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In 2016, the outlay on social security benefits rose by €32.3 million in comparison to 2015.

Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-December 2016

Social Security Benefits Expenditure

By the end of 2016 social security benefits expenditure amounted to €900.7 million, resulting in a 3.7 per cent increase when compared to 2015. The rise in outlay was due to a €44.0 million increase in Contributory Benefits expenditure. Conversely, Non-Contributory Benefits expenditure decreased by €11.7 million (Table 1).

Contributory Benefits outlay for 2016 amounted to €712.2 million, a 6.6 per cent increase from 2015. The rise in outlay was mostly due to a €34.4 million increase in Pensions in respect of Retirement. Increases were also registered under Pensions in respect of Widowhood (€6.3 million), Contributory Bonus (€2.9 million), Pensions in respect of Invalidity (€0.5 million) and Benefits in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities (€0.2 million). On the other hand, a decline in expenditure was recorded by Other Benefits (€0.4 million) (Table 2).

Non-Contributory Benefits decreased by 5.8 per cent during 2016, amounting to €188.5 million. The main reason behind the decline was due to the one-time Child Supplementary Benefit paid in September 2015, accounting for €7.8 million of the Non-Contributory outlay for that year. Further declines were also registered under Social Assistance (€5.8 million), Child Allowance (€0.8 million) and Non-Contributory Bonus (€0.6 million). The decline in Non-Contributory outlay was slightly offset by increases in Disability Pension/Allowance (€1.8 million), In-Work Benefit (€1.2 million), Supplementary Allowance (€0.4 million) and Medical Assistance (€0.1 million) (Table 3).

Between October and December 2016, social security benefits outlay totalled €232.2 million, a 5.4 per cent increase from the same period in 2015. Contributory Benefits expenditure increased by €12.9 million due to an €8.1 million rise in Pensions in respect of Retirement (Table 4). On the other hand, Non-Contributory Benefits expenditure dropped by €1.1 million following a €1.4 million decrease in Social Assistance outlay (Table 5).

Social Security Beneficiaries¹

By the end of 2016, the Two-Thirds Pension recorded the largest number of Contributory beneficiaries with 45,495 recipients followed by the Sickness Benefit with 20,317 beneficiaries. Furthermore, the same benefit registered the biggest increase from 2015 with 2,063 more beneficiaries. Conversely, the largest decrease in recipients was recorded under the Unemployment Benefit with 464 less recipients in comparison to 2015 (Table 2).

In 2016, the majority of Non-Contributory beneficiaries consisted of Childrens Allowance (43,478) and Supplementary Allowance (24,244) recipients. Unemployment Assistance Taper and In-Work Benefit registered the largest increases with 959 and 868 more recipients respectively. On the other hand, Unemployment Assistance saw the largest drop in recipients with the amount declining from 4,816 beneficiaries at the end of 2015 to 3,597 beneficiaries by the end of 2016 (Table 3) ■

¹ Refer to methodological note 2

Table 1. Comparative Social Security Benefits: January-December

Description	Jan-Dec 2014	Jan-Dec 2015	Jan-Dec 2016	Jan-Dec 2016 / Jan-Dec 2015	
				Change	% change
	€ 000				
Contributory Benefits	645,628	668,203	712,205	44,002	6.6
Non-Contributory Benefits	207,280	200,178	188,495	-11,683	-5.8
Total Social Security Benefits	852,908	868,381	900,700	32,319	3.7

Chart 1. Social Security Benefits Expenditure: 2000-2016

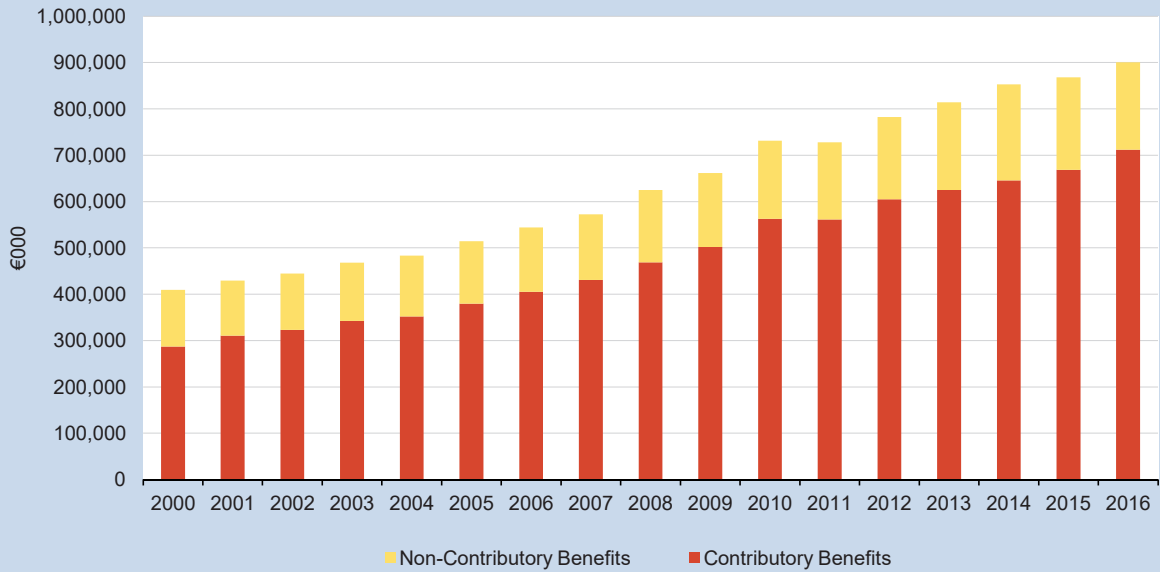


Chart 2. Social Security Benefits Expenditure by ESSPROS functions for 2016

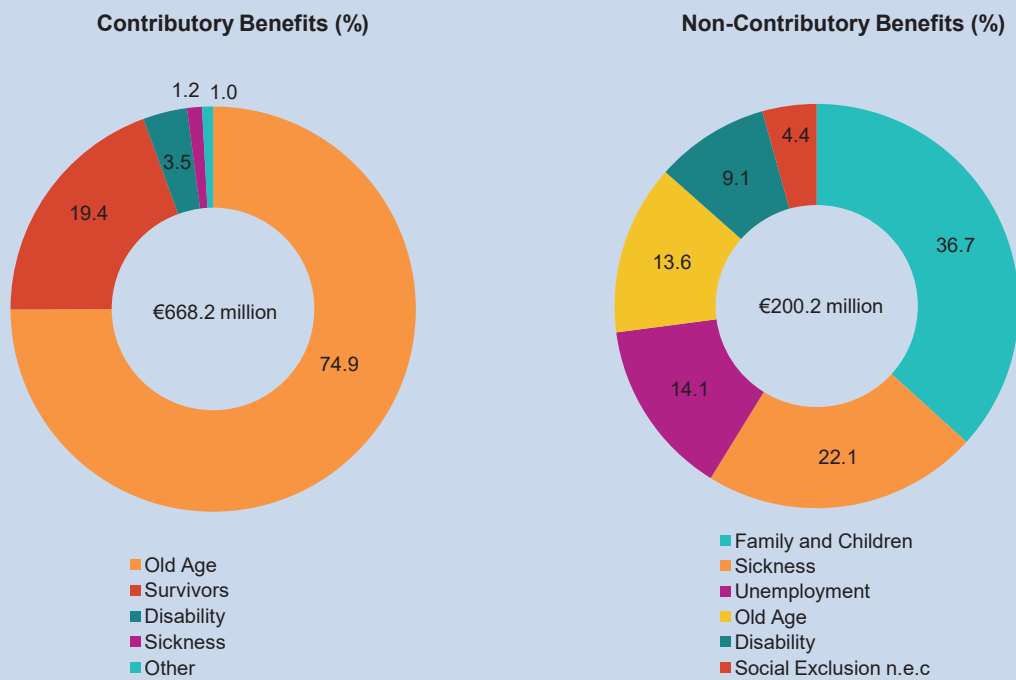


Table 2. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: January-December

Description	Jan-Dec 2014		Jan-Dec 2015		Jan-Dec 2016	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	645,628	-	668,200	-	712,205
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	424,427	-	444,806	-	479,228
Retirement Pension	6,915	42,529	6,787	31,946	6,799	32,862
National Minimum Pension	5,744	29,781	5,867	31,035	6,184	35,870
Increased Retirement Pension	1,062	7,082	959	7,174	860	7,048
Two-thirds Pension	41,314	330,199	43,432	359,044	45,495	386,441
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,843	14,476	1,873	15,268	1,868	16,641
Decreased National Minimum Pension	67	361	54	338	59	365
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	25,498	-	24,332	-	24,870
Invalidity Pension	370	1,597	298	1,162	246	1,022
Increased Invalidity Pension	135	696	131	730	117	708
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	4,326	23,173	4,174	22,409	4,021	23,112
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	6	31	6	31	6	29
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	116,302	-	118,359	-	124,687
Widows' Pension ¹	227	8,384	221	1,658	215	1,786
Early Survivors' Pension	1,650	12,665	1,697	13,290	1,827	14,290
Survivors' Pension	7,126	53,109	7,374	58,165	7,845	62,248
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,840	42,084	6,826	45,245	6,874	46,363
Pension of Widows with Children ²	9	60	1	-	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	1,592	-	1,563	-	1,807
Injury Benefit	1,973	1,168	1,885	1,155	1,941	1,334
Injury Pension	291	349	278	345	269	411
Injury Gratuity	42	75	34	63	29	62
Other Benefits	-	13,255	-	12,945	-	12,545
Unemployment Benefit	2,822	1,588	2,177	1,236	1,713	1,003
Special Unemployment Benefit	746	721	488	446	351	291
Maternity Benefit	3,378	3,006	3,581	3,327	3,601	3,403
Sickness Benefit	19,173	6,556	19,347	6,413	20,317	6,307
Orphans' Allowance	19	89	17	83	15	80
Marriage Grant	3,151	849	3,248	881	3,272	896
Re-Marriage Gratuity	80	446	90	559	92	565
Bonus	-	64,554	-	66,195	-	69,068

¹ Widows' Pension outlay includes welfare payments for 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 2014		Jan-Dec 2015		Jan-Dec 2016	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	207,280	-	200,178	-	188,495
Child Allowance	-	51,435	-	41,662	-	40,825
Childrens Allowance	44,338	49,821	43,246	40,170	43,478	39,410
Foster Child Allowance	215	1,614	204	1,492	189	1,414
Old Age Pension	-	23,259	-	23,520	-	23,550
Age Pension	5,326	21,370	5,420	21,611	5,329	21,499
Carers Pension	147	705	134	573	102	490
Blind Pension	245	1,183	283	1,336	321	1,562
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	14,107	-	15,329	-	17,132
Disability Child Allowance	1,020	1,321	1,168	1,271	1,304	1,428
Disability Pension	2,023	10,364	2,105	10,683	2,193	11,280
Severely Disability Pension	507	2,423	707	3,374	887	4,424
Total Social Assistance	-	79,648	-	74,875	-	69,037
Drug Addicts Allowance	61	29	65	26	80	37
Social Assistance	10,007	39,258	6,976	28,454	6,302	27,910
Social Assistance for Carers	358	1,185	329	1,134	307	1,093
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,583	14,940	4,009	16,107	3,495	14,804
Unemployment Assistance	5,915	22,454	4,816	17,091	3,597	10,293
Social Assistance Board	23	29	26	37	7	9
Unemployment Assistance Taper	588	1,201	2,101	5,441	3,060	8,391
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,396	551	2,442	6,584	2,310	6,500
Medical Assistance	-	18,842	-	18,239	-	18,308
Sickness Assistance	13,644	18,709	13,259	18,112	12,942	18,199
Leprosy Assistance	34	76	32	67	29	65
Milk Grant	116	58	113	60	82	44
Tuberculosis Assistance ¹	1	-	0	0	0	0
Supplementary Allowance	25,885	8,879	24,888	7,375	24,244	7,736
In-Work Benefit ²	-	-	1,359	1,062	2,227	2,259
Child Supplementary Benefit ³	-	-	14,307	7,836	-	-
Bonus	-	11,110	-	10,280	-	9,650

¹ For confidentiality reasons, Tuberculosis assistance outlay for 2014 is included under Leprosy assistance.

² Paid for the first time in April 2015.

³ One time payment made in September 2015.

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

Description	Oct-Dec 2014		Oct-Dec 2015		Oct-Dec 2016	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	165,257	-	172,247	-	185,156
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	99,243	-	105,573	-	113,636
Retirement Pension	6,471	10,191	6,411	7,482	6,602	7,718
National Minimum Pension	5,501	6,897	5,576	7,498	5,965	10,128
Increased Retirement Pension	897	1,552	852	1,566	795	1,510
Two-thirds Pension	40,258	77,222	42,321	85,242	44,266	89,675
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,708	3,306	1,761	3,710	1,735	4,521
Decreased National Minimum Pension	52	75	49	75	53	85
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	5,766	-	5,539	-	6,867
Invalidity Pension	304	387	232	246	194	270
Increased Invalidity Pension	115	99	117	164	104	180
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,872	5,274	3,701	5,122	3,525	6,412
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	6	7	5	7	3	6
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	35,365	-	36,090	-	38,454
Widows' Pension ¹	215	2,512	213	495	193	452
Early Survivors' Pension	1,611	3,971	1,668	4,157	1,759	4,643
Survivors' Pension	6,898	16,312	7,057	17,813	7,468	19,478
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,516	12,569	6,446	13,624	6,376	13,881
Pension of Widows with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	427	-	416	-	483
Injury Benefit	645	318	614	325	644	354
Injury Pension	277	79	264	78	259	100
Injury Gratuity	12	30	7	13	12	28
Other Benefits	-	3,458	-	3,059	-	3,272
Unemployment Benefit	1,027	354	734	273	556	216
Special Unemployment Benefit	228	138	168	89	107	53
Maternity Benefit	988	825	876	747	1,023	846
Sickness Benefit	6,996	1,743	6,835	1,519	7,143	1,690
Orphans' Allowance	16	28	15	26	14	24
Marriage Grant	939	253	824	224	903	247
Re-Marriage Gratuity	75	117	88	180	92	195
Bonus	-	20,997	-	21,570	-	22,444

¹ Widows' Pension outlay includes welfare payments for 2014.

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

Description	Oct-Dec 2014		Oct-Dec 2015		Oct-Dec 2016	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	49,077	-	48,113	-	47,023
Child Allowance	-	10,327	-	9,855	-	9,812
Childrens Allowance	40,216	10,069	40,775	9,547	40,776	9,343
Foster Child Allowance	184	257	188	309	163	469
Old Age Pension	-	5,457	-	5,523	-	5,270
Age Pension	5,009	5,044	5,015	5,075	4,868	4,793
Carers Pension	123	154	95	122	85	108
Blind Pension	231	259	278	326	309	368
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	3,288	-	3,766	-	4,163
Disability Child Allowance	953	287	1,107	358	1,238	372
Disability Pension	1,988	2,425	2,060	2,515	2,162	2,646
Severely Disability Pension	489	576	696	893	873	1,145
Total Social Assistance	-	18,599	-	17,262	-	15,835
Drug Addicts Allowance	21	6	30	7	33	10
Social Assistance	8,005	8,515	5,643	6,372	5,433	6,423
Social Assistance for Carers	301	277	276	253	272	261
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,174	3,449	3,255	3,519	3,002	3,360
Unemployment Assistance	4,297	5,215	3,194	3,797	1,836	2,169
Social Assistance Board	13	12	10	8	4	6
Unemployment Assistance Taper	537	573	1,867	1,729	2,618	1,935
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,401	550	1,706	1,576	1,600	1,672
Medical Assistance	-	5,713	-	5,588	-	5,578
Sickness Assistance	12,789	5,669	12,352	5,552	12,108	5,541
Leprosy Assistance	33	27	29	20	28	20
Milk Grant	56	17	45	16	32	17
Tuberculosis Assistance ¹	1	-	0	0	0	0
Supplementary allowance	23,163	1,784	23,949	2,037	23,368	2,030
In-Work Benefit ²	-	-	1,336	432	1,815	1,039
Child Supplementary Benefit ³	-	-	84	118	-	-
Bonus	-	3,909	-	3,532	-	3,296

¹ For confidentiality reasons, for 2014 Tuberculosis assistance outlay is included under Leprosy assistance.

² Paid for the first time in April 2015.

³ One time payment made 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
7. Kindly indicate source when quoting from this release.
8. The advanced news release calendar may be accessed at www.nso.gov.mt