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In the first quarter of 2016, the outlay on social security benefits increased by €9.7 million when compared to the previous year.

Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-March 2016

Social Security Benefits Expenditure

Total social security benefits amounted to €206.6 million during the first quarter of 2016, reflecting a 4.9 per cent increase when compared to the corresponding quarter in 2015. The increase in expenditure was due to a €10.4 million rise in Contributory Benefits outlay. On the other hand, Non-Contributory Benefits expenditure declined by €0.6 million (Table 1).

Contributory Benefits outlay totalled €162.0 million, 6.8 per cent higher than the comparative quarter in 2015. The rise in outlay was mainly due to a €7.0 million rise in Pensions in respect of Retirement. Further increases in expenditure were recorded under Contributory Bonus (€2.2 million) and Pensions in respect of Widowhood (€1.6 million). On the other hand, decreases of €0.2 million were registered under both Pensions in respect of Invalidity and Other Benefits (Table 2).

Non-Contributory Benefits decreased by 1.4 per cent during the first quarter of 2016, amounting to €44.6 million. A €1.3 million decline in Social Assistance was the main reason behind such decrease, followed by drops in outlay for Child Allowance (€0.3 million) and Non-Contributory Bonus (€0.1 million). Conversely, a rise in outlay was recorded under Disability Pension/Allowance (€0.5 million), Old Age Pension (€0.1 million) and Supplementary Allowance (€0.1 million) (Table 3).

Social Security Beneficiaries¹

During the first quarter of 2016, the largest cohort of Social Security Beneficiaries was recorded under the Two-Thirds Pension (42,786). In comparison to the corresponding quarter of 2015, the largest increase in beneficiaries was also registered under the Two-Thirds Pension (2,010) while Unemployment Benefit registered the highest decline in beneficiaries by 322 (Table 2).

Non-Contributory Benefits mainly consisted of Childrens Allowance (40,615) and Supplementary Allowance (22,969) recipients. The largest rise in beneficiaries was recorded under Unemployment Assistance Taper with 1,262 more persons while Unemployment Assistance registered the largest drop with 1,120 less recipients (Table 3) ■

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¹ Refer to methodological note 2

Kindly indicate source when quoting from this release.

The advance release calendar may be consulted at www.nso.gov.mt

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Table 1. Comparative Social Security Benefits: January-March

Description	Jan-Mar 2014	Jan-Mar 2015	Jan-Mar 2016	Jan-Mar 2016 / Jan-Mar 2015	
				Change	% change
	€ 000				
Contributory Benefits	148,703	151,682	162,032	10,350	6.8
Non-Contributory Benefits	57,589	45,177	44,560	-617	-1.4
Total Social Security Benefits	206,292	196,859	206,592	9,733	4.9

Chart 1. Social Security Benefits Expenditure: January-March 2000-2016

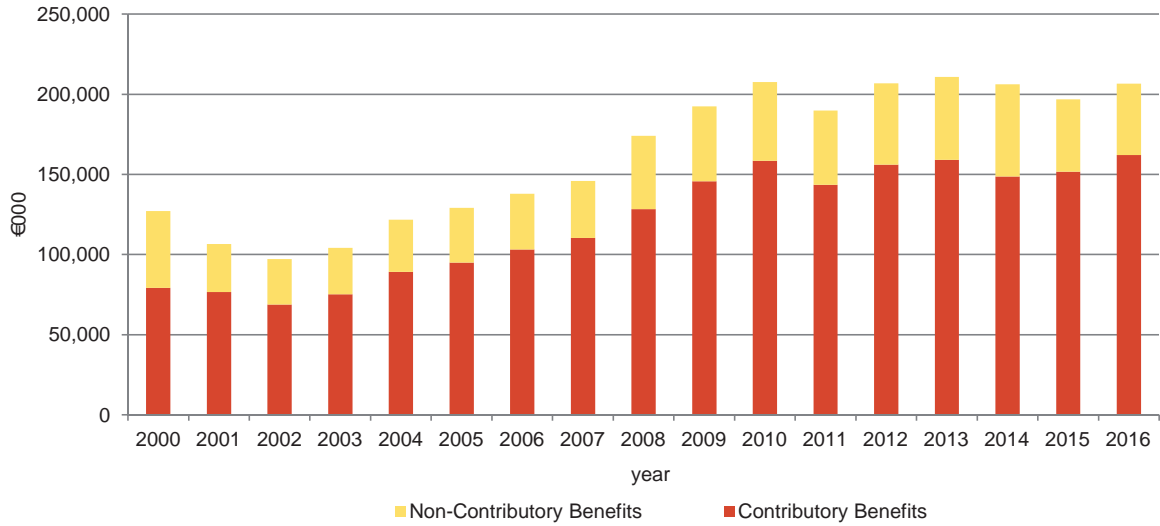


Chart 2. Social Security Benefits Expenditure by ESSPROS functions for January-March 2016

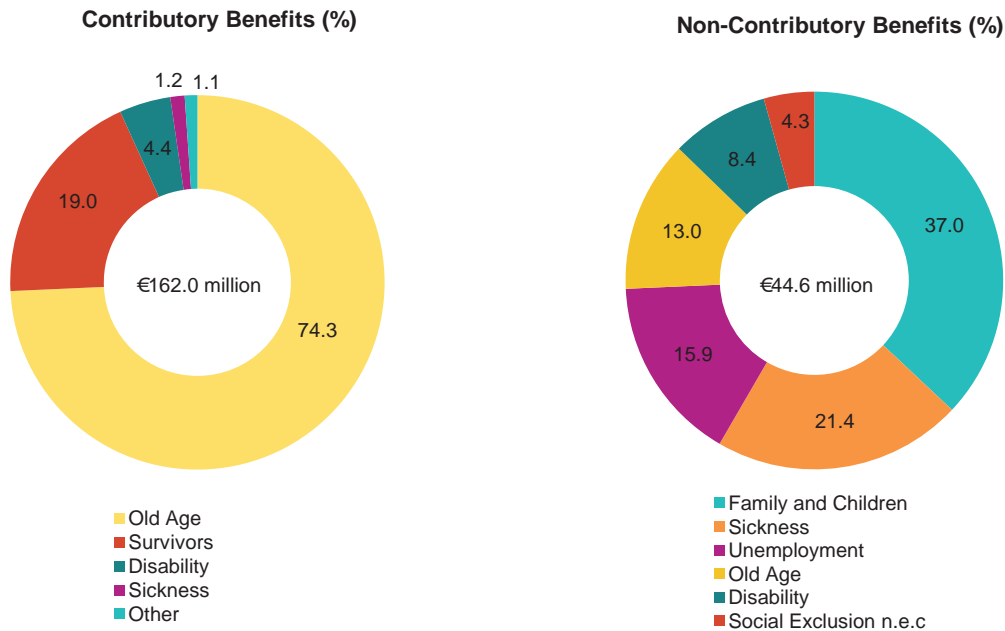


Table 2. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: January-March

Description	Jan-Mar 2014		Jan-Mar 2015		Jan-Mar 2016	
	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000
Contributory Benefits	-	148,703	-	151,682	-	162,032
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	98,892	-	103,023	-	110,063
Retirement Pension	6,611	9,646	6,470	7,403	6,484	7,465
National Minimum Pension	5,402	8,470	5,546	9,163	5,685	9,785
Increased Retirement Pension	1,036	1,782	907	1,768	845	1,572
Two-thirds Pension	39,063	74,741	40,776	80,179	42,786	86,464
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,740	4,168	1,784	4,428	1,786	4,694
Decreased National Minimum Pension	63	85	53	81	47	83
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	7,735	-	7,542	-	7,301
Invalidity Pension	343	450	277	372	233	323
Increased Invalidity Pension	131	224	131	227	113	204
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,983	7,052	3,817	6,933	3,668	6,765
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	5	10	6	10	5	10
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	27,005	-	26,764	-	28,315
Widows' Pension ¹	223	2,037	215	375	211	588
Early Survivors' Pension	1,558	2,882	1,623	3,046	1,671	3,200
Survivors' Pension	6,685	12,211	6,925	13,098	7,108	13,811
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,490	9,867	6,455	10,246	6,413	10,715
Pension of Widows with Children ²	8	9	1	-	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	414	-	403	-	423
Injury Benefit	497	294	533	287	472	285
Injury Pension	283	104	274	105	264	138
Injury Gratuity	10	16	9	11	0	0
Other Benefits	-	3,235	-	3,392	-	3,151
Unemployment Benefit	1,249	446	1,056	425	734	278
Special Unemployment Benefit	363	231	233	170	164	106
Maternity Benefit	922	699	1,077	867	1,043	919
Sickness Benefit	7,187	1,621	7,407	1,674	7,613	1,573
Orphans' Allowance	16	20	17	23	14	18
Marriage Grant	419	110	424	114	508	138
Re-Marriage Gratuity	73	107	79	118	88	119
Bonus	-	11,422	-	10,557	-	12,779

¹ 2014 Widows' Pension outlay includes welfare payments.

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-March

Description	Jan-Mar 2014		Jan-Mar 2015		Jan-Mar 2016	
	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000	Beneficiaries	€000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	57,589	-	45,177	-	44,560
Child Allowance	-	20,639	-	10,562	-	10,218
Childrens Allowance	40,782	20,030	40,198	10,167	40,615	10,000
Foster Child Allowance	210	609	188	396	187	218
Old Age Pension	-	5,122	-	5,300	-	5,434
Age Pension	4,930	4,681	5,037	4,870	5,028	4,963
Carers Pension	133	164	119	155	93	118
Blind Pension	220	277	235	274	287	353
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	3,375	-	3,306	-	3,815
Disability Child Allowance	914	496	974	299	1,138	355
Disability Pension	1,946	2,321	2,003	2,391	2,077	2,529
Severely Disability Pension	441	558	512	616	731	932
Total Social Assistance	-	18,963	-	18,588	-	17,290
Drug Addicts Allowance	29	6	18	5	26	9
Social Assistance	8,302	9,156	6,246	6,946	5,577	6,592
Social Assistance for Carers	288	263	297	269	274	257
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,260	3,521	3,775	3,986	3,219	3,554
Unemployment Assistance	5,082	6,008	4,168	4,958	3,048	3,399
Social Assistance Board	10	8	13	11	2	1
Unemployment Assistance Taper ¹	-	-	814	751	2,076	1,826
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance ²	-	-	1,743	1,664	1,732	1,653
Medical Assistance	-	4,409	-	4,272	-	4,251
Sickness Assistance	12,861	4,382	12,614	4,244	12,228	4,225
Leprosy Assistance	33	17	32	17	29	15
Milk Grant	37	9	40	11	33	10
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary allowance	24,117	3,637	23,484	1,771	22,969	1,861
In-Work Benefit ³	-	-	-	-	1,336	366
Bonus	-	1,444	-	1,378	-	1,325

¹Paid for the first time in July 2014.

²Paid for the first time in September 2014.

³Paid for the first time in April 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 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: <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