



Statistics from
Finnish Centre for Pensions



Earnings-related pension recipients in Finland 2021

Finnish Centre for Pensions
Official Statistics of Finland

This statistical publication provides information on private and public sector benefits payable under statutory earnings-related pension laws. The earnings-related pension scheme covers all workers and self-employed persons whose gainful employment exceeds the minimum requirements laid down by law. Private and public sector statutory pension benefits are classified by the EU as Pillar I benefits.

Statistics on earnings-related pension recipients in Finland have been published since 1996. As of 2005, they have been incorporated as part of the Official Statistics of Finland.



Finnish Centre for Pensions
ELÄKETURVAKESKUS

Earnings-related pension recipients in Finland 2021

Contents

Pension recipients	3
New retirees	11
Size of pension	17
Pension recipients abroad	20
Pension expenditure	22

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ISSN 2343-3558 Statistics from the Finnish Centre for Pensions
ISSN 2343-1342 Earnings-related pension recipients in Finland

Photos: Gettyimages, Markus Pentikäinen (cover)



Pension recipients

All earnings-related pension recipients

1.5 million earnings-related pension recipients

At year-end 2021, earnings-related pensions were paid out to 1,522,000 persons, of whom 35,000 resided abroad. Women accounted for 837,000 (55%) and men for 686,000 (45%) of all earnings-related pension recipients.

The overall number of earnings-related and national pension recipients in 2021 totalled 1,621,000. Of them, 94 per cent received an earnings-related pension. Earnings-related pension recipients include all who receive a pension from the private or public sector.



1,522,000

earnings-related
pension recipients

94%

of all pension
recipients received
an earnings-related
pension

Of all earnings-related pension recipients, 1,489,000 received a pension in their own right and 229,000 a survivors' pension. Pensions in one's own right include pensions received based on work, that is, old-age, disability, part-time and farmers' special pensions. Survivors' pension recipients included 217,000 surviving spouses and 12,000 children. Among those who received a surviving spouse's pension, 195,000 persons also received a pension in one's own right.

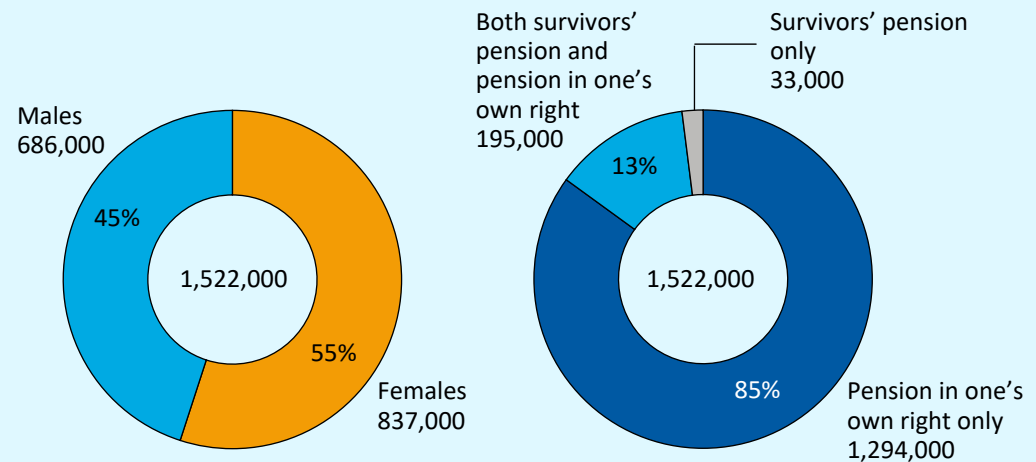
All recipients of a pension in one's own right

At year-end 2021, a total of 1,489,000 persons received an earnings-related pension in one's own right. Of them, 812,000 (55%) were women and 677,000 (45%) men.

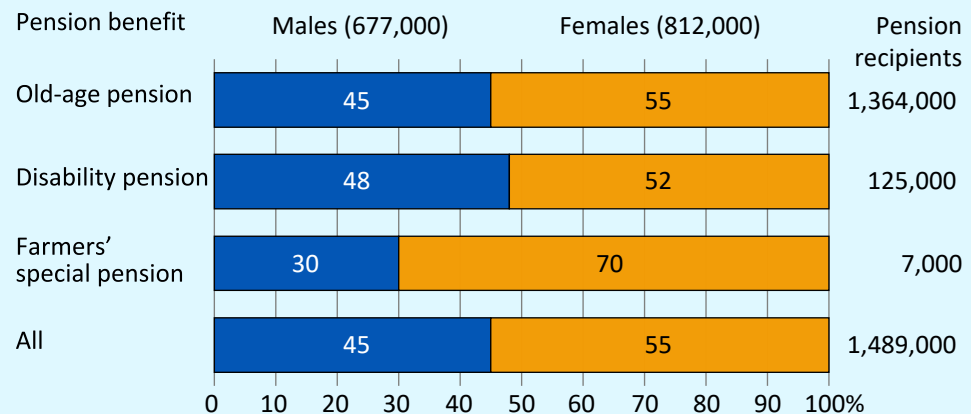
The old-age pension was the most common pension benefit. A total of 92 per cent (or 1,364,000 persons) received an old-age pension. Of them, 747,000 were women and 617,000 men. Disability pensions were paid to 125,000 persons. A slight majority of them were women. Special pensions for farmers were paid to 7,000 persons, of whom nearly 70 per cent were women. Around 100 persons received a part-time pension.

In 2021, the total number of persons receiving a pension in one's own right rose slightly compared to in 2020. When reviewed by pension benefit, the number of old-age pension recipients increased, but the number of other pension benefit decreased.

All earnings-related pension recipients at 31 Dec. 2021



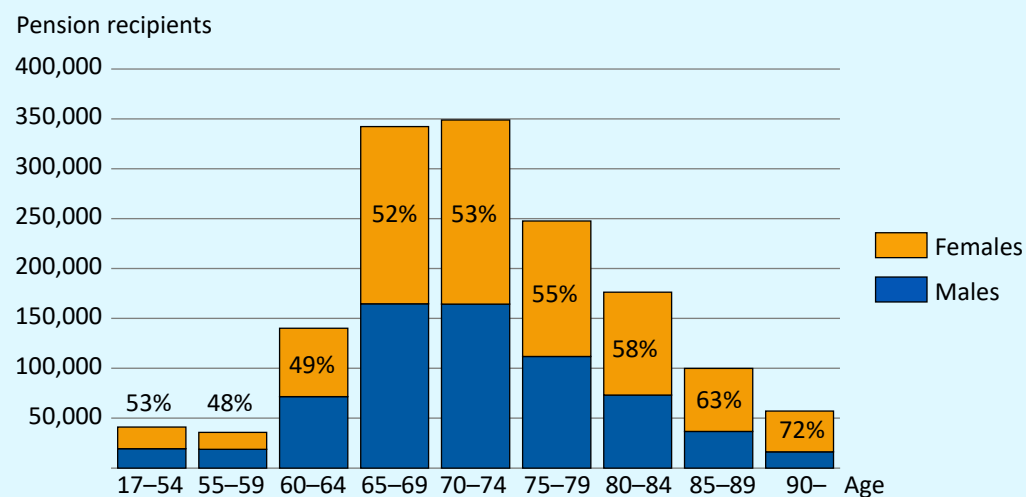
Recipients of an earnings-related pension in one's own right by pension benefit and gender at 31 Dec. 2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

[Year-by-year changes in pension system](#)

Recipients of an earnings-related pension in one's own right by age and gender at 31 Dec. 2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

Majority of recipients of a pension in one's own right aged 65 or over

Of all recipients of a pension in one's own right, 85 per cent (1,272,000 persons) were 65 or over at year-end 2021. The largest five-year age groups were 65–69 and 70–74, totalling nearly 700,000 earnings-related pension recipients. Pension recipients aged 80 and over accounted for nearly one fifth of all recipients of a pension in one's own right.

Men outnumbered women only in the age group 55–64, where they counted for slightly more than half. The share of women in the higher age groups was larger: of pension recipients aged 85–89, around 63 per cent and of those aged 90 or over, slightly more than 70 per cent.



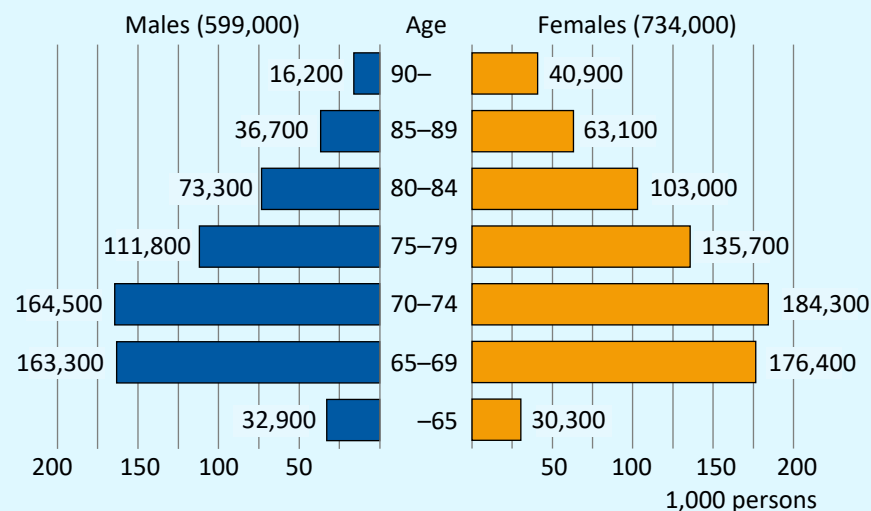
Old-age pension recipients

At year-end 2021, a total of 1,332,000 persons received an earnings-related old-age pension (excluding the partial old-age pension). Of them, 599,000 were men and 734,000 women. The average age of old-age pension recipients was 74.9 years (74.1 for men and 75.6 for women).

One third of old-age pension recipients aged under 70

Five per cent of all old-age pension recipients were under 65 years. The 65–69-year-olds accounted for 25 per cent. In total, those under 70 years accounted for 30 per cent of all old-age pension recipients. Among men the proportion of those under 70 was 33 per cent and among women 28 per cent. The age group 70–74 numbered slightly under 350,000 (26%) persons. Twelve per cent of old-age pension recipients were over 85. The proportion was higher for women (14%) than men (9%).

Recipients of an earnings-related old-age pension by age and gender at 31 Dec. 2021

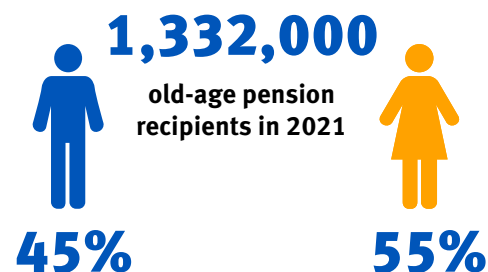


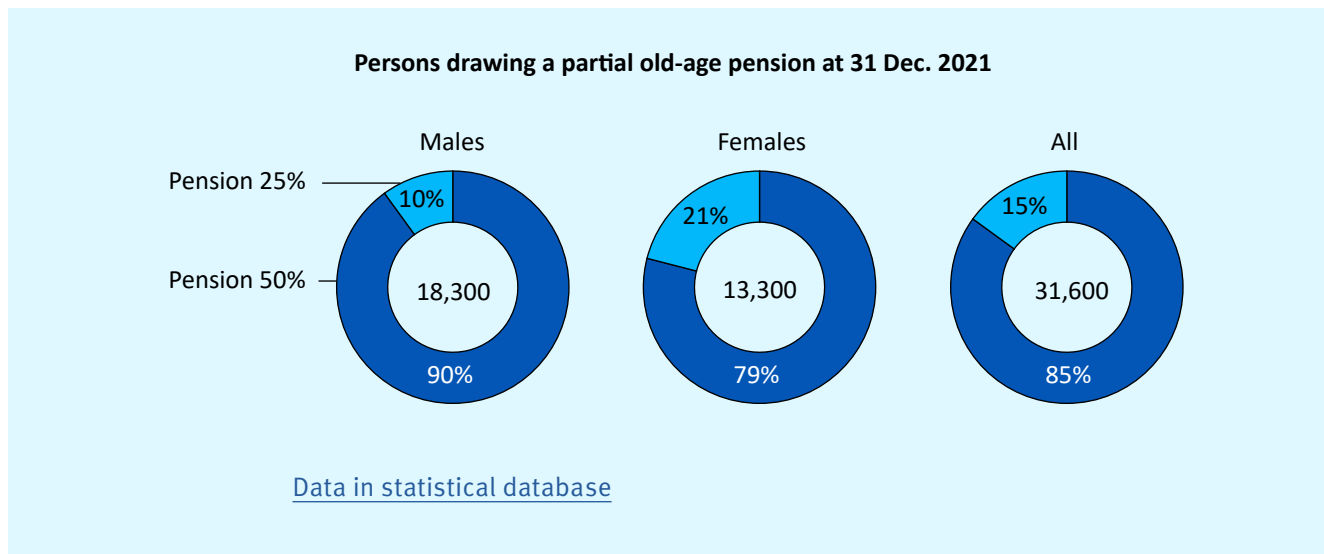
Excludes recipients of a partial old-age pension.

[Data in statistical database](#)



The average age of old-age pension recipients was 74.9 years





The majority of partial old-age pension recipients has drawn half of their accrued pension

The option to retire on a partial old-age pension was introduced from the beginning of 2017. The amount of partial old-age pension is 25 or 50 per cent (based on the individual’s own choice) of the earnings-related pension accrued at the time of retirement. At year-end 2021, a total of 31,600 partial old-age pensions were in payment. Of the recipients, 58 per cent were men. Compared to 2020, the number of recipients has increased by 2,500 persons.

Of the two possible rates of partial old-age pension, the 50 per cent rate has been clearly more common. At the end of 2021, around 85 per cent had selected this rate. Men favour the 50 per cent rate more than women: among men 90 per cent and among women 79 per cent had claimed their partial pension at the 50 per cent rate.



Disability pension recipients

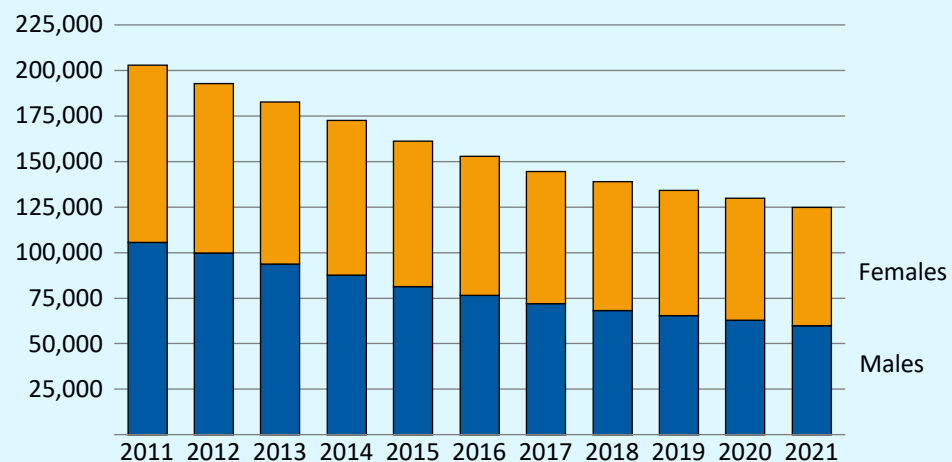
At year-end 2021, around 125,000 persons received an earnings-related disability pension. This is nearly 80,000 less than in 2011, when the number of disability pension retirees was 203,000. The number has dropped each year for both men and women. In 2021, around 52 per cent of the disability pension recipients were women and 48 per cent men. In 2011, the gender gap was the other way around.

Disability benefits

The earnings-related disability pension is granted until further notice or for a fixed term in the form of a cash rehabilitation benefit. Both may be awarded to the amount of a full pension or a partial pension.

Of all disability pensions in force in 2021, around 103,000 (82%) were awarded until further notice and 22,000 (18%) were cash rehabilitation benefits. Disability pensions awarded to the amount of a full pension numbered 102,000 (82%) and to the amount of a partial pension 23,000 (18%).

Earnings-related disability pension recipients by gender at 31 Dec. 2011–2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

The years-of-service pension came on stream in 2017. It is an early pension benefit for 63-year-olds after a long work history that requires great effort. The number of years-of-service pension recipients has remained low. At year-end 2021, years-of-service pensions were paid to 75 persons.

Two thirds of all disability pension recipients aged over 55

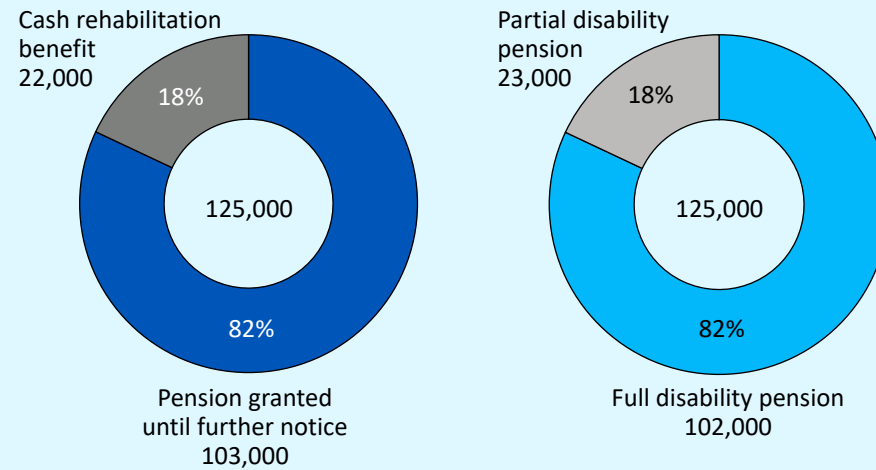
Two thirds of all disability pension recipients were aged over 55 in 2021 while 27 per cent were aged 55–59 and 41 per cent were over 60. Three per cent of disability pension recipients were under age 35.

More than 40 per cent of disability pensions granted on mental health grounds

At year-end 2021, around 55,000 persons retired due to mental or behavioural disorders. This was 44 per cent of all disability pension recipients. The proportion for women was 46 per cent and for men 42 per cent. Mental disorders were by far the most common cause of disability retirement.

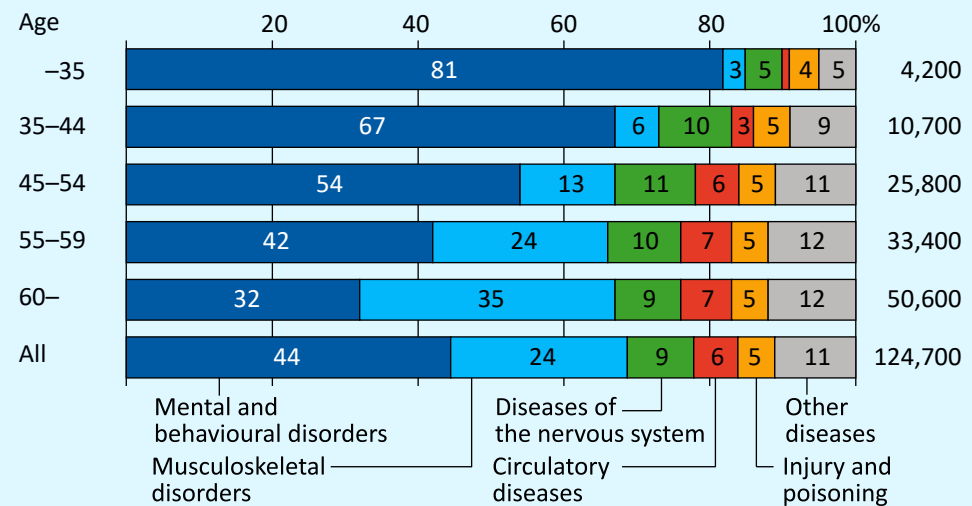
Another major reason were musculoskeletal diseases (30,000), which accounted for one quarter of all disability pensions. The shares for all other main disease categories were less than 10 per cent.

Recipients of an earnings-related disability pension by pension benefit at 31 Dec. 2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

Recipients of an earnings-related disability pension by age and main disease category at 31 Dec. 2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

Disability pensions to persons under age 35 mainly on mental health grounds

The younger the age group of disability pension recipients, the higher the proportion of disability pensions granted for mental disorders. In 2021, mental disorders accounted for 81 per cent of disability pensions in age group under 35.

In age group 35–44 the corresponding figure was 67 per cent and in age group 45–54 it was 54 per cent. In age group 55–59 mental disorders were still the single largest category (42%), but musculoskeletal diagnoses were also a common cause of disability retirement (24%). In the age group over 60 both these disease categories accounted for around one third of disability pensions.

Nearly 24,000 retired because of depression

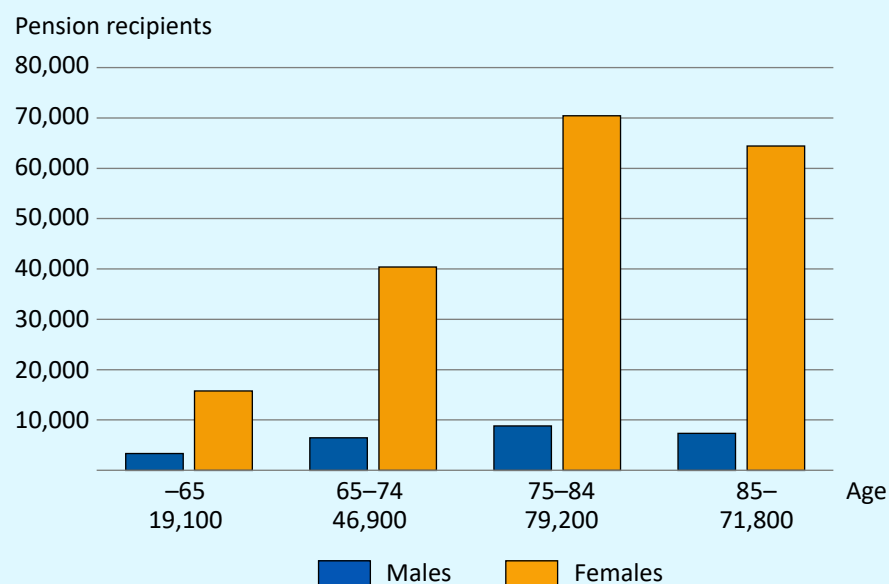
In 2021 the number of persons receiving a disability pension on grounds of depression was 23,800. Depression accounted for 43 per cent of all disability pensions awarded due to mental disorders. Depression was a far more common cause of disability among women (15,000) than men (8,800).

Survivors' pension recipients

In 2021 survivors' pensions were paid out under the earnings-related pension system to 217,000 surviving spouses and 12,000 children. Female surviving spouses numbered 191,000 (88%) and male surviving spouses 26,000 (12%).

Nearly 70 per cent of all recipients of a surviving spouse's pension were 75 years of age or older. Surviving spouses aged 75–84 accounted for 36 per cent and older surviving spouses for 33 per cent. Nearly one in ten recipients of a surviving spouse's pension was under age 65.

Recipients of an earnings-related survivors' pension by age and gender at 31 Dec. 2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

New retirees

New retirees on an earnings-related pension in 2021

In 2021, new retirees on an earnings-related pension numbered 61,500 persons, of whom 52 per cent were women and 48 per cent men. Most new retirees, nearly 44,000 persons, retired on an old-age pension. Around 17,500 of the new retirees retired on a disability pension.

Compared to 2020, the number of new earnings-related pension recipients was about the same in 2021. The number of new retirees on an old-age pension was higher than in 2020, but the number of new retirees on a disability pension was smaller.

72%

of all new retirees retired on an old-age pension

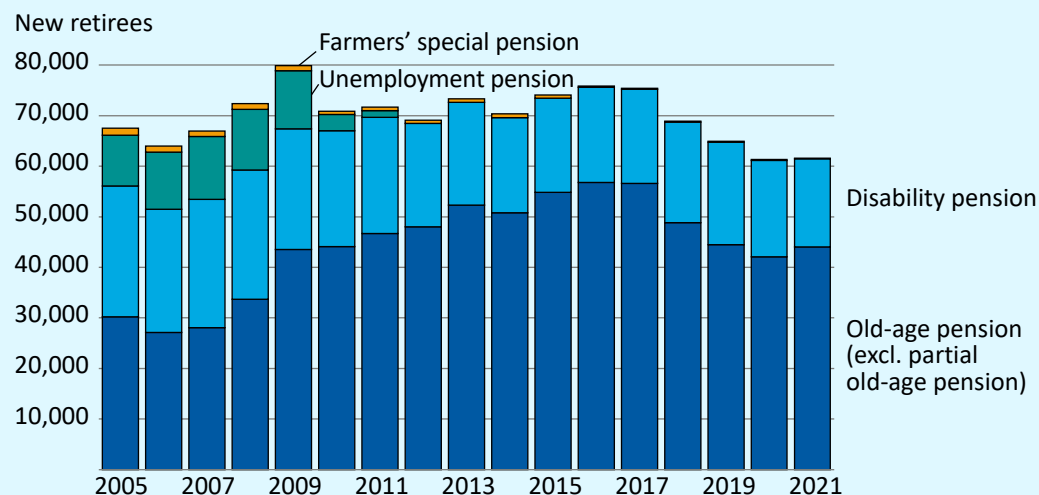


Number of new retirees virtually unchanged

In 2005 the number of new retirees was 67,000. In 2006, the number dipped but increased again until 2009 as baby boomers headed into retirement. At this point the number of new retirees on an earnings-related pension reached a record of around 80,000. The figure then remained steadily at around 70,000 until 2017. Since then, the number of new retirees on an earnings-related pension has declined. This has been due to the falling number of new retirees on an old-age pension, which in turn is mainly explained by the rising retirement age. In 2021, the number of new retirees remained on the same level as in 2020.

At the same time, the number of new disability retirees has slightly increased. In 2014–2017 the annual number of new retirees on a disability pension averaged around 18,500, but in 2018 and 2019 the figure edged up to around 20,000. In 2020, the number took a downward turn again. The same trend continued in 2021 with around 17,500 new retirees on a disability pension.

New retirees on an earnings-related pension by pension benefit in 2005–2021



[Data in statistical database](#)



44,000

new retirees on an
old-age pension



17,500

new retirees on a
disability pension

Retirement on an old-age pension

In 2021, a total of 44,000 persons retired on an old-age pension. Of them, 22,600 (51%) were women and 21,400 (49%) were men. Persons choosing to take payment of a partial old-age pension are not included in the figures for all new old-age retirees; they are only included in the statistics for new retirees in the year when they retire on a full old-age pension or when they begin to receive a disability pension.

Most retire on an old-age pension at age 63

Roughly half (47%) of the new retirees on an old-age pension in 2021 retired at age 63; among men the figure was 49 per cent and among women 45 per cent.

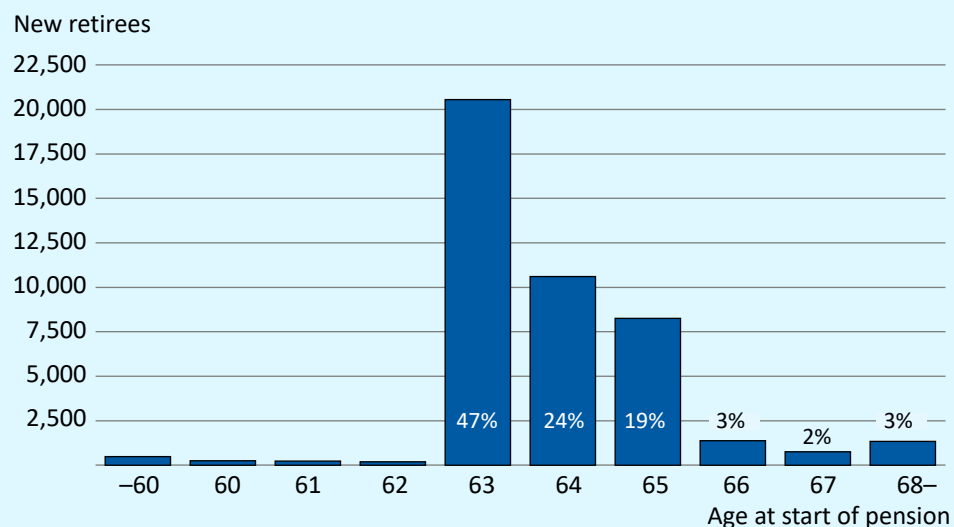
The next most common retirement ages were 64 years (24%) and 65 years (19%). Those who retired at age 68 or older accounted for three per cent of all new old-age retirees. The average age of new retirees on an old-age pension in 2021 was 64.4 years.

Partial old-age pension chosen by 13,000 persons

In 2021, there were a total of 13,000 new recipients of a partial old-age pension (7,300 or 56% were men and 5,700 or 44% were women).

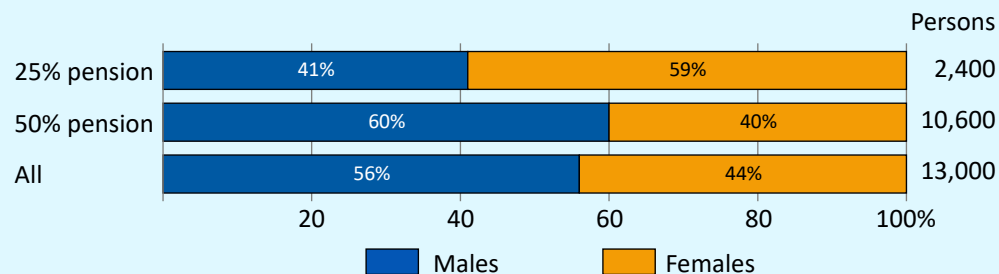
The majority or 10,600 (82%) chose to take out 50 per cent of their accrued monthly earnings-related pension. Among men the proportion choosing this option was 87 per cent and among women 75 per cent.

New retirees on an earnings-related old-age pension in 2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

Partial old-age pensions starting by share of pension taken out in 2021



[Osittainen varhennettu vanhuuseläke ja työuraeläke \[Partial early old-age pension and years-of-service pensions; only in Finnish\]. Eläketurvakeskuksen tilastoja 1/2022.](#)



New retirees on a disability pension

The total number of new disability retirees in 2021 was 17,500, of whom 54 per cent (9,500 persons) were women and 46 per cent (8,000 persons) were men.

Of all new retirees on a disability pension, 58 per cent received a fixed-term cash rehabilitation benefit and 42 per cent a disability pension granted until further notice.

A majority retired on a full disability pension

Of all new retirees on a disability pension, around 70 per cent retired on a full disability pension and around 30 per cent on a partial disability pension in 2021. A total of 12,100 persons retired on a full disability pension. Of them, 6,300 (52%) were

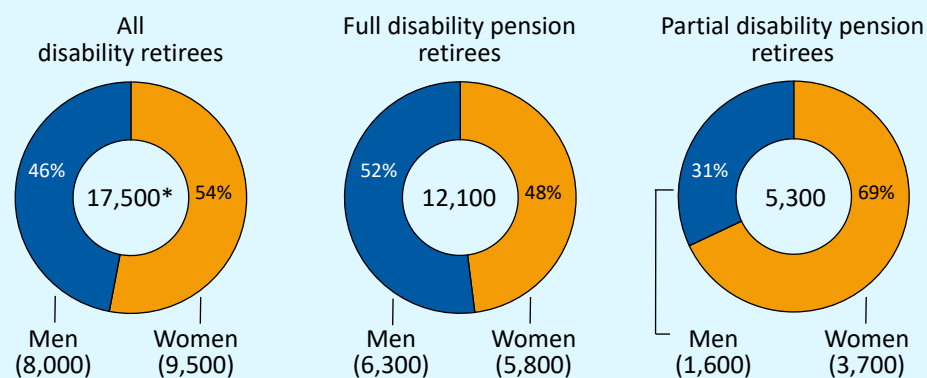
men. A total of 5,300 persons retired on a partial disability pension. Of them 1,600 (31%) were men.

Partial disability retirees older than retirees on a full pension

In 2021, the average age of all new disability pension retirees was 52 years. The average age of persons retiring on a full pension was 51 years; for those retiring on a partial disability pension it was 56 years.

Slightly over 70 per cent of new partial disability retirees were aged at least 55 years. Among new retirees on a full disability pension, 51 per cent were aged 55 or over. Persons under 35 accounted for 15 per cent of all retirees on a full disability pension but for only three per cent of those retiring on a partial disability pension.

New retirees on an earnings-related disability pension by gender in 2021



*Includes new retirees on a years-of-service pension (84 persons).

[Data in statistical database](#)

Mental disorders the most common cause of disability retirement

In 2021, mental and behavioural disorders were the most common cause of retirement on a disability pension. A total of 5,800 persons (33%) retired on a disability pension because of mental disorders and 5,500 persons (32%) because of musculoskeletal diseases. The shares for all other main disease categories were less than 10 per cent.

In 2019 mental and behavioural disorders were the most common cause of retirement on a disability pension for the first time. In previous years it was more common to retire due to musculoskeletal disorders.

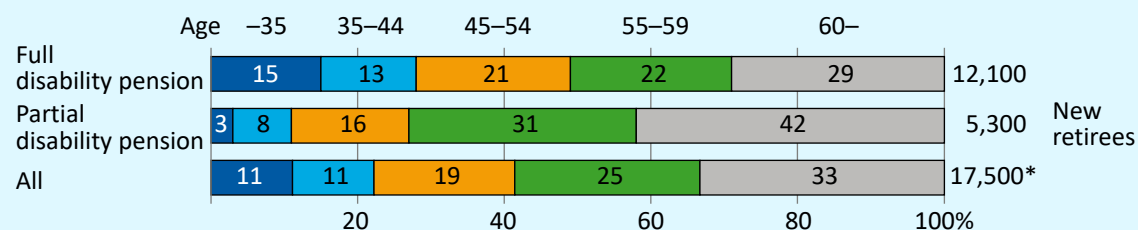
Retirement on mental health grounds was by far more common among women (37%) than men (28%). Musculoskeletal disorders accounted for 33 per cent of women's and for 30 per cent of men's disability retirement.

Full disability retirement mainly due to mental disorders and partial disability retirement mainly due to musculoskeletal disorders

Mental disorders accounted for 37 per cent and musculoskeletal disorders for 25 per cent of all new full disability pensions.

Almost half (47%) of all new partial disability retirees retired due to musculoskeletal disorders, while mental disorders accounted for around one fourth (24%).

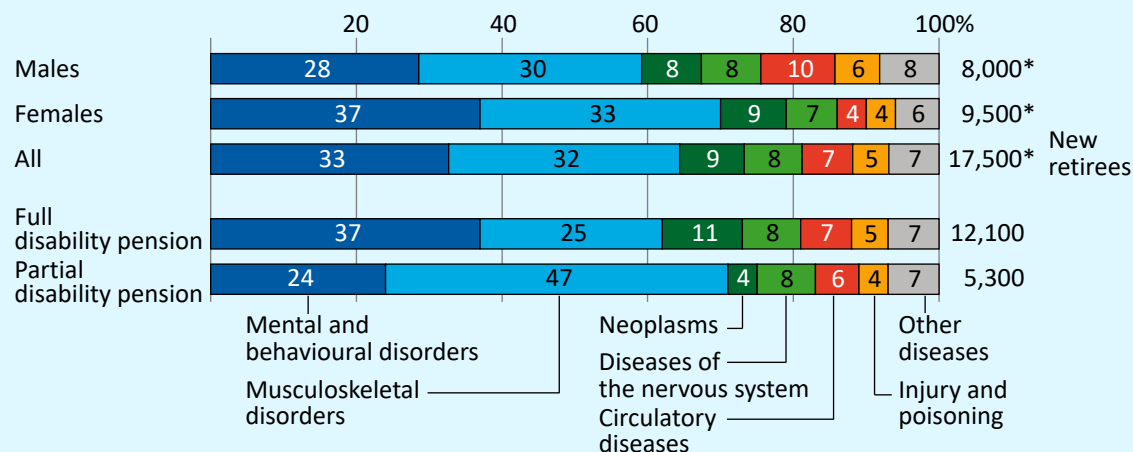
New retirees on an earnings-related disability pension by age in 2021



*Includes new retirees on a years-of-service pension (84 persons).

[Data in statistical database](#)

New retirees on an earnings-related disability pension by main disease category in 2021



*Includes new retirees on a years-of-service pension (84 persons).

[Data in statistical database](#)

Depression a common cause of retirement

Around one in five or 3,300 new disability retirees in 2021 retired due to depression. Among women the figure was 23 per cent and among men 14 per cent.

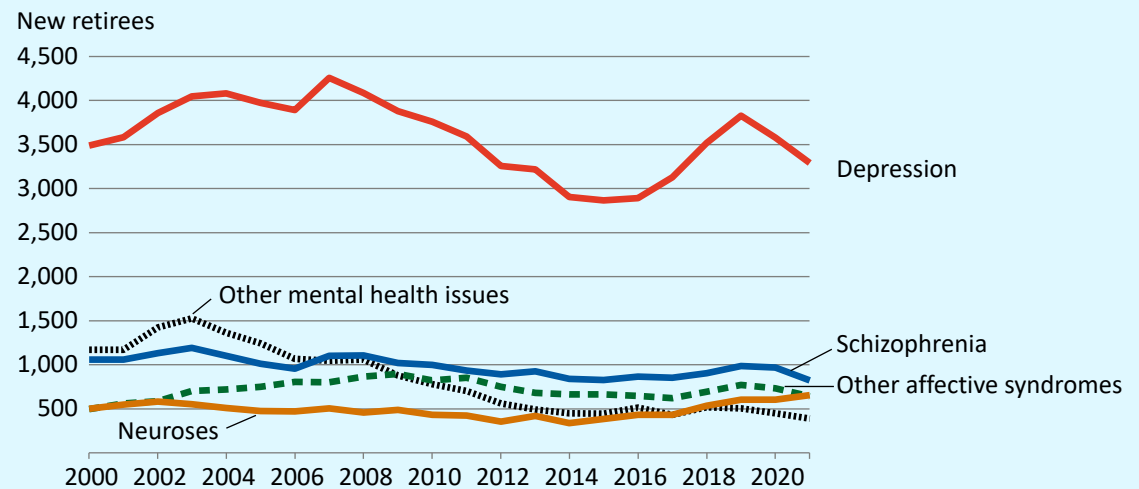
The number of persons retiring on a disability pension due to depression increased in the early 2000s. The figure peaked in 2007 when depression was the main cause of disability for 4,300 new retirees.

The number of pensions granted on grounds of depression started to decline after 2007 and continued on a downward trend through to 2015, when annually some 2,900 persons retired because of depression. After that, disability due to depression increased again until 2019. In 2020, it declined once again.



Every fifth new retiree on a disability pension retired due to depression

Persons retiring on a disability pension due to mental disorders in 2000–2021



Few retirees on a years-of-service pension

The years-of-service pension was introduced as a new pension benefit at the beginning of 2017. It aims to offer a route to early retirement for those who have limited possibilities to continue working but who do not qualify for a full disability pension.

The number of new retirees on a years-of-service pension has been very moderate since the benefit was introduced. In 2021, the number of new retirees on this benefit was higher than ever: 84 persons.



3,300
retired due to
depression

Size of pension

Average and median earnings-related pension in one's own right

This section examines recipients of an earnings-related pension in one's own right, that is, based on one's working life, payable as an old-age, disability or farmers' special pension. Persons drawing a partial old-age pension are not included among old-age pension recipients. The figures indicated are gross pension amounts before taxes.

Women's and men's earnings-related pensions differ markedly

The average monthly earnings-related pension in one's own right in 2021 was 1,621 euros. The average pension for men was 1,944 euros and for women 1,354 euros. In other words, the gap between men's and women's average earnings-related pensions was almost 600 euros.

Gender gap in median pension slightly smaller than in average pension

The median earnings-related pension was 1,482 euros a month (half of the recipients get a higher and half a smaller pension than the median pension). Men's median earnings-related pension was 1,768 euros and women's 1,285 euros. Thus, the median for men was lightly less than 500 euros higher than for women.



The gap between men's and women's average and median monthly pensions is comparatively large. Women's pensions are smaller mainly due to women's lower average wages and shorter working lives compared to men's, as well as the age structure of men and women. The older the pension recipient, the lower their average earnings-related pension. Older pensioners have had less time to build up their pension pot since the introduction of earnings-related pension acts.

Average monthly old-age pension 1,668 euros

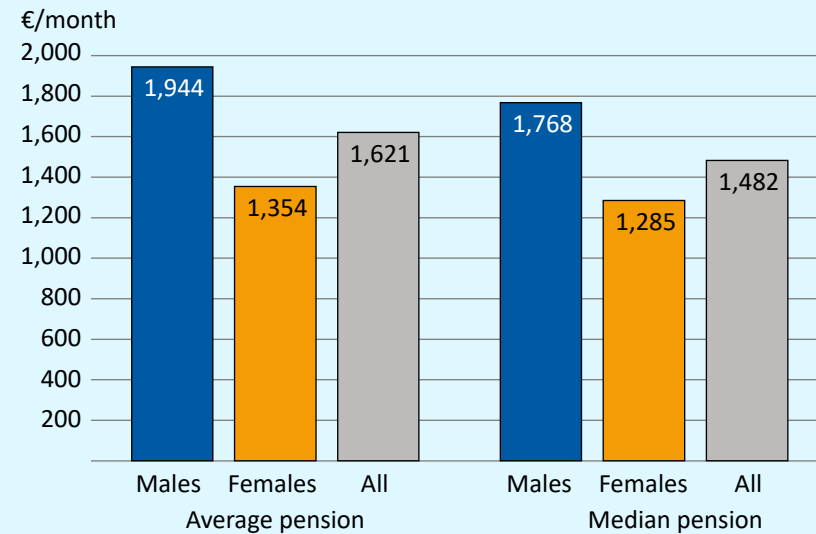
The average monthly earnings-related old-age pension in 2021 was 1,668 euros. Women's average was 1,358 euros and men's 2,016 euros. That means a gender gap of more than 600 euros.

The median earnings-related old-age pension was 1,527 euros a month (€1,320 for women and €1,829 for men).

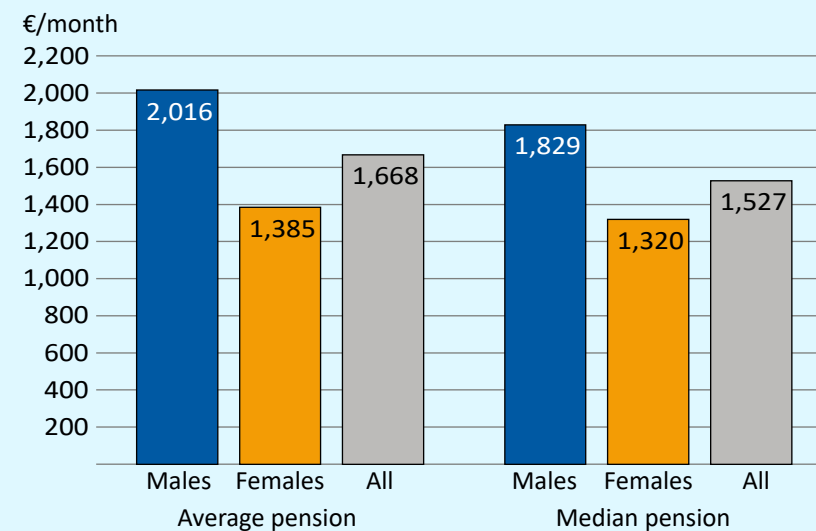
Gender gap less pronounced among disability pension recipients

The average monthly earnings-related disability pension in 2021 was 1,180 euros, the median 1,154 euros. The amounts are for full disability pensions.

Average and median earnings-related pensions in one's own right at 31 Dec. 2021



Average and median earnings-related old-age pension at 31 Dec. 2021



[Data in statistical database \(average pension\)](#)

[Data in statistical database \(median pension\)](#)

The gender gap in average and median pensions was clearly smaller among disability pension recipients than among old-age pension recipients. Women’s average monthly disability pension was 1,085 euros and men’s 1,269 euros. The gender gap in average monthly disability pensions was more than 180 euros.

The gap was almost the same for median pensions. Women’s median disability pension was 1,090 euros and men’s 1,240 euros a month.

Average pension of new retirees on an earnings-related pension

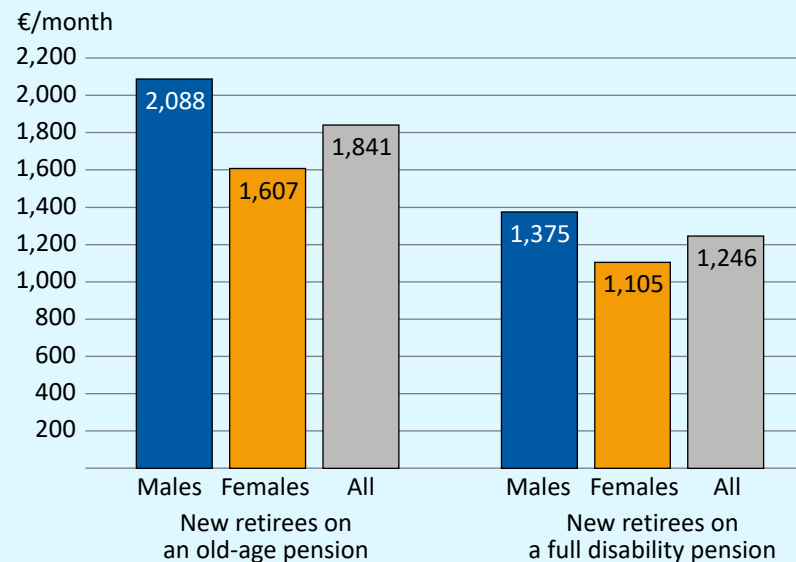
The average pension of those retiring on an earnings-related old-age pension in 2021 was 1,841 euros a month. Women’s average was 1,607 euros and men’s 2,088 euros. Women’s average monthly earnings-related pension was slightly less than 500 euros lower than men’s.

The average monthly pension of new retirees on a full disability pension was 1,246 euros. Women’s average earnings-related disability pension was 1,105 euros and men’s 1,375 euros a month. Women’s average pension was 270 euros lower than men’s.



Average monthly pension of new retirees on an old-age pension 1,841 euros

Average earnings-related old-age and disability pensions of new retirees in 2021



[Data in statistical database \(old-age pension\)](#)

[Data in statistical database \(disability pension\)](#)

Survivors’ pension

Average monthly earnings-related survivors’ pension 654 euros

The average earnings-related survivors’ pension of surviving spouses was 654 euros a month in 2021. Women’s monthly survivors’ pension averaged 693 euros and men’s 365 euros.

The average monthly survivors’ pension granted to children under the earnings-related pension system was 522 euros.

Pension recipients abroad

Two per cent of earnings-related pension recipients reside abroad

At year-end 2021, earnings-related pensions were paid from Finland to 34,600 persons residing abroad. This is around two per cent of all earnings-related pension recipients.

Most pensions paid abroad are old-age pensions

Almost 30,000 (90%) of all earnings-related pension recipients abroad received an old-age pension. Survivors' pension recipients numbered 4,200 (12%) and disability pension recipients 1,100 (3%). Over half (54%) of the earnings-related pension recipients who reside abroad were women.



Two per cent of earnings-related pension recipients resided abroad



Half of all pensions go to Sweden

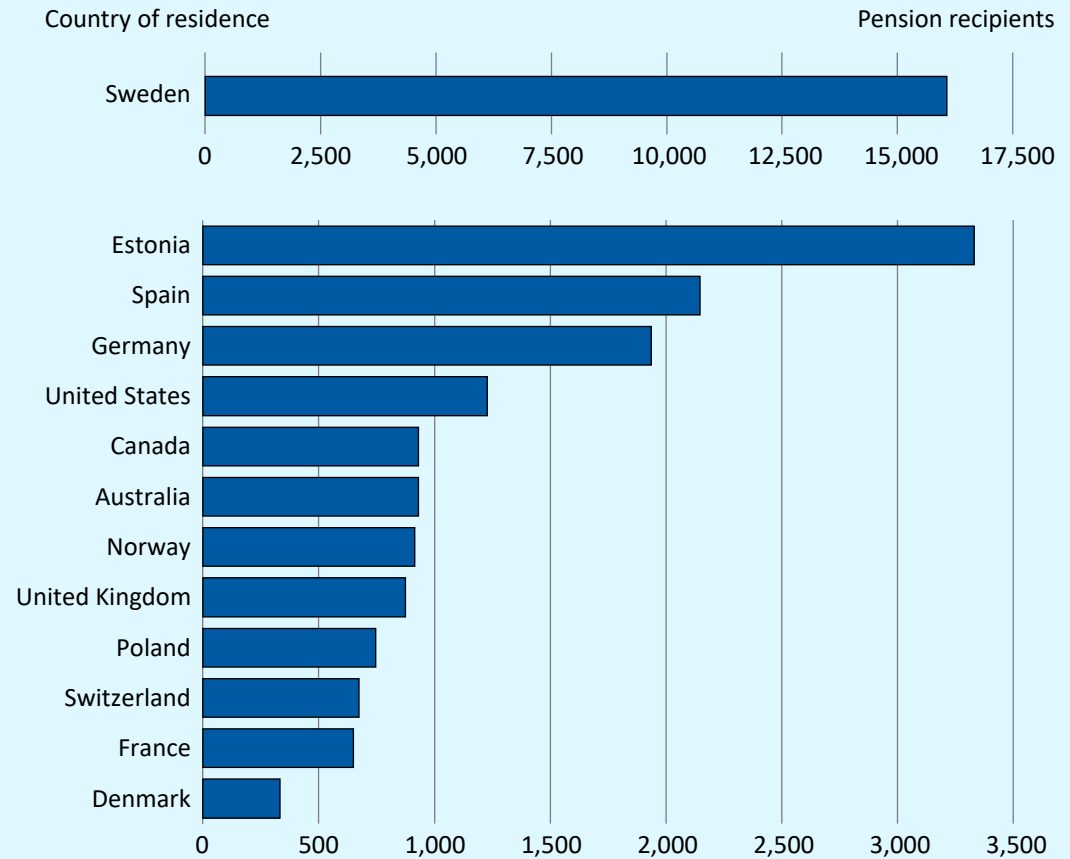
In 2021, there were 13 countries where more than 300 persons received an earnings-related pension from Finland. Nearly half of all pension payments abroad (16,100) went to Sweden. The next biggest destinations were Estonia (3,300), Spain (2,100) and Germany (1,900).

The average monthly earnings-related pension payment abroad was 569 euros. Among countries where payments were made to at least 300 persons, the average monthly pension of earnings-related pensioners was highest in Spain at 1,618 euros, followed by France at 1,573 euros. The average pension of earnings-related pension recipients living in Sweden was 312 euros a month.



Half of all earnings-related pensions paid abroad went to Sweden

Countries to which earnings-related pensions were paid from Finland to at least 300 persons at 31 Dec. 2021



[Data in statistical database](#)

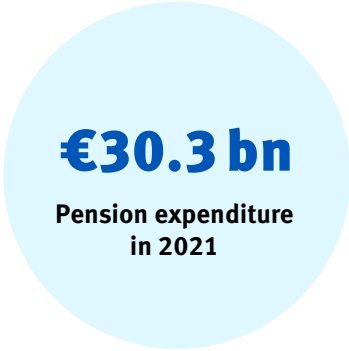


Pension expenditure

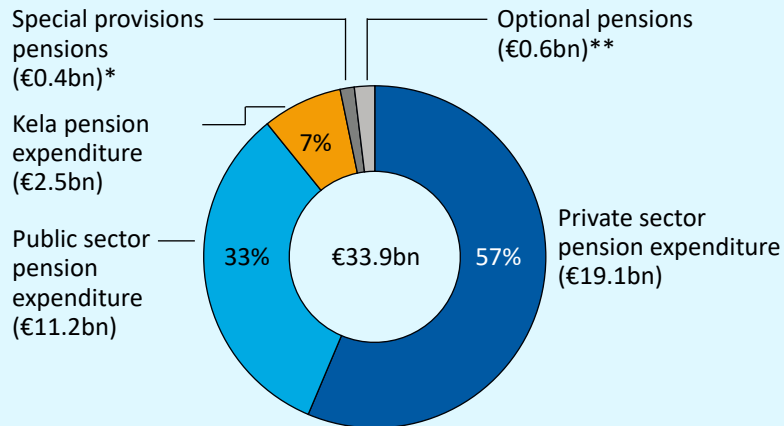
Earnings-related pension expenditure as a proportion of total pension expenditure

Total pension expenditure in 2021 came to 33.9 billion euros. Earnings-related pension expenditure amounted to 30.3 billion euros (90%) and national pension expenditure to 2.5 billion euros (7%). A total of around one billion euros was paid out in optional pensions and special provision pensions.

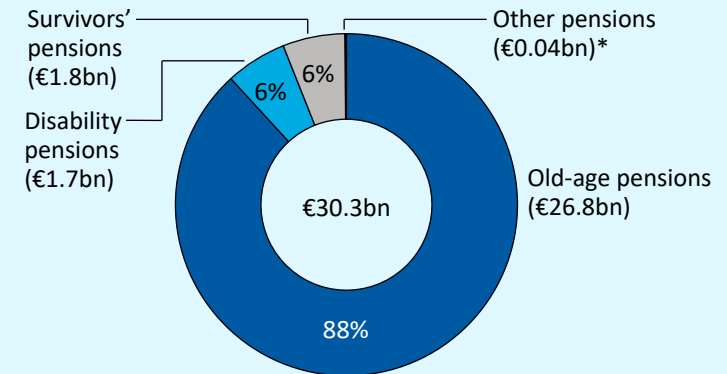
The private sector accounted for 19.1 billion euros (63%) and the public sector for 11.2 billion euros (37%) of earnings-related pension expenditure. Less than one per cent of all earnings-related pensions were paid abroad, to an amount of 242 million euros.



Total pension expenditure in 2021



Earnings-related pension expenditure by pension benefit in 2021



* Occupational Accidents, Injuries and Diseases Act, Motor Liability Insurance Act, Military Accidents Act and Military Injuries Act.

**Unregistered supplementary pensions paid by employers.

*Farmers' special pensions 33 million euros and part-time pensions 2 million euros.

[Data in statistical database](#)

[Data in statistical database \(total pension expenditure\)](#)

[Data in statistical database \(earnings-related pensions and pensions paid by Kela\)](#)

Earnings-related pension expenditure by pension benefit

In 2021 old-age pensions accounted for 26.8 billion euros (88%) of earnings-related pension expenditure. Disability pension payments totalled 1.7 billion euros (6%) and survivors' pension payments 1.8 billion euros (6%). Expenditure on farmers' special pensions amounted to 33 million euros and on part-time pensions to two million euros.



Disability pensions paid to an amount of 1.7 billion euros

Statistics from the Finnish Centre for Pensions

The Finnish Centre for Pensions is a developer, expert and joint service producer of statutory pension provision. The Statistics series includes statistics from the various areas of pension provision. The statistics are based on register data of the pension system.



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