

By the end of June 2019, a €15.0 million rise in Social Security Benefits outlay in comparison to 2018 was reported.

Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-June 2019

Social Security Benefits Expenditure

Social Security Benefits amounted to €512.0 million during the first six months of 2019, 3.0 per cent higher than 2018. A €15.2 million rise in Contributory Benefits spending was the catalyst for the increase, partially offset by a €0.2 million drop in Non-Contributory expenditure (Table 1).

Contributory Benefits outlay totalled €415.3 million, reflecting a 3.8 per cent increase from 2018. This was due to a €13.1 million rise reported under Pensions in respect of Retirement, the result of a higher number of Two-Thirds pensioners, followed by increases recorded in Contributory Bonus (€1.5 million) and Pensions in respect of Widowhood (€1.0 million). Conversely, decreases in outlay were registered under Pensions in respect of Invalidity (€0.3 million) and Other Benefits (€0.1 million) (Table 2).

Non-Contributory spending amounted to €96.7 million, which is 0.2 per cent lower than 2018. Total Social Assistance registered the biggest drop in expenditure of €3.1 million, while minor drops were reported in Supplementary Assistance (€0.3 million) and Child Allowance (€0.1 million). In contrast, increased outlay was reported under Disability Pension/Allowance (€1.5 million), Old Age Pension (€1.3 million), In-Work Benefit (€0.4 million) and Medical Assistance (€0.1 million) (Table 3).

Between April and June 2019, Social Security Benefits outlay reached €282.3 million, 82.6 per cent of which was spent on Contributory benefits. This represented a €9.1 million rise from the €273.2 million recorded during the second quarter of 2018 and was the result of an €8.8 million increase in the contributory Pensions in respect of Retirement (Tables 4 and 5).

Social Security Beneficiaries

During the first six months of 2019, the Two-Thirds Pension registered the largest cohort of recipients at 49,770 persons, coupled with the biggest year-over-year rise of 1,957. On the other hand, the National Minimum Widows' Pension reported the largest drop in beneficiaries with 433 less persons reported than the corresponding period of 2018 (Table 2).

The largest share of Non-Contributory recipients was registered under Children's Allowance (40,549). This was despite a 1,489 drop in beneficiaries, the largest reported among the twenty-three active Non-Contributory benefits. In contrast, In-Work Benefit recipients exhibited the largest increase of 626, rising from 3,497 in 2018 to 4,123 a year later (Table 3).

Quarter-wise was a similar story with the Two-Thirds Pension (49,278) and Children's Allowance (39,705) reporting the largest cohorts of Contributory and Non-Contributory beneficiaries respectively (Tables 4 and 5) ■

Table 1. Comparative Social Security Benefits: January-June

Description	Jan-June 2017	Jan-June 2018	Jan-June 2019	Jan-June 2019 / Jan-June 2018	
				Change	% change
	€ 000				
Contributory Benefits	383,459	400,060	415,289	15,229	3.8
Non-Contributory Benefits	96,336	96,962	96,736	-226	-0.2
Total Social Security Benefits	479,796	497,023	512,025	15,002	3.0

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

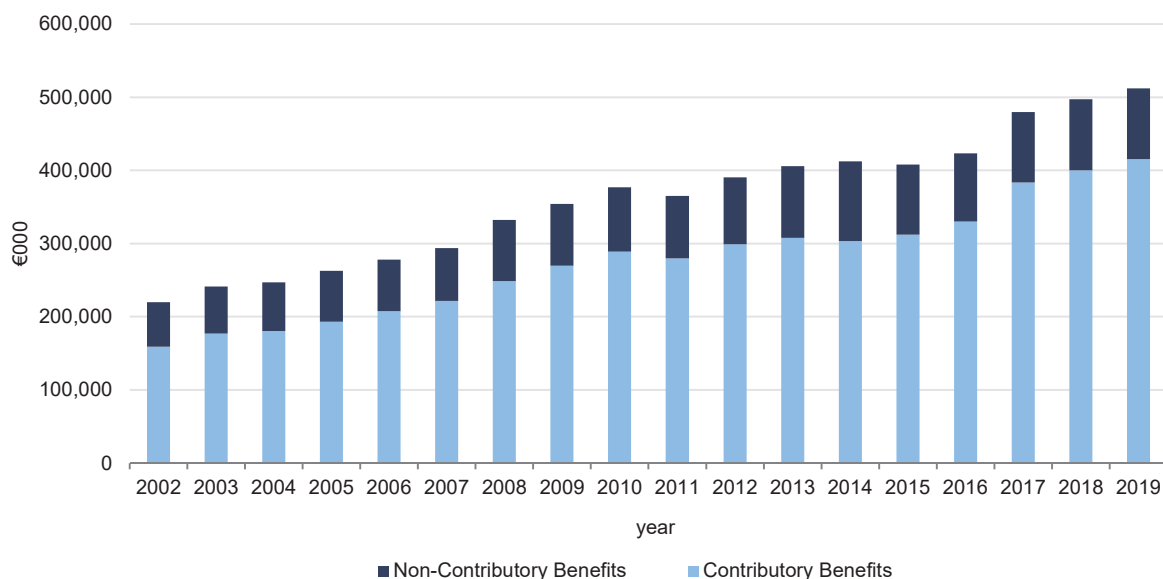


Chart 2. Social Security Benefits Expenditure by ESSPROS functions for January - June 2019

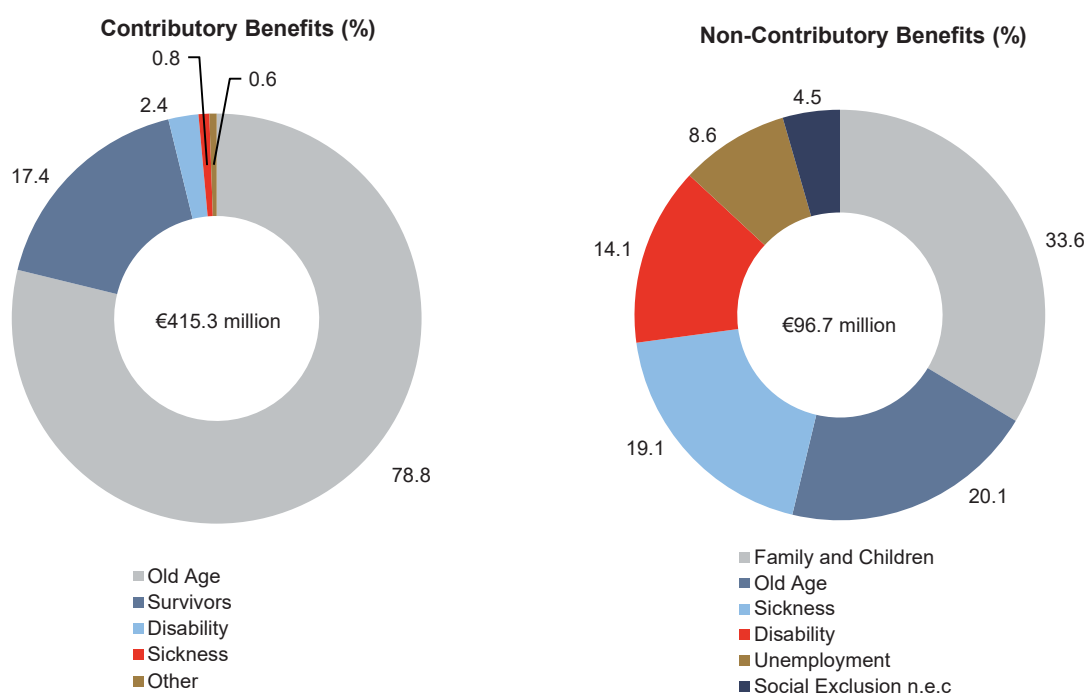


Table 2. Comparative Social Security Contributory Benefits: January-June

Description	Jan-June 2017		Jan-June 2018		Jan-June 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	383,459	-	400,060	-	415,289
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	266,327	-	280,474	-	293,609
Retirement Pension	6,800	18,035	6,210	16,896	5,907	15,498
National Minimum Pension	6,186	16,846	6,340	17,764	6,292	17,690
Increased Retirement Pension	801	3,683	714	3,415	650	3,184
Two-thirds Pension	45,735	219,971	47,813	234,400	49,770	249,014
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,786	7,595	1,820	7,786	1,796	8,022
Decreased National Minimum Pension	57	197	60	212	61	202
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	10,427	-	10,141	-	9,873
Invalidity Pension	195	398	184	376	164	351
Increased Invalidity Pension	94	270	78	203	69	224
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,546	9,751	3,397	9,551	3,298	9,293
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension ¹	3	9	3	12	3	4
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	62,750	-	64,531	-	65,493
Widows' Pension	227	830	211	775	205	778
Early Survivors' Pension	1,745	6,826	1,778	7,085	1,838	7,333
Survivors' Pension	7,803	31,807	8,178	33,081	8,477	34,931
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,478	23,287	6,603	23,590	6,170	22,451
Pension of Widows with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	839	-	804	-	840
Injury Benefit	987	654	1,005	630	967	665
Injury Pension	253	152	240	146	231	140
Injury Gratuity	16	33	11	27	15	34
Other Benefits	-	5,585	-	5,345	-	5,231
Unemployment Benefit	723	338	670	320	684	408
Special Unemployment Benefit	128	95	113	67	101	73
Maternity Benefit	1,782	1,723	1,876	1,699	1,753	1,587
Sickness Benefit	12,336	3,072	13,322	2,896	12,954	2,842
Orphans' Allowance	17	51	14	40	12	31
Marriage Grant	1,027	301	1,149	323	1,028	290
Re-Marriage Gratuity ²	91	5	0	0	0	0
Bonus	-	37,531	-	38,765	-	40,243

¹ In May 2019, an amount was recouped from Government homes due to overpayments.

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-June 2017		Jan-June 2018		Jan-June 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	96,336	-	96,962	-	96,736
Child Allowance	-	19,956	-	19,944	-	19,885
Childrens Allowance	41,906	19,433	42,038	19,112	40,549	18,995
Foster Child Allowance	167	523	176	832	178	890
Old Age Pension	-	13,866	-	15,600	-	16,881
Age Pension	4,971	11,890	4,906	11,722	4,866	12,130
Increased Carers' Allowance	288	1,062	716	2,890	1,010	3,758
Assistance Visually Impaired	330	914	351	988	374	993
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	10,071	-	11,388	-	12,885
Disability Child Allowance	1,288	716	1,379	778	1,507	1,065
Disability Assistance	36	81	108	240	154	323
Severe Disability Assistance	3,176	9,129	3,070	8,688	3,157	9,147
Increased Severe Disability Assistance	103	145	486	1,682	599	2,350
Total Social Assistance	-	33,620	-	30,405	-	27,316
Drug Addicts Allowance	49	48	39	20	41	23
Social Assistance	5,630	14,702	5,279	13,482	4,759	12,332
Carers' Allowance	280	682	243	557	223	516
Social Assistance for Single Parents	3,057	7,668	2,830	7,055	2,572	6,593
Unemployment Assistance	1,718	3,175	1,209	2,481	945	2,056
Social Assistance Board ¹	5	3	0	0	3	3
Unemployment Assistance Taper	3,058	4,385	3,119	3,972	2,379	3,439
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,669	2,957	1,489	2,838	1,211	2,355
Medical Assistance	-	8,520	-	8,490	-	8,601
Sickness Assistance	12,250	8,458	11,995	8,434	11,792	8,561
Leprosy Assistance	28	30	24	27	23	25
Milk Grant	55	32	50	30	25	15
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary Assistance	24,020	4,537	24,165	4,667	23,542	4,321
In-Work Benefit	2,616	842	3,497	1,624	4,123	1,985
Bonus	-	4,924	-	4,844	-	4,861

¹ For confidentiality reasons, 2019 outlay for Social Assistance Board has been included under Unemployment Assistance.

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

Description	Apr-June 2017		Apr-June 2018		Apr-June 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	217,641	-	223,833	-	233,209
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	152,727	-	158,361	-	167,204
Retirement Pension	6,711	10,245	6,101	9,530	5,256	8,424
National Minimum Pension	6,098	8,406	6,220	8,894	6,135	8,833
Increased Retirement Pension	772	2,115	694	1,905	618	1,799
Two-thirds Pension	45,199	127,948	47,297	134,024	49,278	143,973
Increased National Minimum Pension	1,755	3,904	1,763	3,894	1,752	4,061
Decreased National Minimum Pension	54	108	57	113	57	114
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	5,200	-	4,984	-	4,847
Invalidity Pension	185	196	172	185	153	172
Increased Invalidity Pension	86	132	77	90	66	109
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	3,407	4,869	3,272	4,704	3,129	4,567
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension ¹	3	4	3	4	3	-2
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	32,277	-	32,649	-	32,825
Widows' Pension	225	426	205	380	201	391
Early Survivors' Pension	1,721	3,411	1,743	3,630	1,808	3,693
Survivors' Pension	7,685	16,463	7,957	16,748	8,342	17,715
National Minimum Widows' Pension	6,335	11,977	6,357	11,891	5,928	11,025
Pension of Widows with Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benefit in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	442	-	377	-	400
Injury Benefit	587	346	560	295	546	312
Injury Pension	248	76	239	72	226	70
Injury Gratuity	10	20	4	9	10	19
Other Benefits	-	2,938	-	2,661	-	2,538
Unemployment Benefit	417	176	376	159	413	247
Special Unemployment Benefit	75	48	66	32	60	39
Maternity Benefit	872	888	1,033	907	873	734
Sickness Benefit	6,473	1,610	5,947	1,361	6,249	1,344
Orphans' Allowance	14	30	12	18	11	15
Marriage Grant	607	186	653	183	567	160
Bonus	-	24,056	-	24,802	-	25,396

¹ In May 2019, an amount was recouped from Government homes due to overpayments.

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

Description	Apr-June 2017		Apr-June 2018		Apr-June 2019	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	53,757	-	49,335	-	49,083
Child Allowance	-	10,205	-	10,082	-	9,996
Childrens Allowance	41,035	9,878	41,213	9,661	39,705	9,623
Foster Child Allowance	163	327	169	421	173	373
Old Age Pension	-	8,194	-	6,882	-	7,595
Age Pension	4,846	6,746	4,746	5,216	4,689	5,330
Increased Carers' Allowance	280	917	666	1,220	960	1,795
Assistance Visually Impaired	327	531	347	445	369	469
Disability Pension/Allowance	-	5,811	-	5,088	-	5,769
Disability Child Allowance	1,255	374	1,338	393	1,467	547
Disability Assistance	36	64	106	109	149	150
Severe Disability Assistance	3,159	5,228	2,916	3,752	3,104	4,000
Increased Severe Disability Assistance	103	145	483	834	594	1,072
Total Social Assistance	-	18,656	-	16,573	-	15,133
Drug Addicts Allowance	36	38	28	11	33	15
Social Assistance	5,329	8,318	4,956	7,555	4,489	6,954
Carers' Allowance	272	393	227	315	212	317
Social Assistance for Single Parents	2,905	4,349	2,678	3,979	2,432	3,722
Unemployment Assistance	1,331	1,584	1,008	1,246	812	994
Social Assistance Board ¹	2	-	0	0	3	2
Unemployment Assistance Taper	2,837	2,412	2,674	2,064	2,081	1,969
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,481	1,562	1,297	1,403	1,032	1,160
Medical Assistance	-	4,268	-	4,238	-	4,274
Sickness Assistance	11,959	4,238	11,697	4,209	11,463	4,254
Leprosy Assistance	27	15	24	13	22	12
Milk Grant	42	16	34	15	21	8
Tuberculosis Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplementary allowance	23,652	2,309	23,775	2,215	23,177	2,157
In-Work Benefit	1,909	634	2,239	964	2,496	906
Bonus	-	3,680	-	3,293	-	3,253

¹ For confidentiality reasons, 2017 outlay for Social Assistance Board has been included under corresponding 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
8. Kindly indicate source when quoting from this release.
9. The advanced news release calendar may be accessed at www.nso.gov.mt