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In the first six months of 2017 a €56.6 million increase was recorded in Social Security Benefits outlay, in comparison to the same period in 2016.

Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-June 2017

Social Security Benefits Expenditure

Social Security Benefits expenditure amounted to €479.8 million during the first half of 2017, resulting in a 13.4 per cent rise from the same period in 2016. A €53.4 million increase in Contributory Benefits outlay was the catalyst for the abovementioned rise in Social Security Benefits expenditure (Table 1).

Contributory Benefits outlay totalled €383.5 million, a 16.2 per cent increase from the corresponding six months in 2016. The main reason for the rise in Contributory expenditure was a €46.7 million increase registered under Pensions in respect of Retirement, following a double payment in June 2017. Further increases were recorded by Pensions in respect of Widowhood (€6.1 million) and Contributory Bonus (€3.6 million). On the other hand, declines in outlay were registered under Pensions in respect of Invalidity (€2.2 million) and Other Benefits (€0.6 million; Table 2).

In the first half of 2017 Non-Contributory outlay amounted to €96.3 million, 3.4 per cent higher than 2016. Increases in outlay were recorded in Old Age Pension and Disability Pension/Allowance (both €1.2 million), followed by Supplementary Assistance (€0.8 million), Social Assistance and In-Work Benefit (both €0.2 million). Conversely, a decrease in outlay was reported under Child Allowance (€0.3 million) and Non-Contributory Bonus (€0.1 million; Table 3).

Between April and June 2017 €271.4 million was spent by the Government on Social Security Benefits, 80.2 per cent of which covered Contributory Benefits. In comparison to the same quarter in 2016, expenditure on Contributory Benefits increased from €168.0 million to €217.6 million (Table 4) while Non-Contributory outlay also rose from €48.6 million to €53.8 million (Table 5). A €43.1 million rise in Pensions in respect of Retirement was the main reason for the increase in the former while the latter was caused by a positive growth of €2.5 million being registered under Social Assistance.

Social Security Beneficiaries

During the first half of 2017 the Two-Thirds Pension contained the largest cohort of Contributory beneficiaries (45,738), also recording the biggest rise in beneficiaries with 1,844 more recipients in comparison to the same six month period in 2016. On the other hand, the Sickness Benefit and the Unemployment Benefit registered the largest declines in recipients with 429 and 374 less beneficiaries respectively (Table 2).

By the end of June 2017, the majority of Non-Contributory recipients consisted of Children's Allowance (41,907), followed by Supplementary Assistance (24,028). The In-Work Benefit recorded the largest increase in beneficiaries with 1,045 more recipients while the biggest drop in recipients was reported by the Unemployment Assistance (1,544; Table 3).

On a quarterly basis a similar picture was shown with Two-Thirds pensioners containing the largest share of Contributory beneficiaries with 45,211 recipients (Table 4) and the biggest cohort of Non-Contributory recipients falling under Children's Allowance (41,036; Table 5) ■

1 Refer to methodological note 3

Table 1. Comparative Social Security Benefits: January-June

Description	Jan-Jun 2015	Jan-Jun 2016	Jan-Jun 2017	Jan-Jun 2017 / Jan-Jun 2016	
				Change	% change
	€ 000				
Contributory Benefits	312,323	330,014	383,459	53,445	16.2
Non-Contributory Benefits	95,508	93,154	96,336	3,182	3.4
Total Social Security Benefits	407,831	423,169	479,796	56,627	13.4

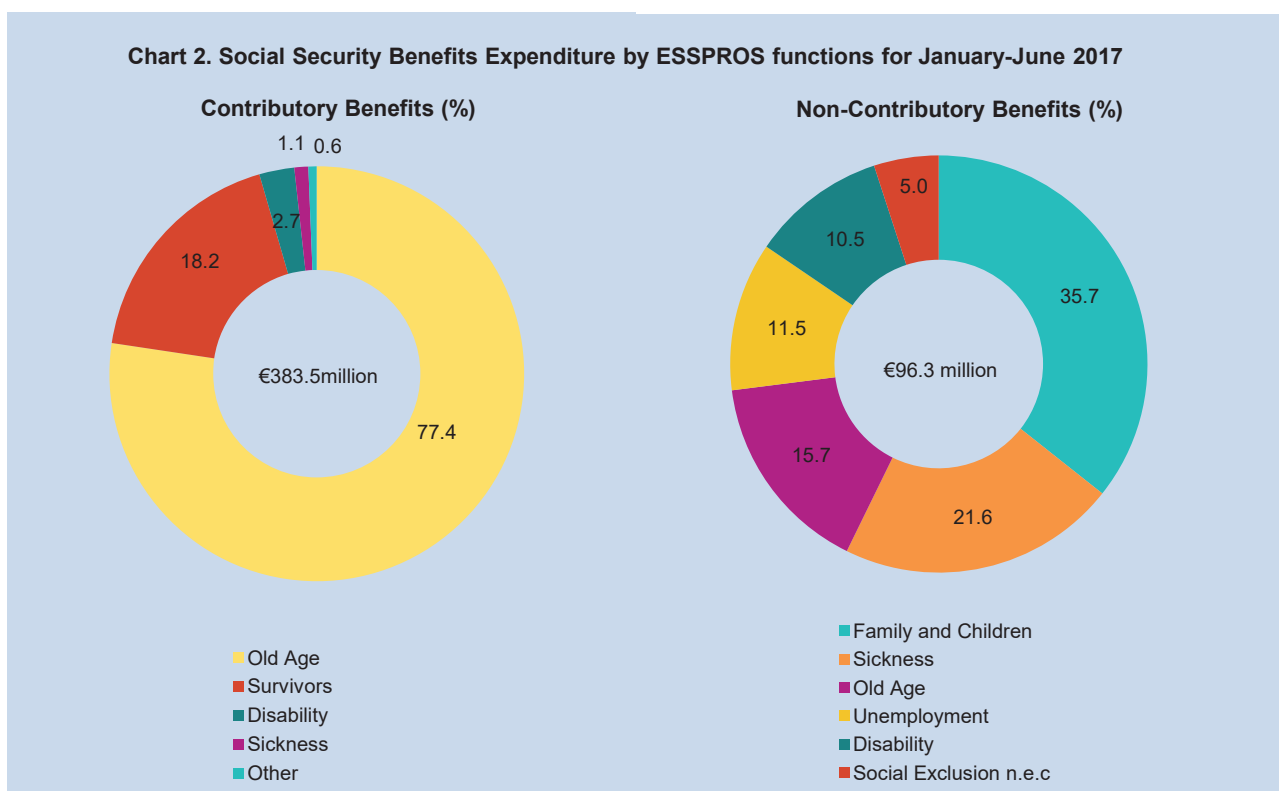
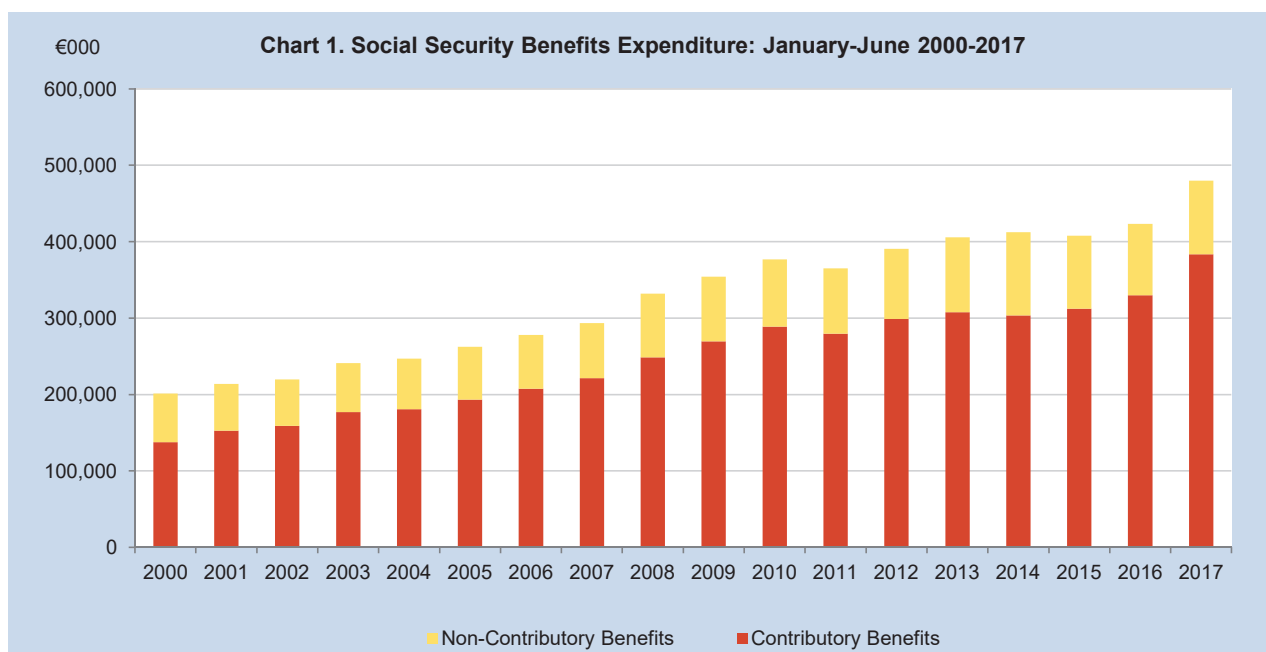


Table 2. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: January-June

Description	Jan-Jun 2015		Jan-Jun 2016		Jan-Jun 2017	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	312,323	-	330,014	-	383,459
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	204,959	-	219,675	-	266,327
Retirement Pension	6,561	14,694	6,599	14,957	6,801	18,035
National Minimum Pension	5,657	16,336	5,898	17,597	6,188	16,846
Increased Retirement Pension	920	3,451	848	3,108	801	3,683
Two-thirds Pension	41,830	162,339	43,894	175,499	45,738	219,971
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,813	7,978	1,814	8,342	1,786	7,595
Decreased National Minimum Pension	54	161	57	172	57	197
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	13,159	-	12,665	-	10,427
Invalidity Pension	284	647	235	538	195	398
Increased Invalidity Pension	131	399	114	377	94	270
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,926	12,095	3,792	11,731	3,546	9,751
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	6	18	6	19	3	9
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	54,197	-	56,693	-	62,750
Widows' Pension	216	756	212	965	227	830
Early Survivors' Pension	1,640	6,081	1,707	6,409	1,745	6,826
Survivors' Pension	7,100	26,589	7,314	27,818	7,805	31,807
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,581	20,771	6,516	21,501	6,480	23,287
Pension of Widows with Children ¹	1	-	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	783	-	872	-	839
Injury Benefit	924	559	969	638	987	654
Injury Pension	277	190	266	215	253	152
Injury Gratuity	21	35	12	19	16	33
Other Benefits	-	6,527	-	6,217	-	5,585
Unemployment Benefit	1,414	717	1,097	547	723	338
Special Unemployment Benefit	326	278	223	181	128	95
Maternity Benefit	1,887	1,665	1,858	1,691	1,782	1,723
Sickness Benefit	12,198	3,287	12,766	3,210	12,337	3,072
Orphans' Allowance	17	40	15	37	17	51
Marriage Grant	1,072	289	1,124	307	1,027	301
Re-Marriage Gratuity ²	81	250	89	244	91	5
Bonus	-	32,698	-	33,893	-	37,531

¹ For confidentiality reasons, 2015 expenditure for Pension of Widows with Children is included under Widows' Pension.

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-June

Description	Jan-Jun 2015		Jan-Jun 2016		Jan-Jun 2017	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	95,508	-	93,154	-	96,336
Child Allowance	-	21,170	-	20,288	-	19,956
Childrens Allowance	41,349	20,310	41,597	19,604	41,907	19,433
Foster Child Allowance	194	859	187	684	167	523
Old Age Pension	-	12,461	-	12,695	-	13,866
Age Pension	5,193	11,454	5,166	11,598	4,971	11,890
Carers Pension ¹	122	321	99	275	-	-
Increased Carers' Allowance ¹	-	-	-	-	288	1,062
Blind Pension / Assistance Visually Impaired ²	261	686	304	823	330	914
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	7,918	-	8,906	-	10,071
Disability Child Allowance	1,032	617	1,212	696	1,288	716
Disability Pension ³	2,037	5,650	2,109	5,971	-	-
Severely Disability Pension ⁴	603	1,652	785	2,239	-	-
Severe Disability Assistance ⁴	-	-	-	-	3,178	9,129
Increased Severe Disability Assistance ⁴	-	-	-	-	103	145
Disability Assistance ^{3,5}	-	-	-	-	36	81
Total Social Assistance	-	36,499	-	33,433	-	33,620
Drug Addicts Allowance	30	9	43	16	49	48
Social Assistance	6,487	13,624	5,826	13,078	5,631	14,702
Social Assistance for Carers ⁶	311	544	286	511	-	-
Carer's Allowance ⁶	-	-	-	-	281	682
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,848	7,761	3,307	6,985	3,059	7,668
Unemployment Assistance	4,422	9,320	3,262	5,891	1,718	3,175
Social Assistance Board ⁷	20	21	2	-	5	3
Unemployment Assistance Taper	1,330	1,950	2,424	3,665	3,058	4,385
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	2,015	3,269	1,973	3,288	1,669	2,957
Medical Assistance	-	8,460	-	8,481	-	8,520
Sickness Assistance	12,794	8,401	12,488	8,432	12,253	8,458
Leprosy Assistance	32	32	29	30	28	30
Milk Grant	66	27	46	18	55	32
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary Assistance	24,051	3,542	23,454	3,700	24,028	4,537
In-Work Benefit ⁸	939	242	1,571	675	2,616	842
Bonus	-	5,215	-	4,975	-	4,924

¹ In 2017, Carers Pension was replaced by Increased Carers' Allowance.

² In 2017, Blind Pension was renamed Assistance Visually Impaired.

³ In 2017, Disability Pension was replaced by Disability Assistance.

⁴ In 2017, Severely Disability Pension was replaced by Severely Disability Assistance and Increased Severe Disability Assistance.

⁵ For confidentiality reasons, 2017 outlay for Disability Assistance has been included under Severe Disability Assistance.

⁶ In 2017, Social Assistance for Carers was replaced by Carer's Allowance.

⁷ For confidentiality reasons, 2016 outlay for Social Assistance Board has been included under Unemployment Assistance.

⁸ Paid for the first time in April 2015.

Table 4. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: April-June

Description	Apr-Jun 2015		Apr-Jun 2016		Apr-Jun 2017	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	160,642	-	167,983	-	217,641
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	101,936	-	109,612	-	152,727
Retirement Pension	6,272	7,290	6,541	7,492	6,711	10,245
National Minimum Pension	5,515	7,173	5,790	7,811	6,101	8,406
Increased Retirement Pension	880	1,683	829	1,536	774	2,115
Two-thirds Pension	41,421	82,160	43,509	89,035	45,211	127,948
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,757	3,550	1,745	3,649	1,754	3,904
Decreased National Minimum Pension	53	81	55	88	55	108
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	5,617	-	5,363	-	5,200
Invalidity Pension	264	275	210	215	185	196
Increased Invalidity Pension	125	172	108	173	86	132
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,727	5,162	3,546	4,966	3,407	4,869
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	6	7	5	9	3	4
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	27,433	-	28,378	-	32,277
Widows' Pension	213	380	207	377	225	426
Early Survivors' Pension	1,625	3,035	1,680	3,208	1,721	3,411
Survivors' Pension	6,996	13,491	7,186	14,007	7,690	16,463
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,433	10,526	6,376	10,786	6,344	11,977
Pension of Widows with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	380	-	449	-	442
Injury Benefit	484	272	584	353	587	346
Injury Pension	273	84	264	78	248	76
Injury Gratuity	12	24	12	19	10	20
Other Benefits	-	3,134	-	3,066	-	2,938
Unemployment Benefit	798	292	659	269	417	176
Special Unemployment Benefit	183	108	117	75	75	48
Maternity Benefit	934	797	917	772	872	888
Sickness Benefit	6,738	1,613	7,060	1,637	6,474	1,610
Orphans' Allowance	15	17	15	19	14	30
Marriage Grant	648	175	616	169	607	186
Re-Marriage Gratuity ¹	81	132	89	125	0	0
Bonus	-	22,141	-	21,114	-	24,056

¹ After the first payment of 2017, the Re-Marriage Gratuity became inactive with recipients being converted to a Widows Pension.

Table 5. Comparative Social Security Non-Contributory Benefits: April-June

Description	Apr-Jun 2015		Apr-Jun 2016		Apr-Jun 2017	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	50,330	-	48,594	-	53,757
Child Allowance	-	10,607	-	10,071	-	10,205
Childrens Allowance	40,529	10,144	40,768	9,604	41,036	9,878
Foster Child Allowance	188	463	185	466	163	327
Old Age Pension	-	7,161	-	7,261	-	8,194
Age Pension	5,033	6,584	4,952	6,635	4,847	6,746
Carers Pension ¹	101	166	91	157	-	-
Increased Carers' Allowance ¹	-	-	-	-	280	917
Blind Pension / Assistance Visually Impaired ²	258	412	301	470	327	531
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	4,612	-	5,091	-	5,811
Disability Child Allowance	1,005	318	1,190	341	1,255	374
Disability Pension ³	2,023	3,259	2,096	3,442	-	-
Severely Disability Pension ⁴	599	1,036	785	1,308	-	-
Severe Disability Assistance ⁴	-	-	-	-	3,160	5,228
Increased Severe Disability Assistance ⁴	-	-	-	-	103	145
Disability Assistance ^{3,5}	-	-	-	-	36	64
Total Social Assistance	-	17,911	-	16,143	-	18,656
Drug Addicts Allowance	22	5	27	7	36	38
Social Assistance	5,896	6,678	5,516	6,486	5,333	8,318
Social Assistance for Carers ⁶	296	276	271	255	-	-
Carer's Allowance ⁶	-	-	-	-	273	393
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,523	3,775	3,126	3,431	2,908	4,349
Unemployment Assistance	3,703	4,363	2,234	2,491	1,331	1,584
Social Assistance Board ⁷	13	10	1	-	2	-
Unemployment Assistance Taper	1,288	1,198	2,293	1,839	2,837	2,412
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,765	1,606	1,725	1,636	1,482	1,562
Medical Assistance	-	4,188	-	4,230	-	4,268
Sickness Assistance	12,354	4,157	12,106	4,207	11,965	4,238
Leprosy Assistance	30	16	28	15	27	15
Milk Grant	45	16	30	8	42	16
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary allowance	23,649	1,771	23,079	1,840	23,656	2,309
In-Work Benefit ⁸	939	242	828	309	1,909	634
Bonus	-	3,838	-	3,649	-	3,680

¹ In 2017, Carers Pension was replaced by Increased Carers' Allowance.

² In 2017, Blind Pension was renamed Assistance Visually Impaired.

³ In 2017, Disability Pension was replaced by Disability Assistance.

⁴ In 2017, Severely Disability Pension was replaced by Severely Disability Assistance and Increased Severe Disability Assistance.

⁵ For confidentiality reasons, 2017 outlay for Disability Assistance has been included under Severe Disability Assistance.

⁶ In 2017, Social Assistance for Carers was replaced by Carer's Allowance.

⁷ For confidentiality reasons, 2016 and 2017 outlays for Social Assistance Board have been included under corresponding Unemployment Assistance.

⁸ Paid 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
8. Kindly indicate source when quoting from this release.
9. The advanced news release calendar may be accessed at www.nso.gov.mt