspx