

Slovak Republic

Slovak Republic: Pension system in 2020

The earnings-related, public scheme is a points system, with benefits that depend on individual earnings relative to the average. Low-income workers with qualified pension contributions are protected by a minimum pension. All pensioners are eligible for social assistance benefits. Voluntary defined contribution plans were introduced in 2005.

Key indicators: Slovak Republic

		Slovak Republic	OECD
Average worker earnings (AW)	EUR	13 200	34 301
	USD	15 077	39 178
Public pension spending	% of GDP	7.3	7.7
Life expectancy	at birth	77.3	80.6
	at age 65	17.2	19.7
Population over age 65	% of working- age population	26.5	30.4

Qualifying conditions

As of September 2020, the 1958 cohort can retire at age of 62 years and 8 months with at least 15 years of contributions. For women with children the pension age is reduced. For instance a woman with five or more children can retire at the age of 60 years and 6 months in 2020.

The retirement age in the Slovak Republic is defined on a cohort basis and there is no link to life expectancy. The retirement age for males and females with no children is set to increase by two months for each subsequent cohort, until it reaches 64 years in 2030. The retirement age for a woman who raised children is lowered by at least 6 months for each child, up to three children¹. The cap on the retirement age on 64 years and decreased retirement age for a woman who raised children is set by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. On 8 December 2020 the parliament of the Slovak Republic passed cancellation of the cap on the retirement age and lowered retirement age for women who raised children. These changes will be effected since 1 January 2023. A new mechanism of the increasing retirement age over 64 years has yet to be established.

Benefit calculations

Earnings-related

The pension points are calculated as the ratio of individual earnings to economy-wide average earnings. In addition there is a “solidarity element” which reduces pension points higher than 1.25. This coefficient has gradually decreased from 84% in 2013 to 68% in 2016. Point values lower than one are increased in a similar way and the coefficient for this increase has gradually increased from 16% to 20% over the same time period.

The pension benefits at retirement equal the average of all pension points in the reference period (generally years since 1984) multiplied by the total period of pension insurance and the pension-point value at the point of retirement. In 2020 the pension point equalled EUR 13.6361. The pension-point value is indexed to average earnings growth (the third quarter of each calendar year). National average earnings in 2019 were EUR 1092.00 per month. Dividing the point value by the earnings figure gives the equivalent to the accrual rate in a defined-benefit scheme, which is just 1.25%.

¹ If the mother is unable to benefit from such early retirement possibility, the right is transferred to the father.

There is a ceiling to earnings for contributions, which increased in 2017 from five times to seven times average earnings. The earnings data are lagged. The lagging means that the ceiling is slightly less than seven times average earnings.

Pensions in payment are indexed to a mix of average earnings growth and price inflation. From 2013 to 2017 the pension benefits were increased by fixed amounts. The share of earnings growth and inflation in the indexation changed from 40:60 in 2014 to 30:70 in 2015 and 20:80 in 2016. However, in 2017 the pensions were indexed by 2%, the minimum percentage, as this is higher than the percentage from 10:90 split through earnings growth and inflation. For each type of pensions (old-age, early old-age, disabled, orphan's, widow's/widower's, etc.), a separate fixed (nominal) amount was calculated in order to avoid redistribution among different types of pensions. From 2018 indexation followed the development of consumer prices for pensioner's households. From 2018 to 2021 the guarantee of the minimum indexation at fixed amount calculated by 2 % of the average pension for each type of pension is applicable.

Workers joining the defined-contribution plans have their benefits from the public earnings-related scheme adjusted proportionally.

Minimum

From 1 July 2015 there is a minimum pension benefit for old-age and invalidity pensioners that have reached retirement age. From 1 July 2015 to 31 December 2019 the conditions for beneficiaries to increase the pension up to the minimum pension were:

1. s/he has completed at least 30 years of qualified pension insurance period²,
2. the amount of total pension income is lower than the amount of the minimum pension and
3. s/he has claimed all pensions s/he has qualified for.

In the years 2015 to 2019 the qualifying period of the 30 years represented a minimum pension equal to 1.36 multiplied by the amount of the subsistence level (in 2019 it was EUR 278.90 per month). For every year of qualifying period over the basic level, the minimum pension was increased:

- by two percentage points of the subsistence minimum level for each year between 31 and 39
- by three percentage points of the subsistence minimum level for every subsequent year.

From 2015 to 2019 the indexation of the minimum pension benefit was linked to the minimum subsistence level.

In 2020, the level of the minimum pension is calculated based on number of years an individual has worked and paid pension insurance. The minimum pension for individuals with 30 years of pension insurance contributions in 2020 is 33% of the average wage from two years ago. For each extra year, pensioners receive 2 p.p. of the subsistence level – EUR 214.83 - up to 39 years of career and 3 p.p. thereafter.

Need to be add, that as of 2021, the mechanism determining the minimum pension is dropped, and their value is at the level of 2020. Additionally, from 2021, only those years with contributions from the assessment base above 24.1% of the average wage are taken into account to determine the minimum pension value.

Besides that, there is a minimum assessment base for paying pension contributions that is equal to 50% of the average wage two years before which applies to self-employed persons. The minimum wage was

² Qualified pension insurance years are those: completed before 1 January 1993 or from 1 January 1993 if in the calendar year a personal wage point reached at least level 0.241 (the yearly income was at least 24.1% of the average wage).

EUR 580.00 for full time workers and the minimum assessment base on pension insurance for self-employed persons was EUR 506.5 from 1 January 2020.

Social assistance

The Assistance in Material Need targets those unable to maintain their living conditions. The benefit is universal, non-contributory and financed through general taxation.

On 1 January 2020 the minimum income guarantee for old-age pensioners consisted of:

- 1) A monthly benefit equal to EUR 66.30 (single-pensioner) and EUR 115.30 (couple-pensioners without children);
- 2) A monthly Housing Allowance equal to EUR 57.20 (single-pensioner) and EUR 91.40 (couple-pensioners without children);
- 3) A monthly Protection Allowance equal to EUR 67.90 (single-pensioner) and EUR 135.80 (couple-pensioners without children);

The total monthly amount is EUR 191.40 (single-pensioner) and EUR 342.50 (couple-pensioners without children).

Individuals with low pension benefits can receive the Assistance in Material Need but 25% of the pension amount is disregarded for eligibility. For every insurance year above 25 years an additional one percentage point is disregarded (for example with 40 years of pension contributions 40% of pension income is disregarded). This means that the amounts above are not maximum amounts for pensioners and that they vary according to the pension insurance period.

Voluntary defined contribution

The contribution rate for the voluntary defined-contribution scheme is 5% of earnings in 2020. On 1 September 2012 the contribution rate was lowered from 9% to 4% of gross wage. However, from 1 January 2017 the contribution rate was set to increase gradually by 0.25 percentage points each year and reach the target level at 6% in 2024. Participation in the defined contribution system was mandatory for workers entering the labour market for the first time from 1 January 2005. Other workers had the possibility to choose by 1 June 2006 to either join the mixed system or remain in the public scheme. From 1 January 2008 to 31 March 2012 participation in the mixed system was made voluntary for new entrants. The previous changes have changed the system into a default auto enrolment with the possibility to opt out within two years. The auto enrolment rules came into force on 1 April 2012. From 1 January 2013 voluntary participation is possible for new entrants and voluntary entrance is possible before the age of 35 years. The defined-contribution pension can be taken as a life annuity, a fixed-term annuity or as programmed withdrawals. For calculation of the life annuity life insurance companies use cash flow models with unisex intergenerational mortality tables and take into account the cost ratio of the system.

Variant careers

Early retirement

Early retirement is possible up to two years before the statutory retirement age and pension benefits are reduced by 0.5% for each 30 days of early benefit withdrawal, equivalent to 6.5% per year. Early retirement also requires a pension benefit higher than EUR 257.79, equal to 1.2 times the adult subsistence income level. From 1 January 2011 it was not possible to receive an early old-age pension benefit and also have mandatory pension insurance. Since 1 July 2018 it is possible to receive an early old-age pension benefit and working on agreement performed outside of an employment relationship with income limit of EUR 2 400 per year.

Late retirement

Late retirement is possible and the pension benefit increases by 0.5% for each 30 days of deferral, equal to 6% per year. For individuals that combine pension benefit withdrawal with work the pension benefit is recalculated automatically every year or upon request when the individual eventually retires adding half of the points earned during that period.

Childcare

Individuals caring for children up to age six are given pension credits paid by the state. The assessment base for the pension contributions is 60% of average earnings prior to the caring period. Since 1 January 2011 the assessment base has been adjusted to the general ceiling rules and annual average wage two years before the absence year. The same rules apply for the defined-contribution scheme (old-age pension saving scheme).

Unemployment

Unemployment spells are not credited in the pension system. However, the unemployed can make voluntary contributions and it is also possible to pay contributions for this period retroactively.

Self-employed

The self-employed are covered by the same scheme as employees, with the same contribution rate. The contribution rate is set at 67% of income from the self-employed activity before deducting social security contributions.

Personal income tax and social security contributions

Taxation of pensioners

There are no special tax allowances or credits for pensioners.

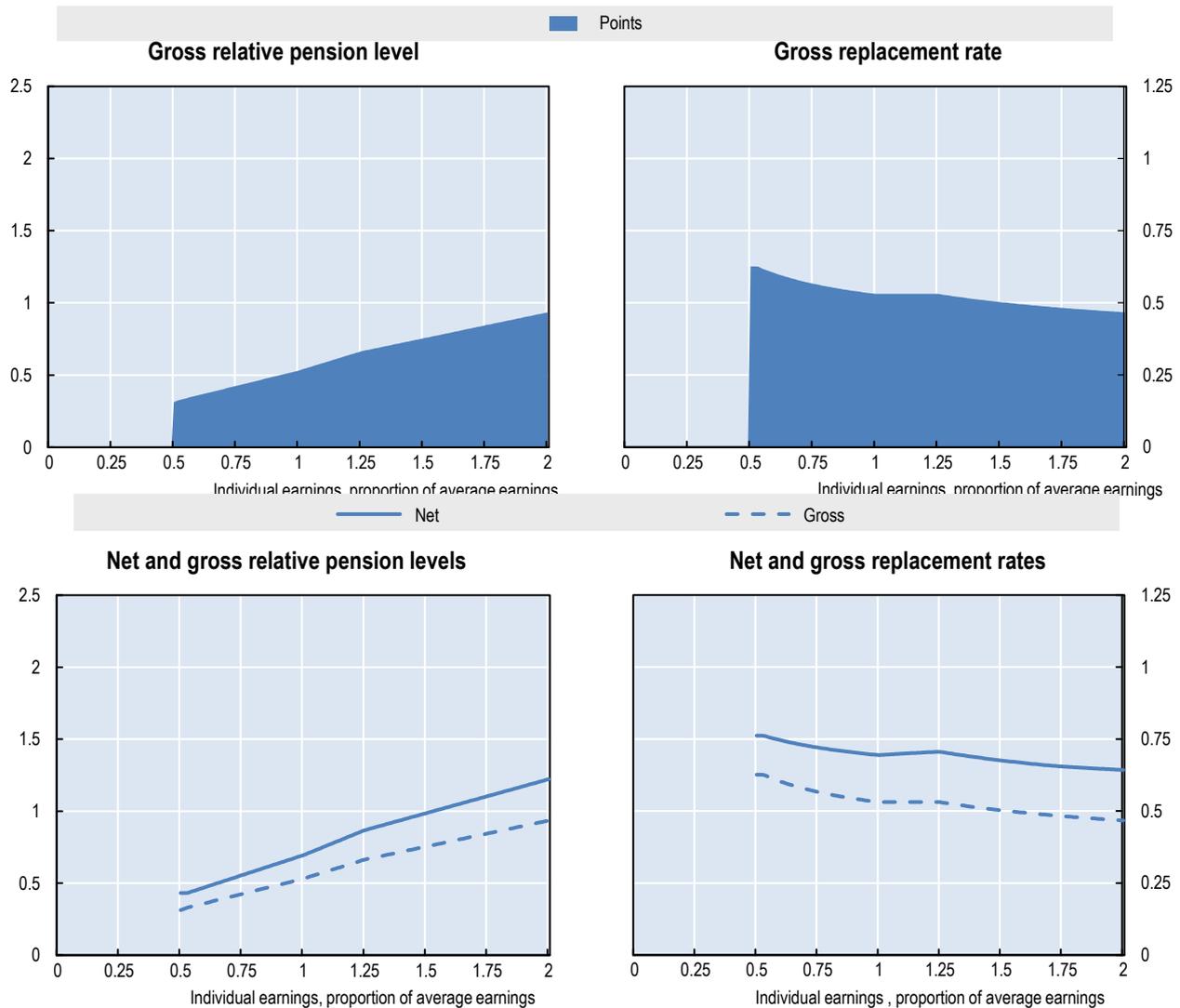
Taxation of pension income

Pensions are not taxed.

Social security contributions paid by pensioners

Pensions are not subject to contributions.

Pension modelling results: Slovak Republic in 2062 retirement at age 64



Men <i>Women (where different)</i>	Individual earnings, multiple of average					
	0.5	0.75	1	1.5	2	3
Gross relative pension level (% average gross earnings)	31.3	42.5	53.1	75.4	93.5	129.6
Net relative pension level (% net average earnings)	43.2	55.5	69.4	98.6	122.2	169.4
Gross replacement rate (% individual gross earnings)	62.6	56.6	53.1	50.3	46.7	43.2
Net replacement rate (% individual net earnings)	76.2	72.1	69.4	67.6	64.3	61.3
Gross pension wealth (multiple of individual gross earnings)	10.7	9.7	9.1	8.6	8.0	7.4
Net pension wealth (multiple of individual net earnings)	13.1	12.3	11.9	11.6	11.0	10.5

Assumptions: Real rate of return 3%, real earnings growth 1.25%, inflation 2%, and real discount rate 2%. All systems are modelled and indexed according to what is legislated. Transitional rules apply where relevant. DC conversion rate equal 90%. Labour market entry occurs at age 22 in 2020. Tax system latest available: 2020.