



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection

Quarterly Statistical Report

Quarter 4 2023

Published
Enquiries

25-01-2024
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 Parent's 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

Table of Contents

Background.....	2
Overall Expenditure.....	3
Programme Expenditure.....	4
Pensions ..	5
Working Age Income Supports.....	6
Illness, Disability, and Caring.....	7
Children and Supplementary Payments	8
Addition Needs Payment (ANP)	9
Notes.....	16

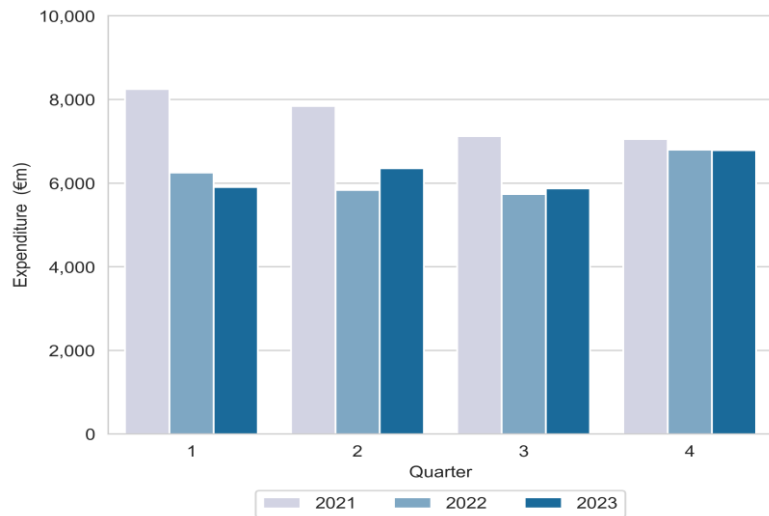
Other Statistics issued by the Department of Social Protection

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



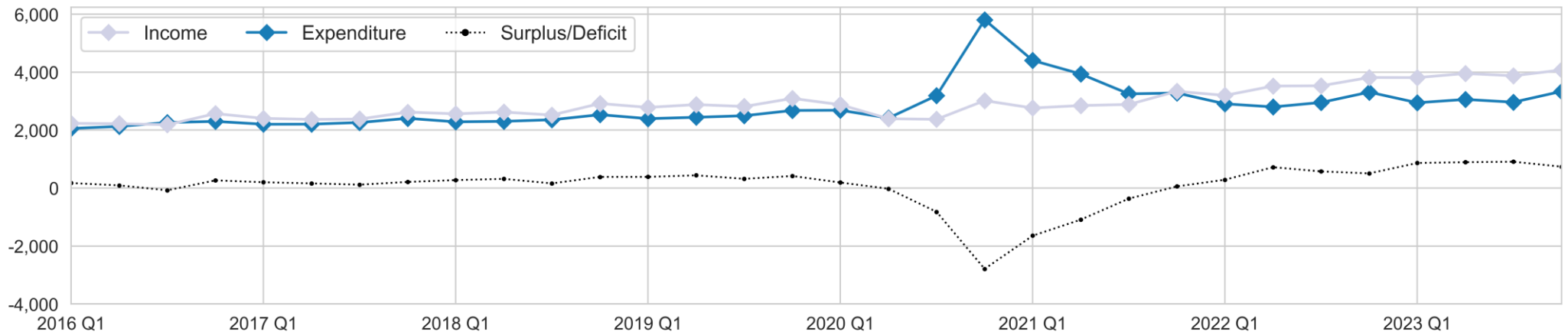
Overall Expenditure

Figure 1: Expenditure (€m) by quarter



- The overall expenditure of the Department of Social Protection, to end of fourth Quarter of 2023, was €24.9 billion. This was €300 million, or 1%, more than the same period in 2022.
- Expenditure on Social Assistance schemes between October and December 2023, was an estimated €3.5 billion, a decrease of 1% or €37 million compared to the same period in 2022.
- Expenditure on schemes financed from Social Insurance in the fourth Quarter of 2023 was an estimated €3.3 billion, an increase of €26 million or 0.8%, compared to the same period in 2022.
- In the full year 2023, the Social Insurance Fund recorded a surplus of €3.4 billion.

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

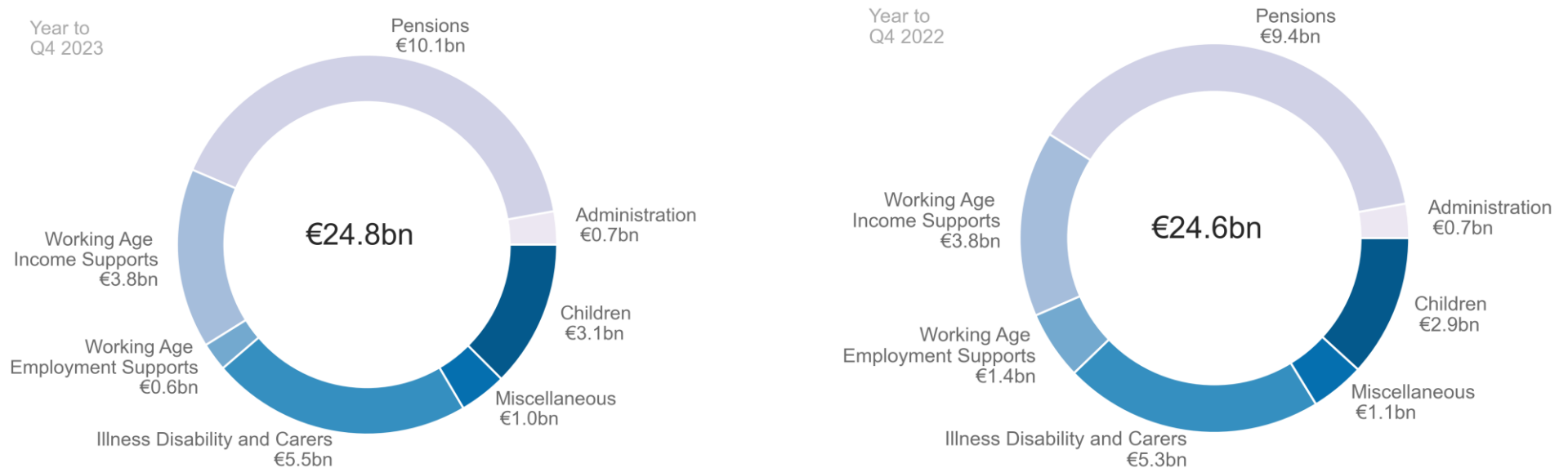




Programme Expenditure

- Expenditure on Working Age Income Support payments in Q4 2023 was €996 million, an increase of €11 million (1%) compared to the same period in 2022.
- Spending on Working Age Employment Support schemes was recorded at €163 million in the fourth Quarter of 2023, a reduction of €17 million, or 9%, when compared with the fourth Quarter of 2022.
- Child related payments amounted to €850 million in the fourth quarter 2023, resulting in a reduction of 0.6% or €5 million from the same period in 2022.
- Pension payments in the period October to December 2023 of €2.7 billion, showing an increase, of 1% or €30 million, from the same period last year.
- Between October and December 2023, expenditure on Illness, Disability and Carers stood at €1.5 billion. This is a reduction of 0.1%, or €2 million, from the same period in 2022.
- Expenditure on Supplementary & Miscellaneous services stood at €390 million in Q4 2023. This is a reduction of 5%, or €21 million, compared with the fourth Quarter of 2022.

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





Pensions

- Some 739,795 people received payments across the main Pension schemes in Quarter 4 2023, a year-on-year increase of 4% (25,309) compared to Quarter 4 2022.
- The main increase in pension related payments occurred for the State Pension Contributory (SPC) scheme, which recorded a 4% year-on-year growth in recipients, from 488,587 to 510,508.
- Across the schemes the average weekly payment was €316 for SPC, €294 for SPNC, and €330 for WCP.
- 59% of people on the SPC were male, while females accounted for 59% of SPNC recipients and 84% of WCP recipients.

Figure 4: Pension recipients by year and by scheme

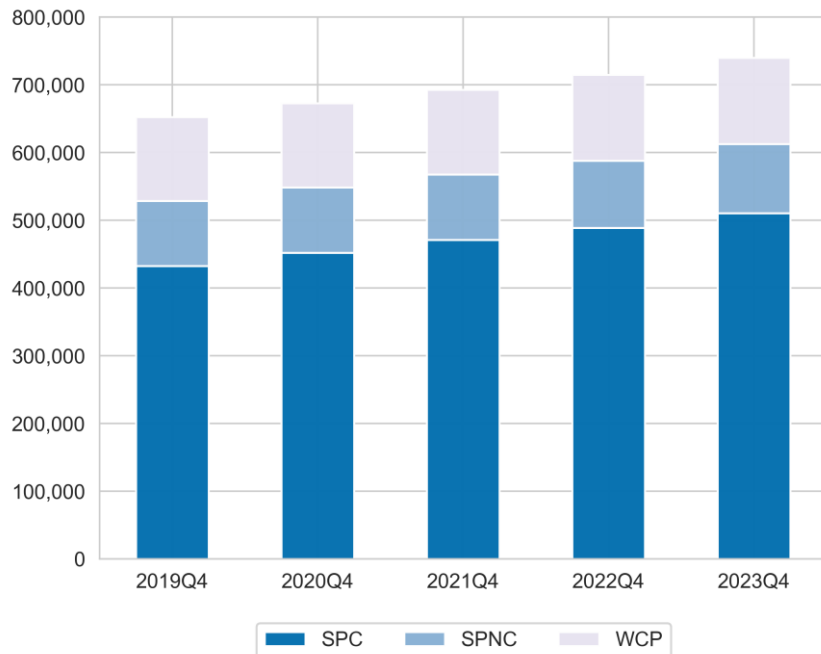
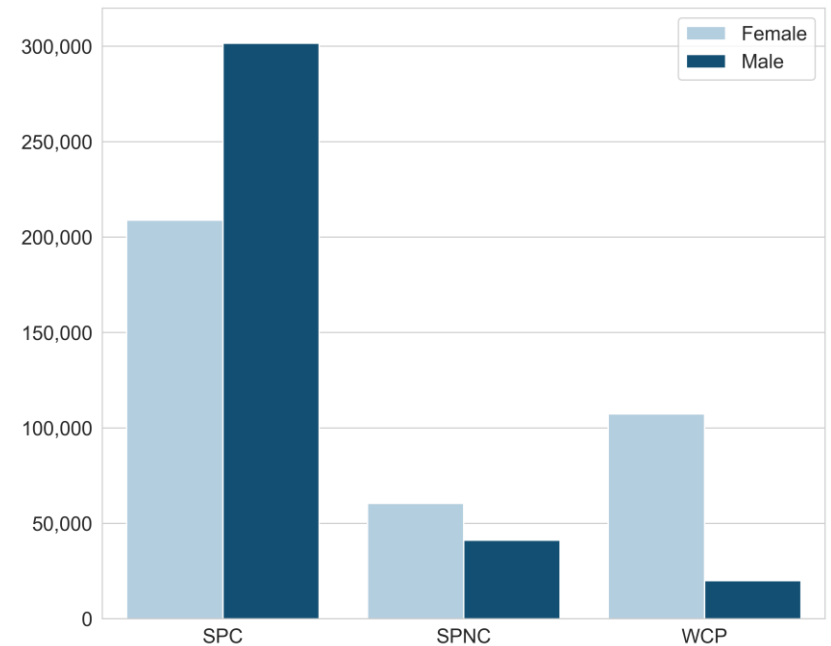


Figure 5: Pension recipients this quarter by sex and by scheme





Working Age Income Supports

- A total of 165,904 people received Jobseeker’s Allowance in the last Quarter. This is a reduction of over 5,682, or 3%, compared to Q4 2022.
- The total number of people in receipt of Jobseeker’s Benefit across Quarter 4 2023 was 63,445, a reduction from 71,879 or 12%, in the third Quarter of 2023. This is also an annual reduction of 6% or 3,969 on Quarter 4 2022.

- Jobseeker’s Benefit (Self-Employed) recipients stood at 1,022 in the fourth Quarter, a decrease of 22%, when compared with the same period in 2022. This follows an increase of 2% from Quarter 3 2023.
- There were 29,906 recipients of Maternity Benefit and 7,798 recipients of Paternity Benefit in the fourth quarter of 2023. 22,068 people received payments from the Parent’s Benefit scheme, a decrease of 12% on the previous quarter, and down 8% compared to Q4 2022.

Figure 6: Jobseeker and Pandemic Unemployment Payment recipients

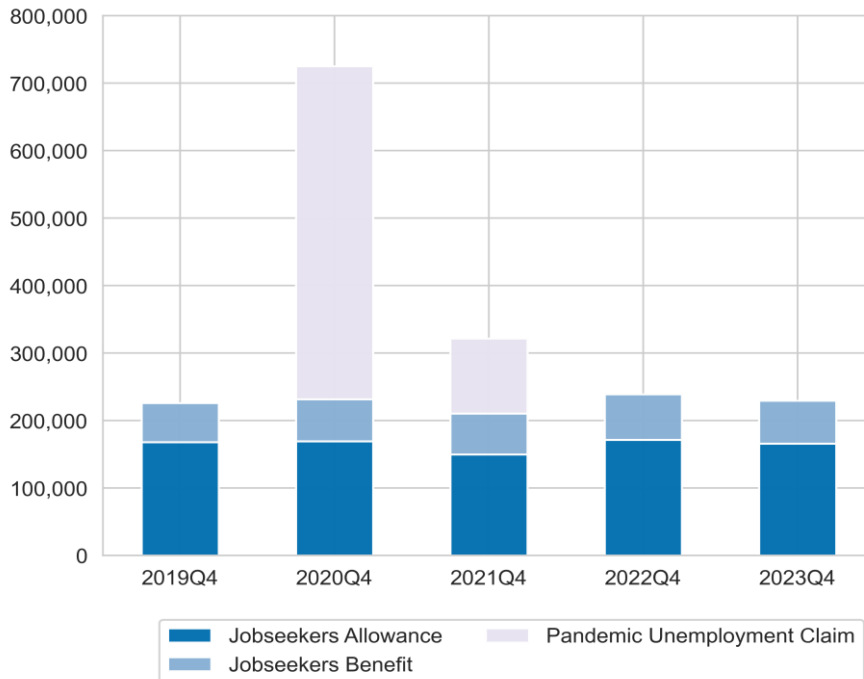
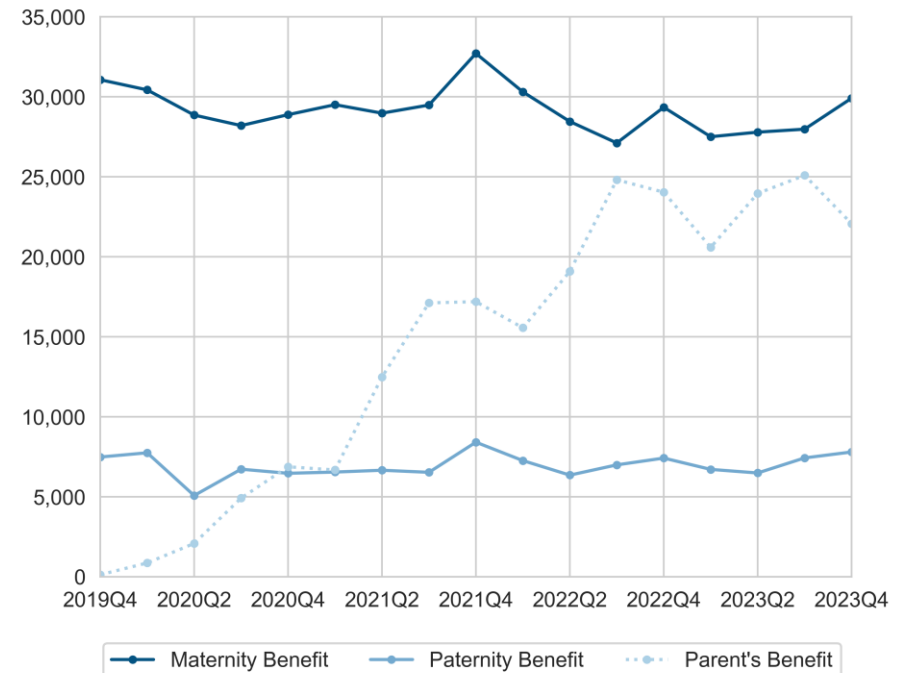


Figure 7: Maternity, Paternity, and Parent’s Benefit recipients

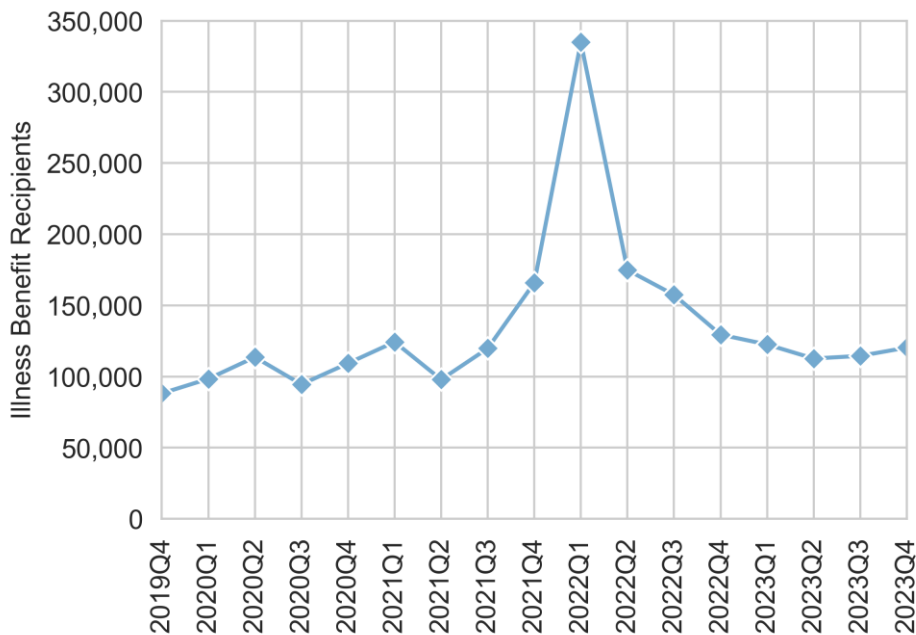




Illness, Disability, and Caring

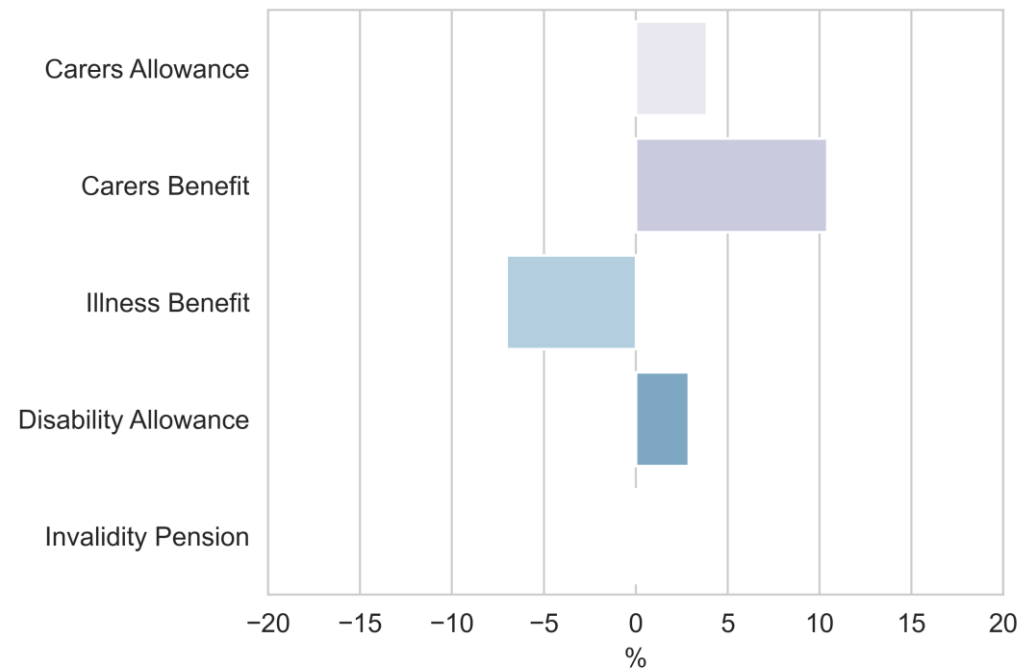
- The number of people paid Illness Benefit in Quarter 4 2023 was 120,350, an increase of 5% from the previous Quarter, but down by 9,116, or 7%, when compared to Quarter 4 2022.
- In the period October to December 2023, there were 57,911 recipients of Invalidity Pension, an increase of 632, or 1% from the previous Quarter. This is the first increase following ten consecutive Quarters of decrease in the number of Invalidity Pension recipients.

Figure 8: Trends in recipient numbers – Illness Benefit



- There were 164,722 people in receipt of Disability Allowance in the fourth Quarter of 2023, an increase of 3% (4,588) on the year before. The average weekly payment received on this scheme was €321.
- The total number of people receiving Carer's payments in Quarter 4 2023 was 102,615, a rise of 4,085, or 4% from Quarter 3 2022. On average, Carer's Allowance recipients received a payment of €257, while Carer's Benefit recipients received a payment of €318.

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

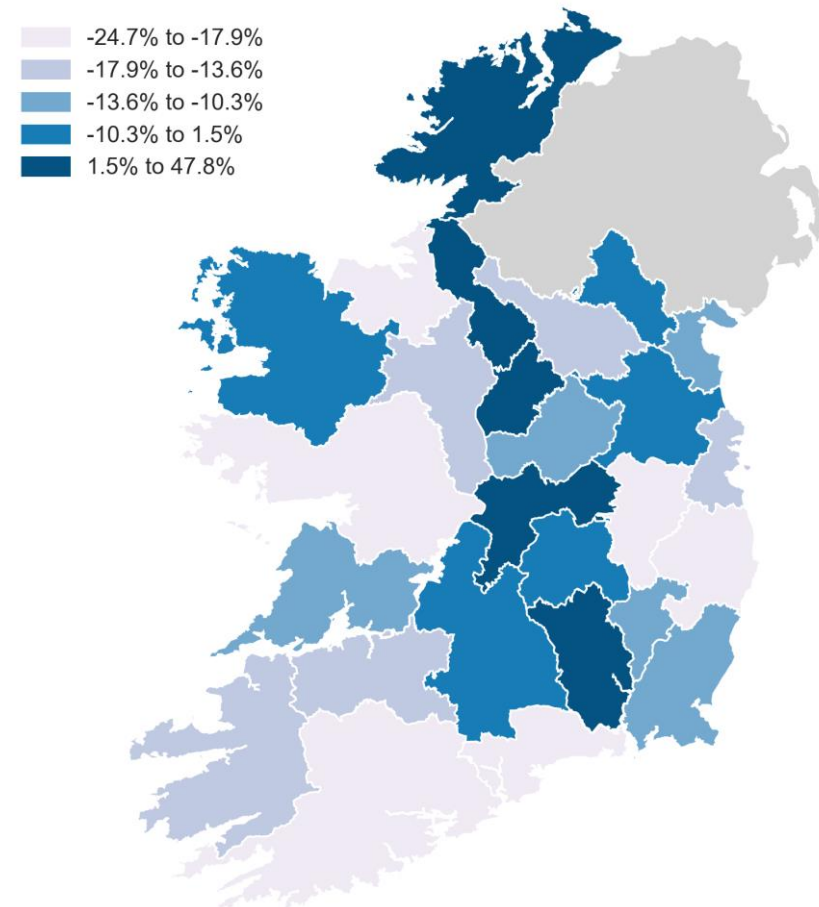




Children and Supplementary Payments

- In the last quarter, a total of 663,240 families received Child Benefit payments, an increase of 7,166, or 1%, compared to Quarter 4 2022.
- Around 98% (652,616) of recipients of Child Benefit were female, while 2% (10,624) were male.
- The number of people in receipt of the Back to Work Family Dividend fell by 491, or 15%, from Q4 2022 and stood at 2,734 in Q4 2023. The average payment for this scheme was €96.
- The number of recipients of Rent Supplement in Quarter 4 2023 totalled 8,419, a 16% decrease (-1,568) compared to the fourth Quarter of 2022.
- There were 275,412 people receiving direct payments from the Household Benefits Package^[1] in the quarter, representing a year-on-year increase of 22,279 or 9%.
- When recipients who had their payment directed to their utility provider and recipients of a free TV Licence only are included, there were 529,530 unique recipients of Household Benefits at the end of December 2023. This is an increase of 4,984, or 1%, when compared with the 524,546 recipients at the end of September 2023.

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



[1] Includes recipients of cash payments only. Recipients who had payments made directly to their energy supplier as credit against their bills are not included.



Addition Needs Payment (ANP)

- A total of 24,202 ANPs were awarded in the fourth Quarter of 2023. This is an increase of 5% (1,246) from Q3 2023, and a decrease of 28% (6,877) compared to Q4 2022.
- Looking at broad ANP category, General recorded the highest quarter-on-quarter percentage increase in awarded claims, increasing by 24% from 4,495 in Q3 2023 to 5,589 in Q4 2023.

- The broad ANP category with the greatest number of awarded claims in the period October to December 2023 was Clothing (10,039), followed by Housing (5,964) and General (5,589). Combined, these three ANP groups account for 89% of all awarded ANP claims in this period.
- Year-to-date ANP expenditure amounted to €72.3 million. Housing accounted for over 65% of total ANP expenditure.

Figure 11 - ANP awarded claims this quarter by broad category.

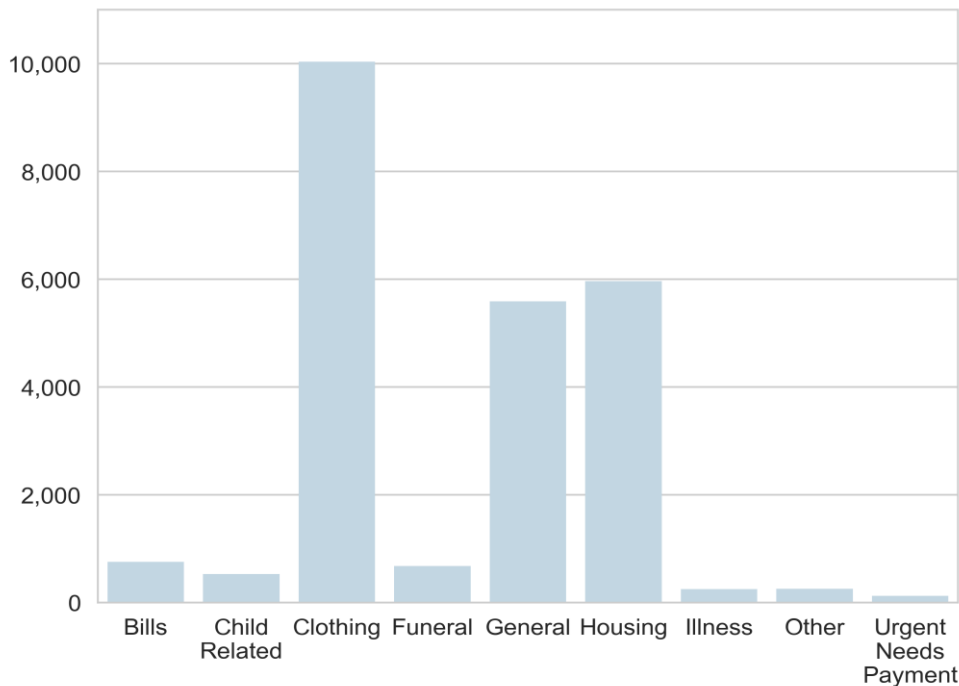
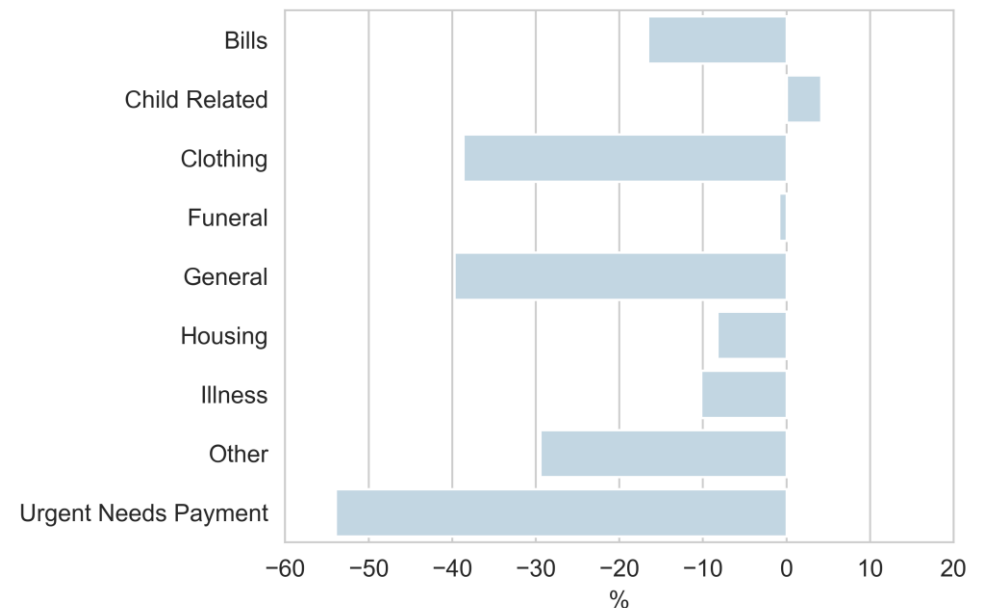


Figure 12 ANP awarded claims year-on-year percentage change.





Quarterly Statistical Report

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

	Quarterly										Year to Date				
	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Dec 2023	Change (2023 v 2022)	% Change (2023 v 2022)	
Funding Basis															
Social Assistance Expenditure (Vote 37) ^(a)	3,771	3,342	3,034	2,783	3,490	2,960	3,296	2,908	3,453	15,388	12,650	12,617	-33	0	
Social Insurance Fund Expenditure ^(b)	3,280	2,908	2,801	2,956	3,311	2,946	3,060	2,966	3,337	14,875	11,976	12,309	333	3	
Social Insurance Fund Income ^(c)	3,339	3,198	3,522	3,531	3,817	3,813	3,954	3,876	4,076	11,839	14,068	15,719	1,651	12	
Social Insurance Fund Deficit/Surplus ^(c-b)	59	289	721	575	507	867	894	910	739	-3,036	2,092	3,410	1,318	63	
Exchequer Subvention	291	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	
Social Protection Programme															
Pensions	2,491	2,070	2,243	2,438	2,686	2,394	2,582	2,449	2,716	8,931	9,437	10,142	705	7	
Working Age Income Supports	1,068	988	880	914	985	937	958	952	996	7,230	3,767	3,843	76	2	
Working Age Employment Supports	1,184	809	306	144	180	158	156	145	163	5,170	1,439	622	-817	-57	
Illness, Disability and Carers	1,227	1,233	1,420	1,181	1,491	1,225	1,558	1,244	1,489	4,818	5,324	5,516	192	4	
Children	632	660	627	713	855	702	789	721	850	2,581	2,855	3,062	207	7	
Supplementary & Miscellaneous	278	333	190	167	411	312	148	187	390	890	1,108	1,037	-71	-6	
Administration	171	158	168	177	193	177	165	175	186	642	696	703	7	1	
Total Expenditure^(a+b)	7,051	6,250	5,835	5,739	6,801	5,906	6,356	5,873	6,790	30,263	24,626	24,926	300	1	



Quarterly Statistical Report

Table 2 Total Recipients per Quarter and mean payment amount

	Quarter									Mean Payment €
	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q4 2023
Pensions										
State Pension Contributory	470,814	474,487	479,717	484,822	488,587	493,225	498,681	503,471	510,508	€316
State Pension Non-Contributory	96,489	96,132	96,418	98,331	99,270	99,966	100,238	100,835	101,800	€294
Widow(er)'s Contributory Pension	125,510	125,784	126,149	126,439	126,629	126,898	127,199	127,070	127,487	€330
Working Age Income Supports										
Jobseeker's Allowance	149,956	146,518	166,809	171,823	171,586	173,639	173,002	171,605	165,904	€282
Jobseeker's Benefit	60,490	82,526	81,776	82,229	67,414	65,871	64,821	71,879	63,445	€258
Jobseeker's Benefit (Self-Employed)	616	942	1,323	1,363	1,307	1,242	1,085	1,006	1,022	€342
Pandemic Unemployment Payment	111,337	84,934								-
Maternity Benefit	32,704	30,301	28,449	27,108	29,339	27,499	27,785	27,972	29,906	€270
Paternity Benefit	8,410	7,259	6,352	6,992	7,416	6,710	6,486	7,427	7,798	€274
Parent's Benefit	17,191	15,560	19,082	24,806	24,033	20,589	23,955	25,085	22,068	€273
One Parent Family Payment	41,943	42,227	43,897	44,683	45,164	45,625	45,985	46,104	46,325	€352
Widows Non-Contributory Pension	1,199	1,176	1,166	1,155	1,140	1,133	1,133	1,105	1,104	€262

Note: Quarterly figures do not represent the numbers and values used by the Department when calculating the Outturn/Estimate for schemes. A yearly calculation is applied to incorporate any seasonal changes and/or adjustments that occur throughout the year on various schemes.



Quarterly Statistical Report

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

	Quarter									Mean Payment €
	Q4 2021	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q4 2023
Illness Disability and Caring										
Carer's Allowance	93,004	93,382	93,185	94,000	94,409	95,284	96,071	96,982	98,065	€257
Carer's Benefit	4,114	4,063	3,964	4,165	4,121	4,342	4,533	4,669	4,550	€318
Disability Allowance	157,448	157,837	158,382	159,308	160,134	161,073	162,075	163,310	164,722	€321
Illness Benefit	165,871	335,004	174,876	157,433	129,466	122,521	112,670	114,528	120,350	€253
Invalidity Pension	59,300	59,196	59,015	58,308	57,887	57,835	57,575	57,279	57,911	€333
Children										
Back to Work Family Dividend	3,361	3,249	3,172	3,264	3,225	3,037	2,983	2,861	2,734	€96
Child Benefit	639,125	638,000	649,142	646,443	656,074	657,533	661,721	657,132	663,240	€361
Working Family Payment	49,859	50,223	50,103	50,991	51,186	51,336	51,044	50,396	49,569	€189
Supplementary & Miscellaneous										
Rent Supplement	14,420	13,042	11,660	10,669	9,987	9,489	9,064	8,714	8,419	€229
Household Benefits ^[1]	220,355	225,012	233,884	238,279	252,233	256,928	261,195	265,663	274,512	-

Note: Quarterly figures do not represent the numbers and values used by the Department when calculating the Outturn/Estimate for schemes. A yearly calculation is applied to incorporate any seasonal changes and/or adjustments that occur throughout the year on various schemes.

[1] Includes recipients of cash payments only. Recipients who had payments made directly to their energy supplier as credit against their bills are not included.



Quarterly Statistical Report

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

	Quarter									
	Q4 2022		Q1 2023		Q2 2023		Q3 2023		Q4 2023	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Pensions										
State Pension Contributory	291,977	196,610	294,003	199,222	296,378	202,303	298,265	205,206	301,599	208,909
State Pension Non-Contributory	40,127	59,143	40,427	59,539	40,591	59,647	40,902	59,933	41,293	60,507
Widow(er)'s Contributory Pension	19,628	107,001	19,818	107,080	19,948	107,251	19,946	107,124	20,058	107,429
Working Age Income Supports										
Jobseeker's Allowance	86,685	84,901	87,987	85,652	87,071	85,931	85,478	86,127	83,691	82,213
Jobseeker's Benefit	33,564	33,850	33,075	32,796	31,915	32,906	33,020	38,859	32,753	30,692
Jobseeker's Benefit (Self-Employed)	732	575	731	511	650	435	572	434	578	444
Pandemic Unemployment Payment										
Maternity Benefit		29,339		27,499		27,785		27,972		29,906
Paternity Benefit	7,379	37	6,682	28	6,455	31	7,387	40	7,767	31
Parent's Benefit	8,473	15,560	7,093	13,496	8,245	15,710	9,804	15,281	8,597	13,471
One Parent Family Payment	552	44,612	575	45,050	595	45,390	603	45,501	616	45,709
Widows Non-Contributory Pension	169	971	175	958	176	957	165	940	163	941



Quarterly Statistical Report

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

	Quarter									
	Q4 2022		Q1 2023		Q2 2023		Q3 2023		Q4 2023	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Illness Disability and Caring										
Carer's Allowance	21,441	72,968	21,594	73,690	21,748	74,323	21,854	75,128	22,092	75,973
Carer's Benefit	687	3,434	724	3,618	768	3,765	780	3,889	775	3,775
Disability Allowance	88,949	71,185	89,201	71,872	89,633	72,442	90,143	73,167	90,734	73,988
Illness Benefit	46,802	82,664	44,169	78,352	41,138	71,532	42,942	71,586	43,957	76,393
Invalidity Pension	23,447	34,440	23,385	34,450	23,213	34,362	22,969	34,310	22,860	35,051
Children										
Back to Work Family Dividend	843	2,382	765	2,272	735	2,248	664	2,197	578	2,156
Child Benefit	10,236	645,838	10,113	647,420	10,508	651,213	10,291	646,841	10,624	652,616
Working Family Payment	16,337	34,849	16,248	35,088	16,007	35,037	15,801	34,595	15,289	34,280
Supplementary & Miscellaneous										
Rent Supplement	4,979	5,008	4,739	4,750	4,543	4,521	4,337	4,377	4,165	4,254
Household Benefits ^[1]	127,380	124,853	129,463	127,465	131,138	130,057	133,026	132,637	137,144	137,368

[1] Includes recipients of cash payments only. Recipients who had payments made directly to their energy supplier as credit against their bills are not included.



Quarterly Statistical Report

Table 4 Additional Needs Payments, by quarter

	Quarter						
	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Awarded	24,121	29,266	31,079	23,751	21,428	22,956	24,202
Rejected	5,408	11,268	19,795	13,030	13,593	16,458	16,711
Withdrawn	330	781	978	737	363	1,203	1,315
Pending	-	-	8,041	6,383	8,681	8,127	5,503

Table 5 Awarded claims by broad ANP category, by quarter

	Quarter							Expenditure (€ million)
	Q2 2022	Q3 2023	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	YTD 2023
Bills	481	1236	885	883	1,088	1,051	759	2.43
Child Related	552	555	511	508	539	603	533	0.45
Clothing	11,802	13,213	13,921	9,955	8,709	10,510	10,039	4.99
Funeral	737	578	686	865	719	617	680	9.02
General	4,899	6,649	7,810	5,664	4,723	4,495	5,589	7.11
Housing	5,085	6,296	6,458	5,331	5,161	5,207	5,964	47.00
Illness	280	302	280	258	271	283	254	0.16
Other	164	205	334	146	94	99	258	0.43
Urgent Needs Payment	121	232	194	141	124	91	126	0.66
Total	24,121	29,266	31,079	23,751	21,428	22,956	24,202	72.25

Note that expenditure figures are based on estimates. These figures exclude supplements awarded prior to 2022. These figures are provisional and subject to revision.

Note that the figures provided for claims awarded, disallowed or withdrawn are by the date these actions were recorded on the Department's systems and will include claims registered in previous periods.



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. Note that a person can be in receipt of payment for more than one scheme.

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 receiving at least one Social Welfare payment in a given quarter period.

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/>
2. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/4be67-social-welfare-statistics/>
3. Available at: <https://data.gov.ie/pages/opendatatechnicalframework>