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Government Expenditure on Social Security Benefits: January-June 2023

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During the first half of 2023, Government outlay towards Social Security Benefits rose by €52.5 million in comparison to 2022.

Social Security Benefits Expenditure

Between January and June 2023, spending on Social Security Benefits totalled €680.6 million, 8.4 per cent higher than the previous year. Higher expenditure was reported for both Contributory (€34.9 million) and Non-Contributory Benefits (€17.6 million) (Table 1).

Government spending towards Contributory Benefits amounted to €548.5 million, a 6.8 per cent rise from 2022. Pensions in respect of Retirement recorded the largest increase of €19.9 million, a result of 1,134 more persons in receipt of the Two-Thirds Pension. Further increases were registered under Contributory Bonus (€8.4 million) and Pensions in respect of Widowhood (€6.7 million). The rise in outlay was marginally offset by a drop of €0.1 million under Other Benefits (Table 2).

By the end of June 2023, €132.1 million went towards Non-Contributory Benefits, a 15.3 per cent increase in comparison to the previous year. All benefit categories registered increases, with the main ones recorded under Total In-Work Benefit (€4.3 million), Child Allowance (€2.9 million) and Total Supplementary Allowance (€2.9 million) (Table 3).

In comparison to 2022, an additional €27.4 million was spent on social security benefits between April and June 2023, amounting to €321.4 million. Contributory expenditure rose by €19.0 million, with the largest increase registered under Pensions in respect of Retirement (€11.1 million). Furthermore, spending towards Non-Contributory Benefits increased by €8.4 million, with the largest growths recorded under Total In-Work Benefit (€2.0 million), Total Supplementary Allowance (€1.7 million) and Child Allowance (€1.6 million) (Tables 4 and 5).

Social Security Beneficiaries

During the first six months of 2023, the largest number of Contributory beneficiaries was recorded under the Two-Thirds Pension (57,750). The same benefit reported the highest increase among recipients, with 1,134 additional pensioners when compared to 2022. On the other hand, the biggest drop in recipients was registered under Sickness Benefit (2,462) (Table 2).

Children's Allowance reported the highest number of Non-Contributory recipients in the first half of 2023, with 43,041 families in receipt of the benefit. In-Work Benefit recorded the largest increase in beneficiaries at 16,494, while the largest decline in recipients was witnessed under Sickness Assistance (396) (Table 3).

In the second quarter, the Two-Thirds Pension (57,071) and Children's Allowance (42,072) were the most received Contributory and Non-Contributory Benefits, respectively (Tables 4 and 5).

Chart 1. Social Security Benefits Expenditure

January-June in euro

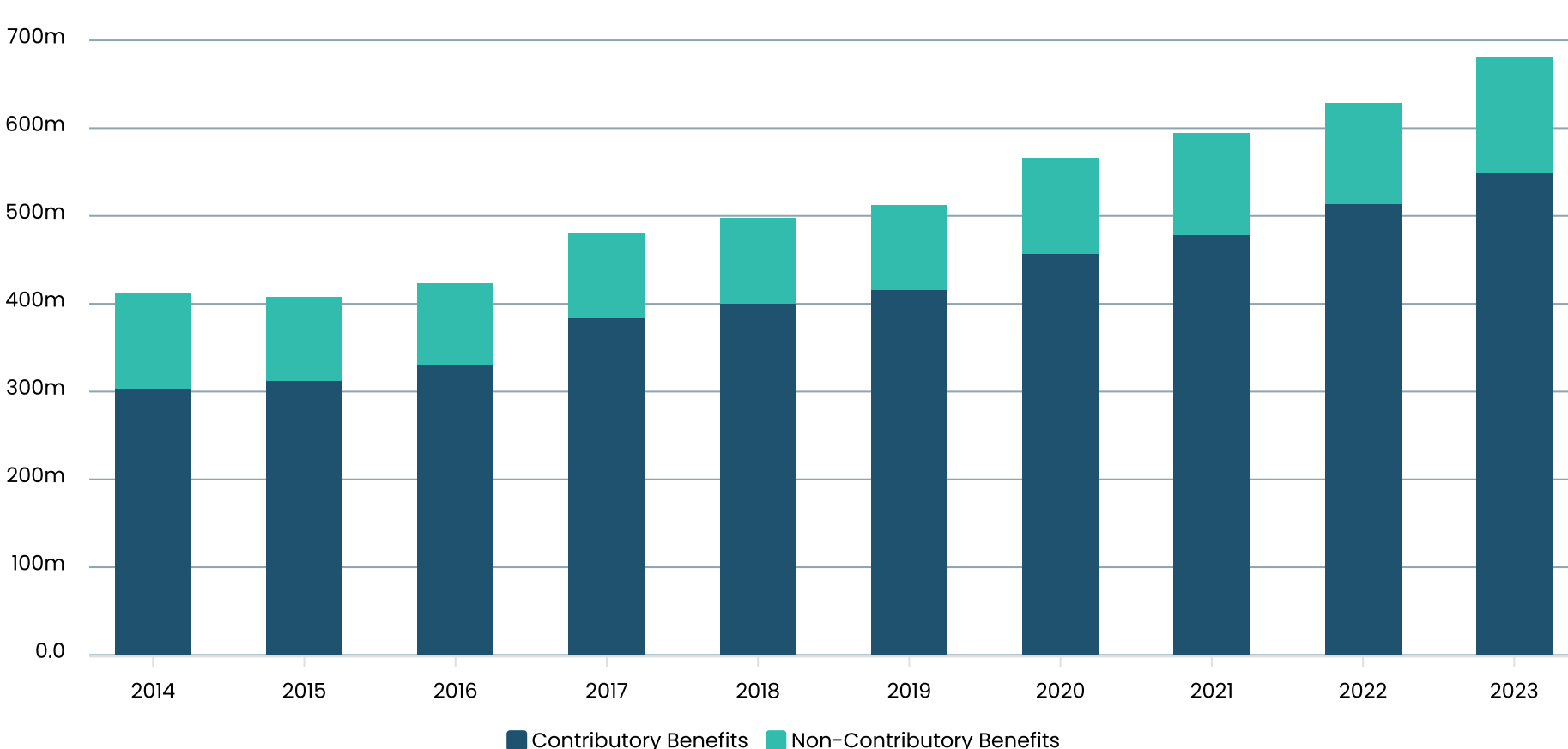
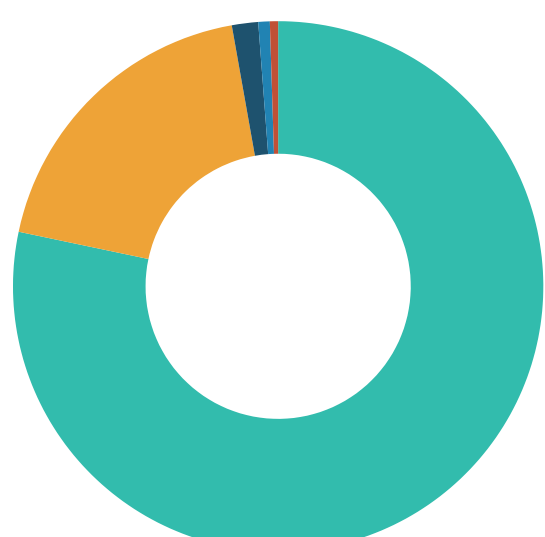


Chart 2. Social Security Benefits Expenditure by ESSPROS functions

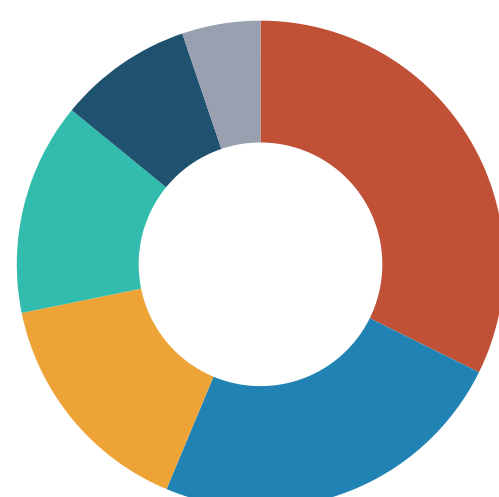
Contributory Benefits (%)

January-June 2023



Non-Contributory Benefits (%)

January-June 2023



● Old Age ● Survivors ● Disability ● Sickness ● Other

● Family and Children ● Old Age ● Disability ● Sickness ● Social Exclusion n.e.c. ● Unemployment

Table 1. Social Security Benefits Expenditure by period and description

Description	Jan-June 2021	Jan-June 2022	Jan-June 2023	Jan-June 2023 / Jan-June 2022	
				Change	% change
				€ 000	
Contributory Benefits	478,839	513,640	548,548	34,908	6.8
Non-Contributory Benefits	115,518	114,524	132,092	17,568	15.3
Total Social Security Benefits	594,356	628,163	680,639	52,476	8.4

Table 2. Social Security Contributory Benefits by period and description

Description	Jan-June 2021		Jan-June 2022		Jan-June 2023	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	478,839	-	513,640	-	548,548
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	335,576	-	359,908	-	379,851
Retirement Pension	5,627	18,870	4,681	12,894	3,672	12,131
National Minimum Pension	7,441	22,124	7,895	25,801	8,029	27,122
Increased Retirement Pension	1,069	4,786	556	3,009	478	2,758
Two-Thirds Pension	53,692	277,220	56,616	305,157	57,750	325,267
Increased National Minimum Pension	2,701	12,343	2,592	12,818	2,376	12,386
Decreased National Minimum Pension	69	232	71	227	59	188
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	8,966	-	8,856	-	8,843
Invalidity Pension	111	259	98	254	93	259
Increased Invalidity Pension	45	156	37	136	27	127
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	2,767	8,551	2,618	8,466	2,435	8,457
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension ¹	2	c	2	c	1	c
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	81,045	-	86,816	-	93,502
Widows' Pension	150	606	145	687	134	662
Early Survivors' Pension	1,816	7,941	1,515	6,260	1,133	4,804
Survivors' Pension	10,092	49,750	11,846	60,099	12,658	69,024
National Minimum Widows' Pension	5,330	22,747	4,866	19,769	3,987	19,011
Benefits in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	682	-	783	-	746
Injury Benefit	765	530	810	596	684	562
Injury Pension	212	136	201	127	196	133
Injury Gratuity	8	16	15	60	11	51
Other Benefits	-	5,625	-	5,814	-	5,711
Unemployment Benefit	1,387	731	647	444	683	524
Special Unemployment Benefit	132	104	76	55	59	44
Maternity Benefit	1,689	1,589	1,685	1,536	1,759	1,659
Sickness Benefit	11,139	2,922	16,106	3,353	13,644	3,050
Orphans' Allowance	8	26	9	26	7	19
Marriage Grant	833	253	1,334	398	1,273	415
COVID-19 Benefits	-	607	-	c	-	-
Additional Unemployment Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disability Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medical Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parent Benefit ²	1,156	607	2	c	-	-
Bonus	-	46,338	-	51,463	-	59,895

^cConfidential

¹For confidentiality reasons, outlay for Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension has been included under National Minimum Invalidity Pension.

²For confidentiality reasons, 2022 outlay for Parent Benefit has been included under Other Benefits aggregate.

Table 3. Social Security Non-Contributory Benefits by period and description

Description	Jan-June 2021		Jan-June 2022		Jan-June 2023	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	115,518	-	114,524	-	132,092
Child Allowance	-	21,969	-	21,439	-	24,376
Children's Allowance	42,662	18,670	42,668	18,104	43,041	18,187
Foster Child Allowance	184	947	193	981	195	917
Child Benefit Bonus	1,611	604	1,434	586	1,567	650
Children's Allowance Supplement	42,262	1,749	42,290	1,768	42,666	4,614
Tapered Foster Child Allowance ¹	-	-	-	-	3	7
Age Pension	4,577	12,344	4,203	10,105	4,038	10,536
Disability Pensions/Allowance	-	16,938	-	16,646	-	18,563
Disability Child Allowance	1,688	1,195	1,872	1,551	2,098	1,800
Disability Assistance	225	521	315	606	393	820
Severe Disability Assistance	3,457	10,601	3,765	10,001	3,918	10,995
Increased Severe Disability Assistance	816	3,526	901	3,382	935	3,720
Assistance Visually Impaired	411	1,095	420	1,105	424	1,227
Total Social Assistance	-	23,985	-	22,532	-	24,857
Drug Addicts Allowance	56	28	51	26	67	35
Social Assistance	4,229	11,593	3,986	11,117	3,797	11,504
Social Assistance for Single Parents	2,473	6,484	2,305	6,340	2,186	6,700
Unemployment Assistance	841	1,746	462	854	352	771
Social Assistance Board ²	2	c	2	c	1	c
Unemployment Assistance Taper	1,341	1,720	1,236	1,888	1,080	1,782
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,150	2,414	1,150	2,306	1,561	4,064
Medical Assistance	-	9,867	-	9,465	-	9,833
Sickness Assistance	11,374	9,822	11,040	9,427	10,644	9,800
Leprosy Assistance	18	24	17	21	15	20
Milk Grant	42	21	31	17	34	14
Tuberculosis Assistance ³	-	-	-	-	1	c
Carers Allowances/Grants	-	5,240	-	5,714	-	6,605
Increased Carers' Allowance	1,281	4,209	1,374	4,543	1,424	4,956
Carers' Allowance	365	914	380	949	428	1,159
Carer's Grant	394	117	418	223	431	490
Total Supplementary Allowance	-	5,964	-	8,580	-	11,465
Supplementary Allowance	22,387	5,964	21,628	8,580	21,300	8,563
Additional COLA Household Mechanism ⁴	-	-	-	-	6,250	2,901
Assistance to Help the Elderly Live Independently	36,370	11,488	38,445	12,764	39,936	13,714
Total In-Work Benefit	-	2,925	-	2,685	-	6,977
In-Work Benefit ⁵	5,122	2,546	7,198	2,594	23,692	6,977
In-Work Supplement ⁶	1,506	379	354	91	1	c
Bonus	-	4,796	-	4,594	-	5,166

^cConfidential

¹From 2023, foster carers who adopt the child they have been fostering will continue to receive a percentage of the Foster Care Allowance over a maximum four-year period.

²For confidentiality reasons, Social Assistance Board outlay has been included under corresponding Unemployment Assistance expenditure.

³For confidentiality reasons, Tuberculosis Assistance outlay for 2023 has been included under corresponding Sickness Assistance expenditure.

⁴Additional COLA payments first made to vulnerable families in December 2022, to offset the cost of living increase.

⁵In-Work Benefit payments for 2023 are to be taken as provisional. Refer to Methodological Note 3.

⁶For confidentiality reasons, In-Work Supplement outlay for 2023 has been included under corresponding In-Work Benefit.

Table 4. Social Security Contributory Benefits by quarter and description

Description	Apr-Jun 2021		Apr-Jun 2022		Apr-Jun 2023	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Contributory Benefits	-	273,222	-	242,082	-	261,102
Pensions in respect of Retirement	-	190,660	-	157,663	-	168,765
Retirement Pension	5,035	10,268	3,738	5,254	3,372	5,144
National Minimum Pension	7,295	11,604	7,766	12,537	7,887	13,929
Increased Retirement Pension	884	2,512	519	1,357	460	1,224
Two-Thirds Pension	53,078	160,030	55,969	132,065	57,071	142,091
Increased National Minimum Pension	2,525	6,125	2,530	6,360	2,323	6,298
Decreased National Minimum Pension	68	121	66	90	56	79
Pensions in respect of Invalidity	-	4,460	-	4,383	-	4,420
Invalidity Pension	107	131	94	126	91	130
Increased Invalidity Pension	44	78	35	66	27	59
National Minimum Invalidity Pension	2,650	4,251	2,525	4,191	2,376	4,232
Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension ¹	2	c	2	c	1	c
Pensions in respect of Widowhood	-	46,120	-	49,371	-	53,267
Widows' Pension	148	376	139	375	131	384
Early Survivors' Pension	1,654	4,318	1,192	3,272	972	2,416
Survivors' Pension	9,912	28,821	11,614	35,151	12,409	39,737
National Minimum Widows' Pension	5,138	12,605	4,101	10,573	3,814	10,731
Benefits in respect of Industrial Injuries and Gratuities	-	356	-	423	-	344
Injury Benefit	431	278	485	314	361	257
Injury Pension	208	70	198	64	194	67
Injury Gratuity	4	8	13	44	5	19
Other Benefits	-	2,717	-	2,814	-	2,731
Unemployment Benefit	782	302	356	180	396	218
Special Unemployment Benefit	73	42	38	23	32	20
Maternity Benefit	955	894	885	684	900	745
Sickness Benefit	6,145	1,305	9,210	1,685	6,922	1,496
Orphans' Allowance	8	14	9	14	7	11
Marriage Grant	487	160	671	227	695	242
COVID-19 Benefits	-	371	-	c	-	-
Additional Unemployment Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disability Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medical Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parent Benefit	1,151	371	1	c	-	-
Bonus	-	28,539	-	27,429	-	31,574

^cConfidential

¹For confidentiality reasons, Decreased National Minimum Invalidity Pension outlay has been included under National Minimum Invalidity Pension.

Table 5. Social Security Non-Contributory Benefits by quarter and description

Description	Apr-Jun 2021		Apr-Jun 2022		Apr-Jun 2023	
	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000	Beneficiaries	€ 000
Non-Contributory Benefits	-	57,037	-	51,912	-	60,292
Child Allowance	-	10,915	-	10,632	-	12,237
Children's Allowance	41,596	9,293	41,635	8,964	42,072	9,107
Foster Child Allowance	181	466	186	477	186	477
Child Benefit Bonus	846	273	777	310	731	303
Children's Allowance Supplement	41,318	882	41,528	880	41,960	2,347
Tapered Foster Child Allowance ¹	-	-	-	-	3	4
Age Pension	4,341	6,591	4,068	5,002	3,907	5,176
Disability Pensions/Allowance	-	9,222	-	8,416	-	9,292
Disability Child Allowance	1,648	610	1,828	783	2,064	917
Disability Assistance	221	224	311	315	383	413
Severe Disability Assistance	3,405	5,884	3,709	5,052	3,859	5,496
Increased Severe Disability Assistance	803	1,963	887	1,712	920	1,857
Assistance Visually Impaired	402	541	413	553	421	609
Total Social Assistance	-	13,957	-	10,332	-	11,054
Drug Addicts Allowance	39	16	38	14	48	14
Social Assistance	4,034	7,022	3,823	5,064	3,656	4,942
Social Assistance for Single Parents	2,368	3,805	2,202	2,825	2,115	2,835
Unemployment Assistance	693	903	342	397	289	373
Social Assistance Board ²	2	c	2	c	1	c
Unemployment Assistance Taper	1,168	962	1,094	796	962	812
Subsidiary Unemployment Assistance	1,053	1,249	1,031	1,235	1,413	2,077
Medical Assistance	-	5,583	-	5,328	-	5,535
Sickness Assistance	11,050	5,558	10,721	5,308	10,359	5,515
Leprosy Assistance	17	13	16	12	15	11
Milk Grant	33	11	24	8	26	9
Tuberculosis Assistance ³	-	-	-	-	1	c
Carers Allowances/Grants	-	2,256	-	2,741	-	3,508
Increased Carers' Allowance	1,202	2,082	1,289	2,311	1,330	2,487
Carers' Allowance	344	168	360	422	418	532
Carer's Grant	20	6	10	8	431	489
Total Supplementary Allowance	-	2,978	-	4,284	-	5,966
Supplementary Allowance	21,949	2,978	21,314	4,284	20,947	4,238
Additional COLA Household Mechanism ⁴	-	-	-	-	2,760	1,728
Assistance to Help the Elderly Live Independently	11	390	2	346	13	437
Total In-Work Benefit	-	1,709	-	1,661	-	3,639
In-Work Benefit ⁵	2,721	1,571	4,359	1,648	23,021	3,639
In-Work Supplement	511	138	45	13	-	-
Bonus	-	3,436	-	3,171	-	3,447

^cConfidential

¹From 2023, foster carers who adopt the child they have been fostering will continue to receive a percentage of the Foster Care Allowance over a maximum four-year period.

²For confidentiality reasons, Social Assistance Board outlay has been included under corresponding Unemployment Assistance expenditure.

³For confidentiality reasons, Tuberculosis Assistance outlay for 2023 has been included under corresponding Sickness Assistance expenditure.

⁴Additional COLA payments first made to vulnerable families in December 2022, to offset the cost of living increase.

⁵In-Work Benefit payments for 2023 are to be taken as provisional. Refer to Methodological Note 3.

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's Unique Beneficiaries Report.
3. In 2022, a complete revamp of the In-Work Benefit (IWB) was carried out by the Income Support and Compliance Division, with now payments being made to all eligible parents irrespective of application status. Payments are made in arrears, hence the reporting period for reference year N is being covered by payments made between April of year N to March of year N+1. Due to the differences in reporting methods between the data sources listed in Notes 1 and 2, and to maintain consistency in line with the restructuring performed, from 2023 the Unique Beneficiaries Report has been used to extract both the expenditure and beneficiaries data for the IWB.
4. For every benefit, the corresponding beneficiaries reflect any person who has received the benefit at least once during the reference period. 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.
5. The functions provided in charts 2 are in line with the European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics (ESSPROS) Manual 2022 Edition (ISBN 978-92-76-58596-1). This methodology is mandatory for all EU Member States. A detailed breakdown of which benefits are classified under each function is provided in the Social Security Benefits Glossary that can be accessed from the 'Sources and Methods' link listed in note 7.
6. Expenditure data is not normally subject to revision, while beneficiaries data may be revised. As of 2023, latest figures for the IWB are to be taken as provisional and subject to revision.
7. Figures may not add up exactly due to rounding.
8. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:
[Statistical Database](#)
[Sources and Methods](#)
8. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.
9. A detailed news release calendar is available [online](#).