

# Pensions Commission - Government response delayed to April

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**The Government's response to the report of the Pensions Commission is now not expected until April, according to the Department of Social Protection.**

When the Commission's report - dealing with the future of the state pension, as well as retirement ages in general - was published last October, the Government said it would consider the report, with "a view to bringing a recommended response and implementation plan to Government by end of March 2022".

This week the Department of Social Protection told IRN that Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys, "intends to bring a recommended response and implementation plan to Government in April".

It added that "in the interests both of older people and future generations of older people, the Government intends to consider the comprehensive and far reaching recommendations in the Pensions Commission's report very carefully".

"The views of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands and the Commission on Taxation and Welfare will be considered as part of the Government's deliberations over the coming weeks. Officials in the Department of Social Protection are also examining each of the recommendations and consulting across Government through the Cabinet Committee system. It is important that this work is completed before reaching conclusions on any recommendations."

The Department concluded: "The State Pension is the bedrock of the pension system in Ireland. It is very effective at ensuring that our pensioners do not experience poverty. The Government is committed to ensuring that this remains the case for current pensioners, those nearing State Pension Age and today's young workers including those who are only starting their careers."

The Pensions Commission recommended that the state pension age start increasing from 66 in 2028, rising by three months every year to reach 67 in 2031, then rising three months every two years to reach 68 in 2039. It also recommended a ban on most employers forcing retirement below state pension age.

## UNION MOTIONS

Separately, SIPTU's biennial conference next week has several motions on issues that were considered by the Commission. One motion opposes any increase from the current age of 66, while welcoming the recommendation that prevents compulsory retirement below state pension age.

Another motion recommends restoring the state pension age of 65 for those in "construction and related labour-intensive industries", while a third calls for higher increases in the current state pension to deal with the effects of high inflation, forecast to reach over 8% this year.