



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection

Quarterly Statistical Report

Quarter 1 2021

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Enquiries

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statsunit@welfare.ie



Background

The quarterly statistical report provides summary information on Income and Expenditure as well as total recipients of the main schemes administered by the Department of Social Protection.

The quarters referenced in this report cover the following periods

	Period
Quarter 1	January 1st - March 31st
Quarter 2	April 1st - June 30th
Quarter 3	July 1st - September 30th
Quarter 4	October 1st - December 31st

These statistics may be subject to revision and should be considered as provisional.

Classifications

The schemes in the report are grouped into programmes according to the social need they address. The programmes and their associated main schemes are set out in the table below.

Programme	Schemes	
Pensions	State Pension Contributory Widow(er)'s Contributory Pension	State Pension Non-Contributory
Working Age Income Supports	Jobseeker's Benefit Jobseeker's Benefit for the Self employed Maternity Benefit Paternity Benefit	Jobseeker's Allowance One Parent Family Payment Widow(er)'s Non-Contributory Pension Pandemic Unemployment Payment
Illness Disability and Caring	Carer's Benefit Invalidity Pension Illness Benefit	Carer's Allowance Disability Allowance
Children	Child Benefit Working Family Payment	Back to Work Family Dividend

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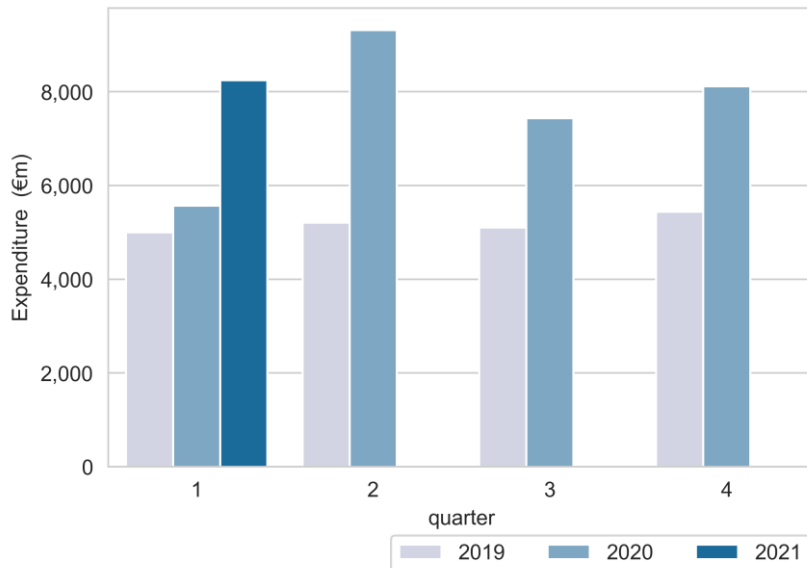
Other Statistics issued by the Department of Social Protection

The Department also produces additional statistical reports which can be viewed at www.gov.ie/dsp/statistics



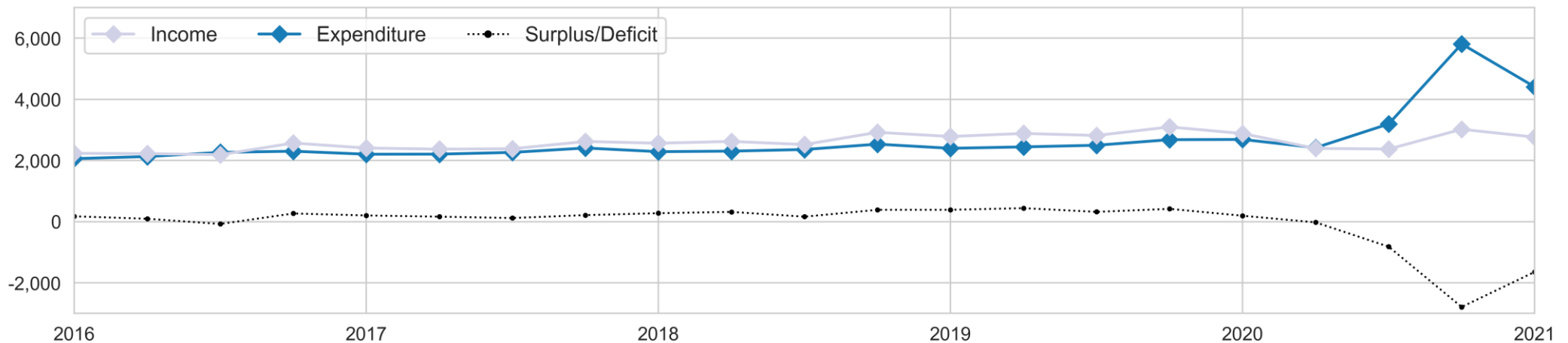
Overall Expenditure

Figure 1: Expenditure (€m) by quarter



- The overall expenditure of the Department of Social Protection to end-March 2021 was €8.2 billion. This was €2.7 billion, or 48%, higher than the same period in 2020, and an increase of €126 million (2%) compared to Quarter 4 2020.
- Expenditure on Social Assistance schemes was an estimated €3.8 billion, an increase of 33% or €1 billion compared to the same period last year.
- Expenditure on schemes financed from the Social Insurance Fund was an estimated €4.4 billion, an increase of €1.7 billion or 64% compared to the same period last year. This increase is primarily related to the Pandemic Unemployment Payment and Enhanced Illness Benefit schemes.
- Social Insurance Fund income was estimated at €2.8 billion this quarter, €116 million lower than the same quarter last year. For that reason the Social Insurance Fund recorded a current account deficit of €1.6 billion for the first quarter of the year.
- On a 12-month rolling basis, from Quarter 2 2020 to Quarter 1 2021, total expenditure of the Department was estimated at €33.1 billion.

Figure 2: Social Insurance Fund Income and Expenditure (€m)

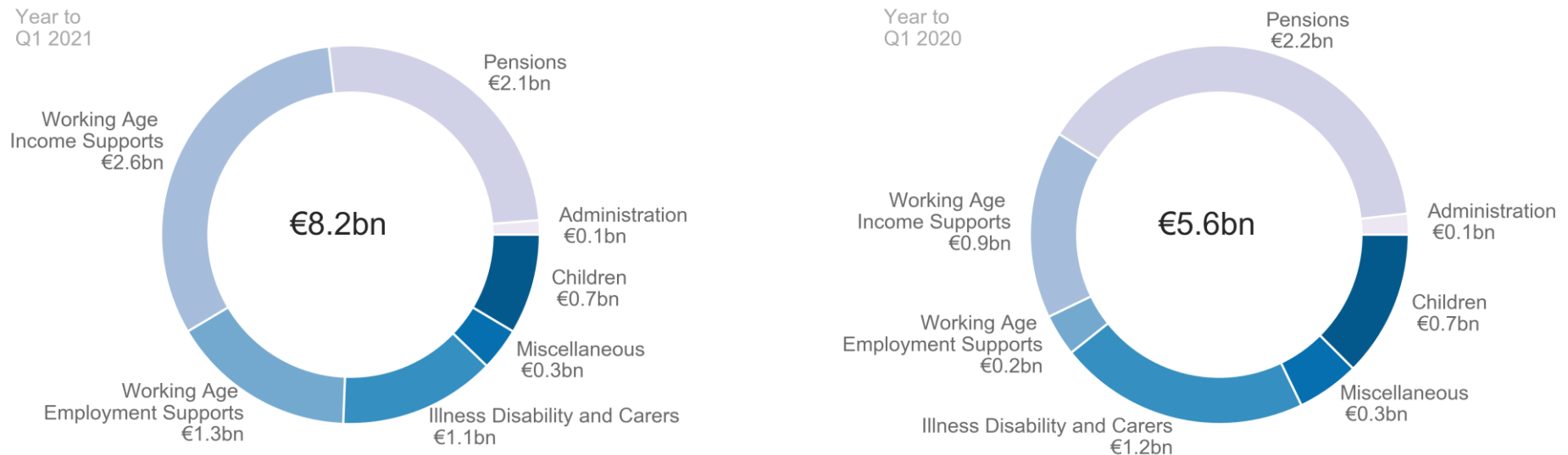




Programme Expenditure

- Working Age Income Support payments amounted to an estimated €2.6 billion in Quarter 1 2021, over €1.6 billion (175%) higher compared to the same period in 2020.
- Working Age Employment Support payments were estimated at €1.3 billion for this quarter, a year-on-year increase of €1.1 billion or 587%. This is due primarily to costs associated with the Employee Wage Subsidy Scheme.
- Spending on Illness, Disability and Carers payments was €33 million lower compared to the same quarter last year, representing a year-on-year decrease of 2.9%.
- Child related payments also saw a slight annual decrease, with expenditure this quarter estimated at €665 million, compared to €672 million in Quarter 1 2020.
- Since the introduction of covid-related supports in March 2020, €12 billion has been paid on these supports to end-March 2021, of which €2.8 billion was expended in the first quarter of 2021.
- Estimated expenditure breakdown of the main Covid related supports for Quarter 1 2021 was as follows; Pandemic Unemployment Payment (€1.7 billion), Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (€1.1 billion), and Enhanced Illness Benefit (€38 million).

Figure 3: Expenditure to date by Social Protection Programme (€): This period and same period last year





Pensions

- Some 677,367 people received payments across the main Pension schemes in Quarter 1 2021, an increase of 3% (18,281) compared to Quarter 1 2020.
- The State Pension Contributory (SPC) scheme recorded a 3.7% year-on-year growth in recipients, from 438,247 to 456,128, while there was minimal annual change in the number of recipients of the State Pension Non-Contributory (SPNC) and Widow(er)'s Contributory Pension (WCP).
- The mean rate of payment for all Pensions schemes was €248 per week. Across the schemes the average weekly payment was €254 for SPC, €232 for SPNC, and €259 for WCP.
- Around 59% of people on the SPC were male, while females accounted for 60% of SPNC recipients and 85% of WCP recipients.

Figure 4: Pension recipients by year and by scheme

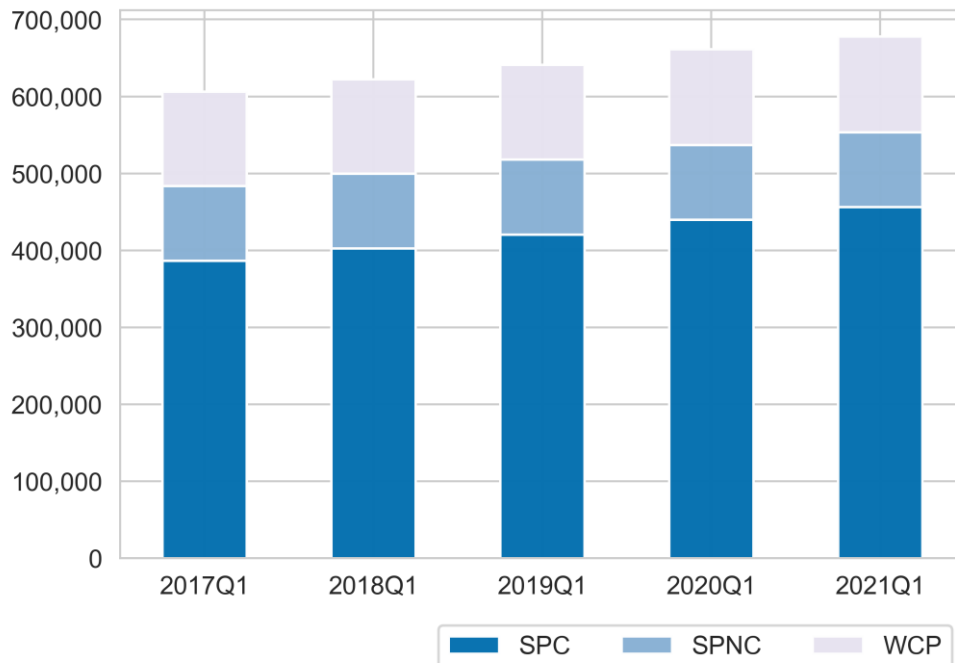
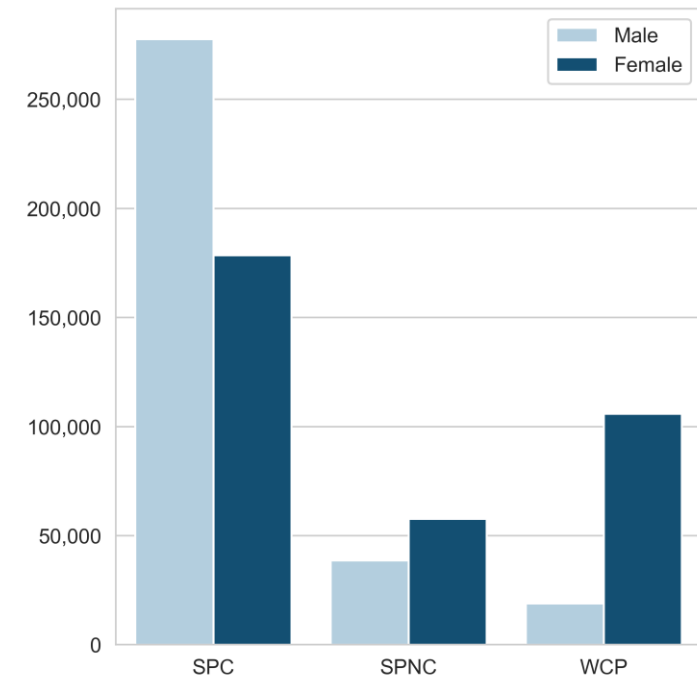


Figure 5: Pension recipients this quarter by sex and by scheme





Working Age Income Supports

- A total of 570,492 people received at least one Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) in Quarter 1 2021. This was 76,624 or 15%, higher than Quarter 4 2020, but down by 22% compared to the 734,259 people who received this payment in Quarter 2 2020.
- The average weekly payment was €303 for PUP, €223 for Jobseekers Allowance and €191 for Jobseekers Benefit in Quarter 1 2021.
- The total number of people in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit across Quarter 1 2021 was 55,594, an annual decrease of 18%, while the numbers availing of Jobseekers Allowance totalled 157,280, a 5% drop compared to one year previously.
- There were 29,501 recipients of Maternity Benefit and 6,544 recipients of Paternity Benefit in the quarter, while 6,675 people received payments from the Parents Benefit scheme.

Figure 6: Jobseeker and Pandemic Unemployment Payment recipients

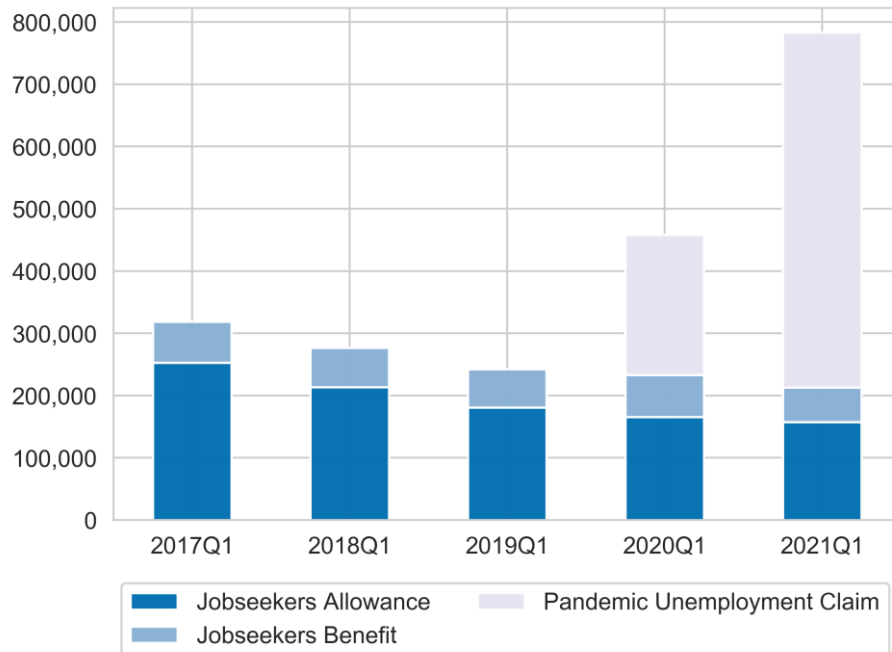
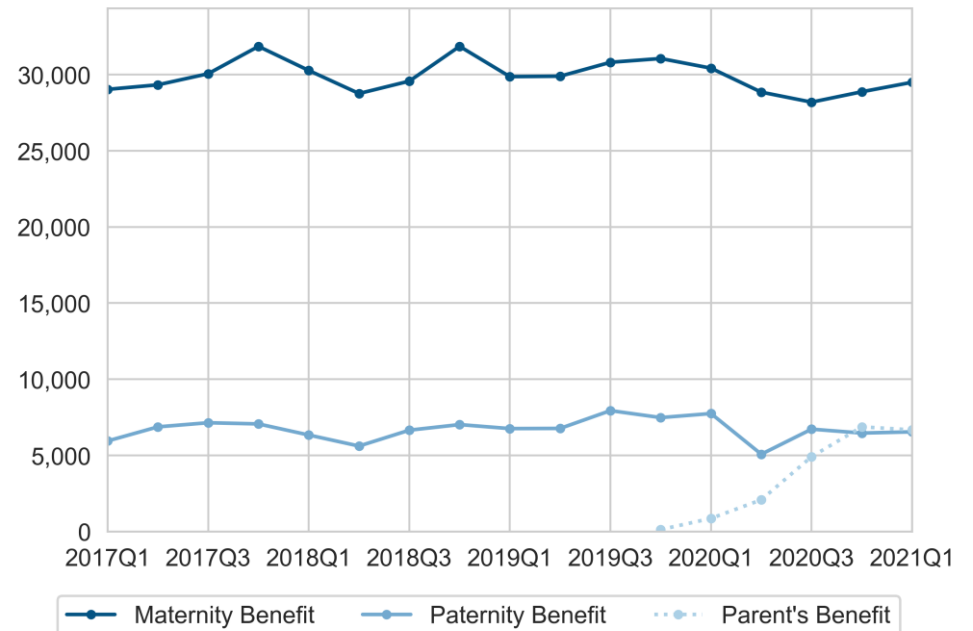


Figure 7: Maternity, Paternity, and Parent's Benefit recipients





Illness, Disability, and Caring

- The number of people paid Illness Benefit in Quarter 1 2021 was 124,303, a rise of 14% from the previous quarter, and up by almost 24% when compared to Quarter 1 2020.
- Of those in receipt of Illness Benefit, 47,327 people received the Enhanced Illness Benefit (EIB) in the last quarter. This was an increase of 18,472 or 64% from the 28,855 people who received EIB in Quarter 4 2020.

- There were 155,601 people in receipt of Disability Allowance in the first quarter of 2021, an increase of 4,750 (3%) on the year before. The average weekly payment received on this scheme was €225.
- The total number of people receiving Carers payments in Quarter 1 2021 was 95,566, a rise of 3,628 (4%) from Quarter 1 2020. On average, Carer's Allowance recipients received a payment of €196, while Carer's Benefit recipients received a payment of €250.

Figure 8: Trends in recipient numbers – Illness Benefit

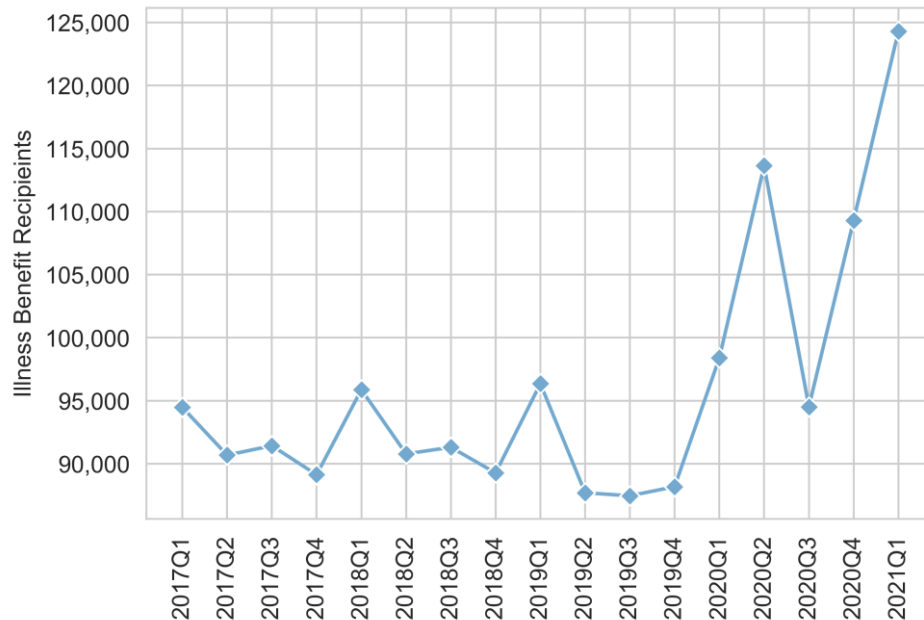
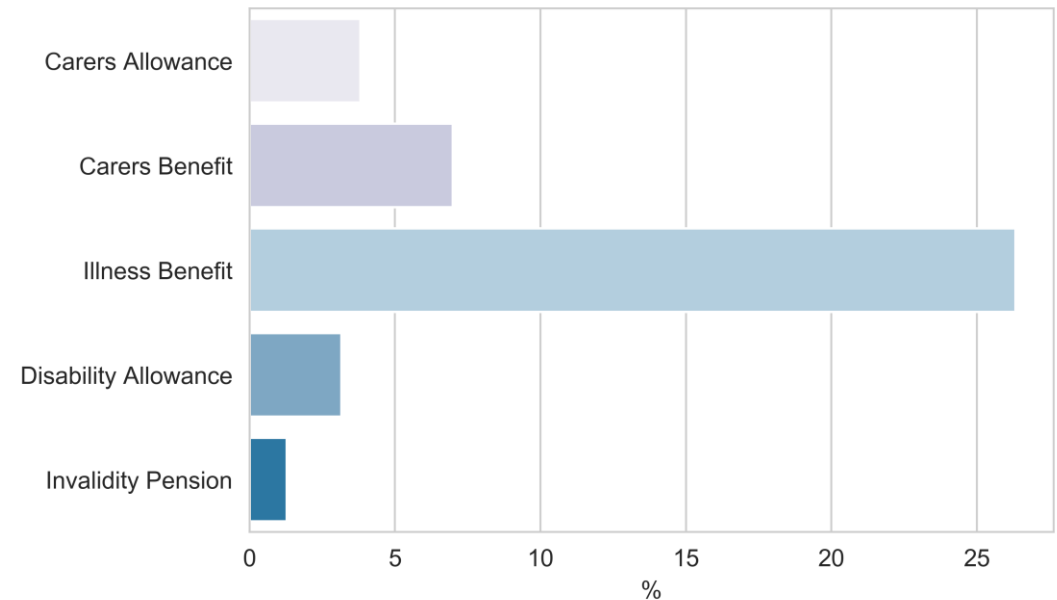


Figure 9: Annual Change (%) in recipient numbers by scheme

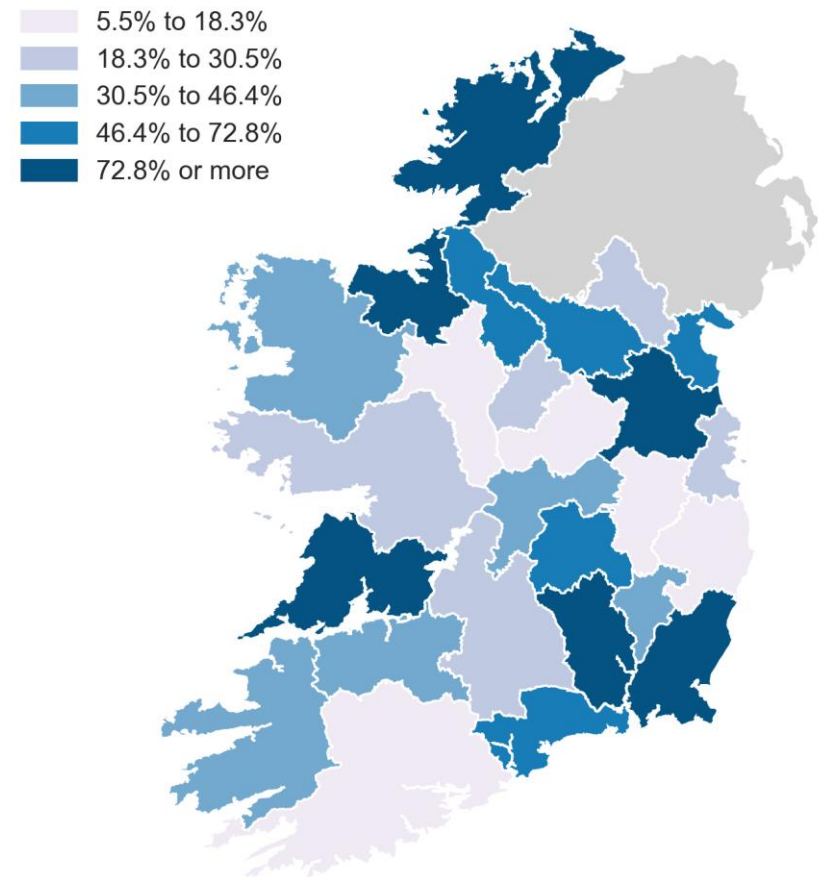




Children and Supplementary Payments

- In the last quarter a total of 640,391 families received Child Benefit payments, down by 2,434 compared to Quarter 1 2020.
- Around 98% (630,153) of recipients of Child Benefit were female, while 2% (10,238) were male.
- Year-on-year, the number of people in receipt of the Working Family payment decreased by 12% to 50,322. The average payment for this scheme was €144.
- The number of recipients of Rent Supplement in Quarter 1 2021 totalled 20,872, a 26% increase (+4,373) compared to the first quarter of 2020.
- There were 200,524 recipients of the Household Benefits package in the quarter, representing a year-on-year increase of 26,243 or 15%.

Figure 10: Annual change (%) in Rent Supplement recipients by county





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Table 1 Estimated Income and Expenditure in the Department of Social Protection (€m)

	Quarterly									Year to Date				
	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Jan-Mar 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Jan-Mar 2021	Change (2021 v 2020)	% Change (2021 v 2020)
Funding Basis														
Social Assistance Expenditure (Vote 37) ^(a)	2,603	2,767	2,609	2,762	2,889	6,901	4,249	2,313	3,841	2,603	2,889	3,841	952	33%
Social Insurance Fund Expenditure ^(b)	2,397	2,443	2,497	2,678	2,686	2,417	3,192	5,808	4,406	2,397	2,686	4,406	1,720	64%
Social Insurance Fund Income ^(c)	2,784	2,883	2,816	3,096	2,879	2,394	2,373	3,019	2,763	2,783	2,879	2,763	-116	-4%
Social Insurance Fund Deficit/Surplus ^(c-b)	387	440	319	416	193	-23	-819	-2,789	-1,643	387	193	-1,643	-1,836	-951%
Social Protection Programme														
Pensions	1,945	2,021	2,049	2,199	2,189	1,942	2,242	2,107	2,130	1,945	2,189	2,130	-59	-3%
Working Age Income Supports	791	803	834	832	936	3,273	1,887	2,261	2,579	791	936	2,579	1,643	176%
Working Age Employment Supports	183	178	165	186	194	1,855	1,169	1,498	1,332	183	194	1,332	1,138	587%
Illness, Disability and Carers	1,024	1,256	1,075	1,151	1,152	1,281	1,151	1,185	1,119	1,024	1,152	1,119	-33	-3%
Children	664	637	689	646	672	637	679	642	655	664	672	655	-17	-3%
Supplementary & Miscellaneous	246	152	140	249	283	167	166	251	283	246	283	283	0	0%
Administration	146	163	154	177	148	163	148	176	148	146	148	148	0	0%
Total Expenditure ^(a+b)	5,000	5,210	5,106	5,440	5,575	9,318	7,441	8,121	8,247	5,000	5,575	8,247	2,672	48%



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Table 2 Total Recipients per Quarter and mean payment amount

	Quarter									Mean Payment €
	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q1 2021
Pensions										
State Pension Contributory	417,678	421,496	428,717	432,383	438,247	442,457	447,254	451,910	456,128	€254
State Pension Non Contributory	96,799	96,598	96,494	96,220	96,417	96,262	96,347	96,413	96,453	€232
Widow(er)'s Contributory Pension	123,453	123,775	124,075	123,957	124,422	124,285	124,382	124,453	124,786	€259
Working Age Income Supports										
Jobseekers Allowance	180,788	180,913	179,178	168,066	165,417	153,303	170,548	169,514	157,280	€223
Jobseekers Benefit	61,752	58,714	65,488	57,795	67,874	63,200	65,057	61,990	55,594	€191
Jobseekers Benefit (Self-Employed)				302	1,144	1,546	1,240	882	573	€277
Pandemic Unemployment Payment					224,813	734,259	448,618	493,868	570,492	€303
Maternity Benefit	29,871	29,900	30,813	31,060	30,426	28,852	28,196	28,877	29,501	€252
Paternity Benefit	6,759	6,771	7,940	7,482	7,748	5,076	6,722	6,466	6,544	€277
Parents Benefit				129	862	2,083	4,916	6,873	6,675	€240
One Parent Family Payment	41,762	41,859	41,947	41,711	42,124	41,369	41,592	41,940	41,401	€265
Widows Non Contributory Pension	1,473	1,431	1,419	1,392	1,388	1,358	1,344	1,320	1,315	€195



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Table 2 Total Recipients per Quarter and mean payment amount (continued)

	Quarter									Mean Payment €
	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q1 2021
Illness Disability and Caring										
Carers Allowance	83,275	84,004	84,291	85,800	88,000	89,036	89,716	90,684	91,353	€196
Carers Benefit	3,342	3,289	3,661	3,735	3,938	4,086	4,328	4,268	4,213	€250
Disability Allowance	144,157	145,166	146,843	148,802	150,851	151,824	153,556	154,260	155,601	€225
Illness Benefit	96,353	87,699	87,460	88,181	98,403	113,632	94,517	109,309	124,303	€236
Invalidity Pension	59,532	59,465	59,415	59,385	59,925	60,148	60,375	60,467	60,690	€236
Children										
Back to Work Scheme Family Dividend	8,021	7,524	7,132	6,570	6,116	4,973	4,411	4,123	3,788	€60
Child Benefit	634,475	640,040	634,683	641,102	642,825	642,694	642,997	643,159	640,391	€276
Working Family Payment	58,951	57,763	57,669	57,241	57,257	54,883	52,753	52,100	50,322	€144
Supplementary & Miscellaneous										
Rent Supplement	23,471	21,420	19,489	17,783	16,499	22,401	20,999	20,469	20,872	€125
Household Benefits	160,954	166,154	169,180	174,281	177,404	180,557	186,119	194,992	200,524	-



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Table 3 Total recipients of the main Social Protection schemes, by quarter and sex

	Quarter									
	Q1 2020		Q2 2020		Q3 2020		Q4 2020		Q1 2021	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Pensions										
State Pension Contributory	269,586	168,661	271,400	171,057	273,593	173,661	275,776	176,134	277,616	178,512
State Pension Non Contributory	38,236	58,181	38,301	57,961	38,459	57,888	38,570	57,843	38,706	57,747
Widow(er)'s Contributory Pension	18,742	105,680	18,741	105,544	18,793	105,589	18,853	105,600	18,908	105,878
Working Age Income Supports										
Jobseekers Allowance	94,761	70,656	87,790	65,513	96,175	74,373	95,371	74,143	88,704	68,576
Jobseekers Benefit	32,264	35,610	31,408	31,792	28,858	36,199	29,344	32,646	26,360	29,234
Jobseekers Benefit (Self-Employed)	658	486	1,077	469	829	411	572	310	389	184
Pandemic Unemployment Payment	109,494	115,319	413,876	320,383	231,317	217,301	254,482	239,386	318,201	252,291
Maternity Benefit		30,426		28,852		28,196		28,877		29,501
Paternity Benefit	7,723	25	5,057	19	6,697	25	6,451	15	6,535	9
Parents Benefit	851	11	788	1,295	1,685	3,231	2,078	4,795	1,736	4,939
One Parent Family Payment	551	41,573	532	40,837	536	41,056	529	41,411	528	40,873
Widows Non Contributory Pension	214	1,174	204	1,154	205	1,139	203	1,117	203	1,112



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Table 3 Total recipients of the main Social Protection schemes, by quarter and sex (continued)

	Quarter									
	Q1 2020		Q2 2020		Q3 2020		Q4 2020		Q1 2021	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Illness Disability and Caring										
Carers Allowance	20,779	67,221	20,927	68,109	20,990	68,726	21,179	69,505	21,287	70,066
Carers Benefit	593	3,345	604	3,482	647	3,681	658	3,610	677	3,536
Disability Allowance	85,445	65,406	85,800	66,024	86,686	67,870	86,950	67,310	87,473	68,128
Illness Benefit	34,963	63,440	42,844	70,788	34,572	59,945	41,476	67,833	49,118	75,185
Invalidity Pension	25,196	34,729	25,167	34,981	25,140	35,235	25,064	35,403	25,079	35,611
Children										
Back to Work Scheme Family Dividend	2,041	4,075	1,599	3,374	1,360	3,051	1,219	2,904	1,093	2,695
Child Benefit	10,765	632,060	10,596	632,098	10,673	632,324	10,621	632,538	10,238	630,153
Working Family Payment	22,027	35,230	20,912	33,971	19,937	32,816	19,401	32,699	18,671	31,651
Supplementary & Miscellaneous										
Rent Supplement	8,258	8,241	12,059	10,342	11,044	9,955	10,687	9,782	11,127	9,745
Household Benefits	92,931	84,473	94,282	86,275	96,687	89,432	100,837	94,155	103,514	97,010



Notes

Methodology and quality considerations

The expenditure details in this report are based on estimates. The finalised expenditure information can be viewed in the latest Appropriation Accounts for Vote 37¹, or the latest Annual Statistics Report². Note that the estimated expenditure figures in this report may not add up exactly due to rounding.

When comparing to a previous quarter or previous year, the comparison can sometimes be impacted by the number of pay days that fall in a particular quarter. This may account for skews in expenditure and/or recipient totals in certain quarter periods.

The recipient totals were extracted from the Department's administrative systems, and include people who were issued at least one payment for a particular scheme in a given quarter. In the majority of cases the date in which the payment was made reflects the entitlement period .i.e. when the payment was issued the recipient's claim was open. However payments can be issued in respect to different entitlement periods (arrears payments). The figures produced in this report are calculated with reference to the date the payment was issued, and are therefore inclusive of arrears payments.

A person can be in receipt of payment for more than one scheme. All payments are inclusive of additional allowances such as the Christmas Bonus, Household Benefits, and payments for qualified adult or qualified child dependents.

The recipient figures quoted in the Annual Statistics report are not directly comparable to the numbers shown in this publication. The Annual Statistics report counts only those awarded and in receipt of payment at a point in time (December 31st) to ensure comparability with a series of statistical reports dating back to 1983.

Glossary of Terms

Recipient: A person actually receiving a Social Welfare payment

Social Assistance: payments funded from voted expenditure, which cover people who do not have sufficient PRSI contributions to qualify for the equivalent social insurance payments, or where entitlement to the social insurance payment has expired. These payments are typically means-tested.

Social Insurance Fund: a current account and an investment account managed by the Minister for Social Protection and the Minister for Finance, respectively. The current account consists of monies collected from people in employment, self-employment, and employer contributions. This money is then used to fund social insurance payments.

Open Data

Each report in this series will be available in formats consistent with the Open Data Technical Framework³. Any open data produced by the Department will be accessed through the National Open Data portal at: <https://data.gov.ie/>

Revisions

Revisions may occur as a result of changes in methodology, an update to a series or errors in the original data. Any significant revisions will be footnoted in the report and will describe the reason for the change and its impact on comparability (.i.e. with other schemes or over time).

1. Published by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General at: <https://www.audit.gov.ie/en/find-report/publications/appropriation%20accounts/>
2. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/dsp/statistics>
3. Available at: <https://data.gov.ie/pages/opendatatechnicalframework>