



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# The number of people registering interest in the State Pension top up scheme

September 2015

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# Background

State Pension top up (class 3a) enables pensioners to acquire additional state pension. Registrations of interest in the scheme opened in April 2014 and will continue until the goes live date of 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015. The scheme is open to those who reach State Pension age before the introduction of the new State Pension (April 2016) and will be available for 18 months from 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015 until 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The maximum amount of additional pension that will be allowed will be £25 a week, and a cooling off period of 3 months will be offered.

Currently people with gaps in their contribution record can pay voluntary class 3 NI contributions to make up shortfalls to meet the contribution conditions for basic State Pension and bereavement benefits. Class 3 can be paid up to 6 years in arrears but there are concessions in place that allow those eligible to fill gaps as far back as 1975.

This scheme allows pensioners to increase their State Pension, even if they did not have any gaps in their National Insurance record for the basic State Pension. The scheme enables existing pensioners to make a lump sum NI contribution to entitle them to Additional Pension. The contribution rates are higher than Class 3 contributions but are set at an actuarially fair rate.

Pensioners will start receiving extra additional pension immediately after making their lump sum contribution. This contribution is for Additional Pension, and will have all the features of Additional Pension: it will be up-rated in the same way (currently CPI – Consumer Price Index), it can be deferred, and will be available to a surviving spouse following the normal rules of inherited SERPS (State Earnings Related Pension Scheme). The rate of the contributions will be based upon age; older pensioners will pay a lower rate in line with life expectancy. The scheme will be taxable, as with current Additional Pension.

Further information on State Pension top up can be found at the links below:

<https://www.gov.uk/statepensionpopup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/300007/wms-state-pension-top-up.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300007/wms-state-pension-top-up.pdf)

# Methodology

The data has been produced using management information, which has been collected during the State Pension top up registration process. The data is simply a count of people who have registered an interest in the State Pension top up scheme either via telephone or e-mail. Note that there may be a small amount of double counting of people within the figures.

# Results

Between 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015, there were 16,780 registrations of interest in the State Pension top up scheme. Monthly numbers are presented in the table below:

Month	Registrations of interest
Apr-14	2,840
May-14	530
Jun-14	230
Jul-14	220
Aug-14	270
Sep-14	170
Oct-14	1,140
Nov-14	380
Dec-14	280
Jan-15	630
Feb-15	1,600
Mar-15	860
Apr-15	350
May-15	850
Jun-15	670
Jul-15	3,300
Aug-15	2,450
<b>Total to end of August 2015</b>	<b>16,780</b>

## Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

# Contact details

## Queries about the content of this document

**Press enquiries** should be directed to the Department for Work and Pensions press office:

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