

During the first quarter of 2019, a €5.9 million increase was recorded in Social Security Benefits expenditure when compared to 2018.

## Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-March 2019

### Social Security Benefits Expenditure

Social Security Benefits amounted to €229.7 million by the end of March 2019, a 2.6 per cent rise from 2018. A €5.9 million rise in Contributory Benefits spending was the reason for the above-mentioned rise in Social Security Benefits expenditure (Table 1).

Contributory Benefits outlay totalled €182.1 million, reflecting a 3.3 per cent increase from 2018. This was due to a €4.3 million rise reported under Pensions in respect of Retirement, the result of a higher number of Two-Thirds pensioners, along with increases recorded in Contributory Bonus (€0.9 million) and Pensions in respect of Widowhood (€0.8 million). On the other hand, the rise in outlay was partially offset by a €0.1 million drop in Pensions in respect of Invalidity (Table 2).

Non-Contributory outlay amounted to €47.7 million, 0.1 per cent higher than 2018. Increased outlay was reported under Disability Pension/Allowance (€0.8 million), Old Age Pension (€0.6 million) and In-Work Benefit (€0.4 million). Conversely, Total Social Assistance registered the biggest drop in expenditure of €1.7 million, while minor drops were reported by Supplementary Assistance (€ 0.3 million), Non-Contributory Bonus and Medical Assistance (both €0.1 million).

### Social Security Beneficiaries<sup>1</sup>

In 2019, the largest cohort of Contributory beneficiaries was reported under the Two-Thirds Pension (48,235), also recording the biggest year-over-year rise with 1,188 more recipients than 2018. On the other hand, the Sickness Benefit reported the largest drop in beneficiaries with 693 less persons reported than the first quarter of 2018 (Table 2).

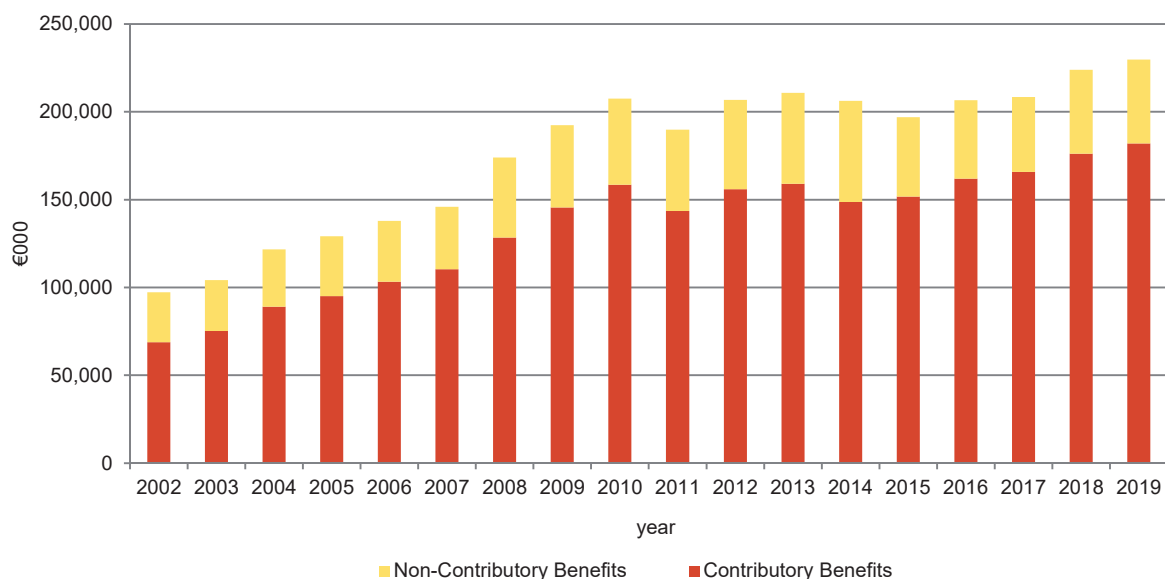
The largest share of Non-Contributory recipients was registered under Children's Allowance (39,075), followed by Supplementary Assistance (23,078). The In-Work Benefit recorded the largest increase in beneficiaries with 618 more recipients while, conversely, the biggest drop was reported by the Unemployment Assistance Taper (675) (Table 3) ■

<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 3

**Table 1. Comparative Social Security Benefits: January-March**

Description	Jan-Mar 2017	Jan-Mar 2018	Jan-Mar 2019	Jan-Mar 2019 / Jan-Mar 2018	
				Change	% change
	€ 000				
Contributory Benefits	165,818	176,228	182,080	5,852	3.3
Non-Contributory Benefits	42,579	47,627	47,654	26	0.1
<b>Total Social Security Benefits</b>	<b>208,398</b>	<b>223,855</b>	<b>229,733</b>	<b>5,879</b>	<b>2.6</b>

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



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

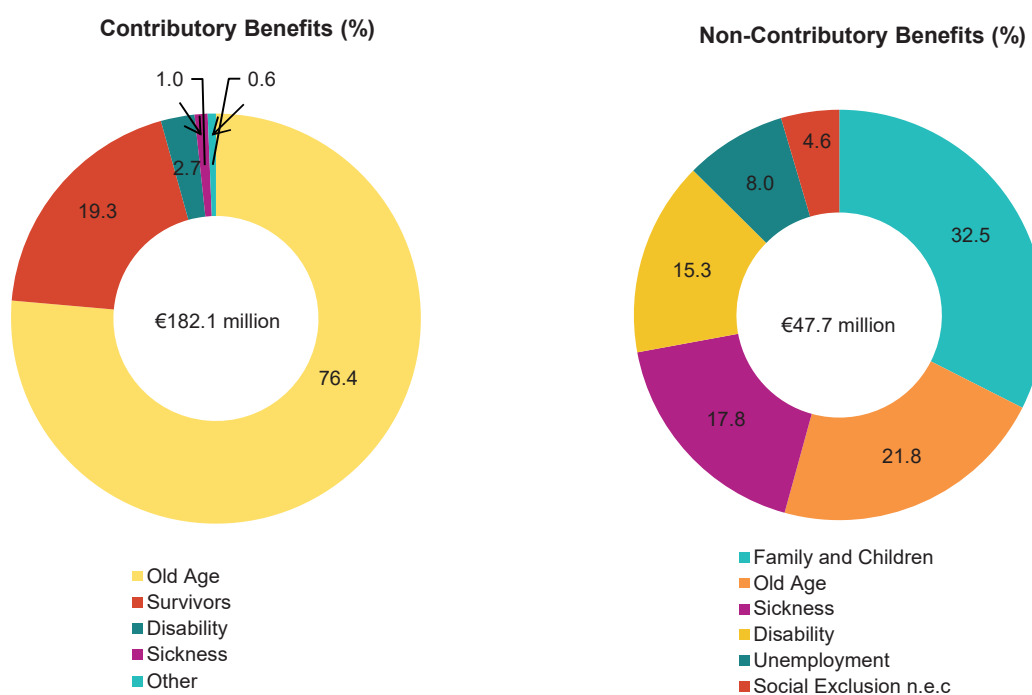


Table 2. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: January-March

Description	Jan-Mar 2017		Jan-Mar 2018		Jan-Mar 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
<b>Contributory Benefits</b>	-	<b>165,818</b>	-	<b>176,228</b>	-	<b>182,080</b>
<b>Pensions in respect of Retirement</b>	-	<b>113,600</b>	-	<b>122,113</b>	-	<b>126,405</b>
Retirement Pension	6,689	7,790	6,128	7,366	5,792	7,074
National Minimum Pension	6,010	8,440	6,272	8,871	6,162	8,857
Increased Retirement Pension	779	1,568	703	1,509	638	1,385
Two-thirds Pension	44,723	92,022	47,047	100,376	48,235	105,041
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,739	3,692	1,775	3,892	1,741	3,961
Decreased National Minimum Pension	53	89	60	99	56	87
<b>Pensions in respect of Invalidity</b>	-	<b>5,227</b>	-	<b>5,158</b>	-	<b>5,026</b>
Invalidity Pension	188	202	182	191	161	179
Increased Invalidity Pension	94	138	78	113	69	115
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,432	4,882	3,314	4,846	3,223	4,726
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3	4	3	7	3	6
<b>Pensions in respect of Widowhood</b>	-	<b>30,473</b>	-	<b>31,883</b>	-	<b>32,668</b>
Widows' Pension	226	404	210	395	202	387
Early Survivors' Pension	1,708	3,415	1,724	3,455	1,783	3,640
Survivors' Pension	7,511	15,343	7,826	16,333	8,187	17,216
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,268	11,310	6,357	11,699	6,113	11,426
Pension of Widows with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities</b>	-	<b>397</b>	-	<b>427</b>	-	<b>440</b>
Injury Benefit	484	308	542	335	514	354
Injury Pension	251	76	240	74	230	71
Injury Gratuity	6	13	7	18	5	15
<b>Other Benefits</b>	-	<b>2,647</b>	-	<b>2,684</b>	-	<b>2,693</b>
Unemployment Benefit	461	162	462	161	434	162
Special Unemployment Benefit	85	46	66	34	64	34
Maternity Benefit	1,000	835	927	792	953	853
Sickness Benefit	7,737	1,462	9,159	1,535	8,466	1,498
Orphans' Allowance	15	21	14	22	12	16
Marriage Grant	420	115	496	140	461	129
Re-Marriage Gratuity <sup>1</sup>	91	5	0	0	0	0
<b>Bonus</b>	-	<b>13,475</b>	-	<b>13,963</b>	-	<b>14,848</b>

<sup>1</sup>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-March

Description	Jan-Mar 2017		Jan-Mar 2018		Jan-Mar 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
<b>Non-Contributory Benefits</b>	-	<b>42,579</b>	-	<b>47,627</b>	-	<b>47,654</b>
<b>Child Allowance</b>	-	<b>9,751</b>	-	<b>9,861</b>	-	<b>9,889</b>
Childrens Allowance	40,664	9,556	40,909	9,451	39,075	9,372
Foster Child Allowance	166	196	167	410	170	517
<b>Old Age Pension</b>	-	<b>5,672</b>	-	<b>8,718</b>	-	<b>9,286</b>
Age Pension	4,825	5,144	4,808	6,505	4,757	6,800
Increased Carers' Allowance	87	145	616	1,670	855	1,963
Assistance Visually Impaired	318	383	332	543	365	524
<b>Disability Pension/Allowance</b>	-	<b>4,260</b>	-	<b>6,300</b>	-	<b>7,116</b>
Disability Child Allowance	1,235	342	1,325	385	1,437	518
Disability Assistance <sup>1</sup>	2	-	94	132	140	173
Severe Disability Assistance	3,084	3,918	3,003	4,936	3,069	5,147
Increased Severe Disability Assistance <sup>2</sup>	-	-	404	847	550	1,278
<b>Total Social Assistance</b>	-	<b>14,964</b>	-	<b>13,832</b>	-	<b>12,184</b>
Drug Addicts Allowance	34	10	22	8	24	9
Social Assistance	5,420	6,384	5,060	5,927	4,547	5,378
Carers' Allowance	269	288	229	242	183	199
Social Assistance for Single Parents	2,947	3,319	2,694	3,077	2,478	2,871
Unemployment Assistance	1,575	1,592	1,080	1,235	873	1,061
Social Assistance Board <sup>2</sup>	4	2	0	0	1	-
Unemployment Assistance Taper	2,739	1,974	2,818	1,907	2,143	1,470
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,493	1,395	1,353	1,435	1,082	1,196
<b>Medical Assistance</b>	-	<b>4,252</b>	-	<b>4,253</b>	-	<b>4,327</b>
Sickness Assistance	11,989	4,220	11,778	4,225	11,577	4,307
Leprosy Assistance	28	15	24	13	23	13
Milk Grant	35	16	24	14	15	7
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Supplementary Assistance</b>	<b>22,644</b>	<b>2,227</b>	<b>23,561</b>	<b>2,452</b>	<b>23,078</b>	<b>2,164</b>
<b>In-Work Benefit</b>	<b>1,898</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>2,963</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>3,581</b>	<b>1,079</b>
<b>Bonus</b>	-	<b>1,245</b>	-	<b>1,551</b>	-	<b>1,608</b>

<sup>1</sup> For confidentiality reasons, 2016 outlay for Disability Assistance has been included under Severely Disability Assistance.

<sup>2</sup> For confidentiality reasons, 2019 outlay for Social Assistance Board has been included under 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: <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](http://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](https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx)