

Definition

Social security and social protection for older people can be defined as providing quality services and assisting individuals in fighting social exclusion and ensuring equal opportunities with specific emphasis to one of the vulnerable groups of society.

Scope of the right

Both contributory and non-contributory schemes are available for older people where contributory pensions are paid to those who were in a gainful occupation and contributed throughout their lives towards a retirement pension, while those who were not in a gainful occupation are paid a non-contributory pension which however is means tested.

Throughout the years, both schemes of pensions were increased by the yearly cost of living adjustments but in recent years, after 25 years, another increase over and above the cost of living adjustment was awarded to all contributory and non-contributory pensioners, to have a higher standard of living and to enable pensioners to lead a decent life and to participate in a public and social life, thus avoiding exclusion due to lack of financial means.

State obligations

The state is obliged to continue in the development and further enhancement of social security for all sectors of the society with particular emphasis on those deemed to be most vulnerable to ensure a basic standard of living and to continue to fight against poverty and social exclusion while promoting social inclusion and equal opportunities.

Hence, the state is obliged to provide in time, appropriate financial assistance and other benefits to those who are eligible, together with information on social security benefits and encourage individuals to be aware with their obligations under the social security legislation.

The need to extend coverage is therefore a challenge for all organisations and this can only be done while also addressing wider policy issues including the demographic ageing of populations, evolving family structures, and the impact of economic globalisation.

Special considerations

These should consider that everyone has the right to an adequate income for an independent living in their familiar surroundings as much as possible, together with adequate health care facilities and services necessitated by their state of health.

The right to social security should require a composition of a single scheme or variety of schemes, to ensure that benefits are provided for the relevant individuals.

All persons should be covered by the social security system, especially individuals belonging to the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, without discrimination on any grounds. Social security services must be affordable, and should have physical access.