

# Teaching Guides for Teachers

## Social Security Classroom



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# 1 What is the Social Security system? How is it organised?

## 1.1 Affected Units

**Unit 0.** General Concepts. Principles and Directives of the Social Security System.

**Unit 1.** The Spanish Social Security System

## 1.2 Previous Reflections

- What have you heard about the Social Security?
- What do you think it is?
- What is it for?

## 1.3 Teacher Presentation

All citizens, in order to live with dignity, have to work in exchange for a salary, but reality shows us that this is not always possible.

In this way, it may be that workers stop working when they reach retirement age, have their working capacity permanently reduced or terminated, die or lose their job due to dismissal. In addition, workers cannot work when they are ill, have had an accident or are taking leave for maternity, paternity adoption or foster care.

These situations cause, for the people who suffer them, excessive costs or a reduction in income, which can affect their basic needs (food, housing, clothing, medical care, etc.).

Therefore, the State, through the Social Security, guarantees people adequate protection in certain situations and under the legally established terms.

The protection system we are referring to is known as the SOCIAL SECURITY.

**From where does the Social Security get enough money to protect all the citizens when they need it?**

Basically from the contributions made by workers and employers to the Social Security. The companies where people work keep back a small part of their wage, to give it to the Social Security; the contributions.

It is also funded by the taxes paid by all of the State's citizens.

**How does each worker acquire the right to this protection?**

Through the contributions made over their working life, by the employer and the worker, since there is an obligation to make contributions from the moment they start a job.

### Can we all acquire this right?

All people can acquire it because they have the right to work, but they also need to meet the necessary requirements for each situation.

To guarantee this right, we need to be supportive of one another, especially those most in need of protection, even though they are of different ages or from different places. Everyone has equal rights.

You can see that the **Social Security** system is based on **solidarity** and **equality of rights** because the amount received from the contributions across the whole country are used to help all Spanish citizens and citizens from other countries residing in Spain.

## 1.4 Activities

- **Preparing lists:** necessary things to live, ways of getting those things, obstacles or difficulties in getting them (situations of need) and solutions that occur to us.  
*Students should reach the conclusion that a protection system is necessary.*
- **Conceiving and describing: how that system should be.**  
Inventing how that protection system would behave and describe it as if it were a game with rules: which things can be done, which things cannot be done, which things are appropriate and which things are not.
- **Planning:** draw a plan of a small city to show how it is previous ideas that create the structure (principles –guide). Students should be able to clearly see where the people and things can travel and where they cannot (streets, pavements, pipes, cables, zebra crossings, traffic lights, etc.).
- Composing simple texts that give examples of cases of **solidarity**, and **equality of rights**.
- Searching on the Internet for Article 41 of the Spanish Constitution and talking about it in class.
- Group work to prepare a questionnaire with six questions on these topics, aimed at parents and teachers.
- **Questionnaire for students**
  1. *What is the system that protects citizens against life insecurity called?*
    - a) Social Protection
    - b) Social Security
    - c) Protective Action
  2. *What do people have to do to get money and buy the things they need?*
    - a) Ask the bank for a loan.
    - b) Work.
    - c) Ask their neighbour.
  3. *If a person has no job, gets ill or is old, what can they do to receive protection?*

- a) Beg in the street.
  - b) Nothing.
  - c) Ask for help from the Social Security.
4. *Who is entitled to receive protection from the Social Security?*
- a) Everyone.
  - b) Only workers who contribute part of their wage every month to the Social Security to be safe and protected.
  - c) Children.
5. *How does the Social Security get most of its money to give to us in the form of help or benefits when we really need it?*
- a) All the people who work, in companies or for themselves, give a small part of their monthly wage to the Social Security.
  - b) The State gives part of its funds.
  - c) The richest and most powerful citizens are asked for it.
6. *What does the fact that the Social Security is guided by the principle of universality mean?*
- a) That it tries to protect the entire population because all citizens have the right to be looked after.
  - b) That it travels the universe with a guide.
  - c) That it is searching for a guide to the universe.
7. *The Social Security is based on the principle of solidarity this means that...*
- a) all those people who are solidary, and only them, are part of the Social Security system.
  - b) solidarity is a very strong rock upon which the Social Security its built.
  - c) we all need solidarity, or in other words, the commitment to help each other, and therefore the Social Security is based on this principle.
8. *What is solidarity between people from different generations?*
- a) A commitment to help between people of different ages.
  - b) A commitment to help between friends.
  - c) A commitment to help between workers.
9. *What is solidarity between people from different regions?*
- a) A commitment to help between people who live in different parts of the country.
  - b) A commitment to help between people who have different needs.
  - c) A commitment to help between people of different races.

## 2 How does the Social Security protect citizens?

### 2.1 Affected Units

**Unit 2.** The Current Social Security Model.

**Unit 3.** Protective Action and Legal Framework of Benefits.

### 2.2 Previous Reflections

- Is the Social Security system that helps us when we are ill? And when we are old?
- At what times in our lives do you think the Social Security can help us?
- Do you know what retirement is?
- Do you know what pensions are?

### 2.3 Teacher Presentation

Citizens, who live in society, have the right to be safe and protected in many cases and situations. The main reason that the Social Security exists is: **the existence of situations of need.**

#### The Spanish Constitution

Article 41. The public authorities will maintain a public Social Security system for all citizens, which guarantees sufficient social benefits and support in situations of need, especially in the event of unemployment". Additional benefits and support will be optional.

As a result, the help (or **benefits**) of the Social Security are extremely varied due to the number of needs that may arise over a person's life.

We are going to see **what type of help is received in each case.** The help is called **benefits** and there are four different classes:

#### 2.3.1 Pensions

These are received periodically, every month for example, and normally for your whole life.

**Case 1:** Daniel's grandfather is 70 years old and he has just retired, in other words, he no longer works. At 65 years old, which is the retirement age, he didn't want to leave his job because he really liked what he was doing (*invent what is most appropriate for each presentation*). He was able to carry on at his company by reducing his working hours. This is called **partial retirement**.

Now, even though he doesn't work, he receives his retirement wage every month. The Social Security gives him a wage for what he has **contributed**, by providing him with part of his earnings over the years.

**Case 2:** Paloma, Paula's mother, has been left a widow. Her husband had a respiratory disease for some time and has died aged just 45 years old. She is entitled to receive a benefit called **widowhood pension**.

The children are also entitled, if they are under 18 years of age, to a benefit that in this case is called **orphan's pension**.

(it is recommended that the teacher expands on this information by talking about other cases in which this pension is received: up to 22 years of age if you work but earn little, up to 24 if you are an absolute orphan, etc. We suggest that it is done by answering students' questions carefully, with the aim being for the questions to "occur" to them based on giving examples of *life's needs*).

### 2.3.2 Benefits

Benefits are received for specific periods. Workers can find themselves in a situation where it is temporarily impossible for them to go to work and in which they also need medical care for an illness or accident.

**Case 1:** Marina, has been a primary school teacher for years and while she was playing with her three-year-old students she slipped and fell over. Unfortunately she broke her arm. So now she has to wear a plaster cast and can't go to the school where she works for three weeks.

Marina will receive the following:

- a) a **temporary disability benefit**, or in other words, the Social Security will grant an amount of money similar to that which she would be earning if she were working over these three weeks (financial benefit).
- b) **the entitlement to go to the doctor's as many times as she needs to** for her arm to recover, without having to pay any money for these visits (health care).
- c) the option to **buy medicines**, to relieve the pain or reduce the swelling, for much less money than they are worth (pharmaceutical benefit).

**Case 2:** Merche and Andrew have had a baby girl, Begoña. They really enjoy looking at her and playing with her. Now, since she is so small and needs lots of care and attention from her parents, they want to be close to her as much as possible. Also, they are a little tired because they have to get up several times in the night to feed the baby, which cries when it is hungry, of course.

Merche and Andrew will receive the following help:

- a) a benefit for the mother (maternity). Merche will be able to take care of the baby and spend the first few months of its life by its side. Since she has been making contributions to the Social Security with part of her monthly wage, she will be entitled to stay at home for several months. She won't go to the hairdresser's where she works but she will receive her regular earnings.
- b) for 13 days, if it is his first child, Andrew has the option not to go to the restaurant where he works as a waiter, and help Merche at home instead, looking after their little girl or boy. It is a Social Security benefit for being a father (paternity).

### 2.3.3 Compensation

Financial benefits that are paid in a single payment.

**Case 1:** Maria is a train hostess. While serving food on the train she injured her foot with one of the drinks trolleys. Maria could walk (**non-disabling permanent injury**), but she couldn't spend hours on end walking at full speed down the aisles of a train. She couldn't carry on working as a hostess but she did receive some **compensation** for her **Social Security** contributions. After she carried on working for the same company but doing work on the ground and not on a train, which was more appropriate to her situation.

### 2.3.4 Unemployment Benefits

**These protect all people who, although they want to work, have temporarily or permanently lost their job.**

All workers who have been working for a certain amount of time and making monthly contributions are entitled to receive this benefit. They will receive this benefit for a limited amount of time, which will depend on the number of years for which they have been working and making contributions.

The **Public State Employment Service** pays the company contributions for Social Security contributions while the benefit is being received.

## 2.4 Activities

- **Preparing lists:** situations in which people, during their life, will find themselves unable to work (age, maternity, accident, illness, etc.).
- Giving examples of and describing any of the listed situations. Applying the appropriate type of benefit to a case.
- Writing a letter to a friend, who, because his or her father has died, as well as being very sad, is worried about the financial situation in which his or her family has been left.
- A debate about whether or not protective action from the State is necessary.
- Group work to prepare a questionnaire with six questions on these topics, aimed at parents and teachers.
- **Student questionnaire.**
  1. *What is the help that people receive from the Social Security called?*
    - a) Mortgages.
    - b) Loans.
    - c) Benefits.
  2. *What are pensions?*
    - a) A type of benefit that is received for life.
    - b) A punishment.
    - c) Unemployment benefits.

3. *Who is entitled to an orphan's pension?*
    - a) Retired people.
    - b) In general, children who have become orphans and are under 18 years of age.
    - c) Children under 18 years of age.
  
  4. *What is a benefit?*
    - a) A temporary benefit.
    - b) A life benefit.
    - c) A social benefit.
  
  5. *What is the maternity benefit?*
    - a) It is a medical examination during pregnancy.
    - b) It is a benefit that mothers are entitled to for a period of time when they have to care for newborn children.
    - c) It is a transport allowance for mothers.
  
  6. *Who is entitled to a temporary disability benefit?*
    - a) Male and female workers when they are feeling very tired.
    - b) All people who make contributions every month and suffer from a disease or an accident that prevents them from doing their normal job.
    - c) People in general.
  
  7. *Is this temporary disability benefit only financial?*
    - a) This benefit involves not paying for medicine.
    - b) This benefit helps people to get financial assistance, health care and medicine.
    - c) This benefit is only financial.
  
  8. *What do you call financial benefits that are paid in a single payment to compensate a worker, for example, for a permanent injury that doesn't leave them disabled.*
    - a) Compensation.
    - b) Indemnities.
    - c) Pensions.
  
  9. *What is the name of the benefits granted by the Public State Employment Service for having lost your job?*
    - a) Forced benefits.
    - b) Short-term benefits.
    - c) Unemployment benefits.
  
  10. *For how long can you receive an unemployment benefit?*
    - a) For however long you are out of work, even if this situation lasts your whole life.
    - b) The maximum limit for which you can receive the benefit is approximately two years.
    - c) Until you turn 50 years of age.
- Collating the results of the questionnaire and drawing a conclusion from the answers.

## 3 Are there any citizens who are without protection?

### 3.1 Affected Units

Unit 3. Protective Action and Legal Framework of Benefits.

### 3.2 Previous Reflections

- Do people who have never made contributions have a right to receive help when they are most in need?
- And what about workers who have been unemployed for a long time and despite looking for work, have been unable to find it?
- Are people who cannot work due to illness, age or disability, if they do not have family who are able to help them, entitled to receive social benefits?

### 3.3 Teacher Presentation

We have seen that according to Article 41 of the Spanish Constitution, all citizens, everyone, has the right to the **Protective Action** of the Social Security. This protective action has two modes or levels:

1. Protection for the people who make contributions, in other words, contributory mode, **contributory level** or occupational level.
2. Protection for people who are unable to contribute or have not made enough contributions. This is called, non-contributory mode, **basic level** or welfare level.

All the cases we have been talking about (the cases of Marina, Merche and Andrew) are examples of situations that arise at contributory level, in other words, situations for people who contribute the appropriate part of their monthly wage to the Social Security.

Now we are going to see cases of people who may need protective action at its **basic level**, in which contributions come from the State and are received through the various Social Security Managing Bodies. The National Institute of the Social Security (INSS), the Social Marine Institute (ISM), and the Institute for the Elderly and Social Services (IMSERSO), with the latter being subordinate to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality.

There are the same benefits that we saw before: retirement, maternity, disease, and also temporary benefits, etc. but now the most of the money needed comes from the **General State Budget**, in other words, taxes.

So the **basic level** is intended to provide basic help to those people without contributions or resources.

There are **six classes** of protective action and it covers the following cases.

### 3.3.1 Health Care Benefits.

When the Constitution sets out the right to health protection for all citizens, an extremely important characteristic of its benefits is mentioned: the fact that they are **universal**, in other words, the entire population (without any discrimination) can receive them.

Also foreign citizens both those who live in Spain and those who are only here for a short time are entitled to health care in the event of accidents and illnesses. The same thing happens if a pregnant foreign citizen goes into labour, she is fully entitled to receive care until she has fully recovered.

Here you can give the example of immigrants who come to Spanish shores and receive health care, which is a frequently covered topic in classes.

### 3.3.2 Non-Contributory Pensions

These are for people who have never made any contributions and people who have contributed little and meet certain requirements For example:

- a) Spanish citizens living in Spain.
- b) Spanish citizens living abroad.
- c) Spanish citizens who have returned after living for a long time in other countries.

*Are they very special cases? Is it fair for everybody to work to help them?*

A clear example is people with chronic diseases such as chronic asthma, which does not allow you to exert yourself because you become short of breath and get very tired. So, as a result, these people are granted a **non-contributory pension for permanent disability**.

Another case are people who can no longer work because of their age and have no income. In this case they receive a non-contributory **retirement pension**. *If they live among us it would seem a bit cruel not to help them out when we can, wouldn't it?*

But this can also happen to a Spanish citizen who lives abroad.

**Case 1:** Miralles is a friend of Daniel's grandfather, who when he was young went to work in a country where the social protection system wasn't as developed as in Spain and he couldn't return to Spain because there was no work for him there. Miralles became old and unfortunately his wife died. He is 75 years old with no children and can no longer work due to his age.

The Social Security grants Miralles a **need benefit**, because he is an old man, even though he doesn't live in his country of origin.

If Miralles wanted to and was able to return to Spain, he also would have the option, by right, to receive an **old age welfare pension**.

### 3.3.3 Special Maternity Benefit

A benefit in the event of having a child, for all female workers, even if they have not been contributing part of the wage for the necessary time to be entitled to this benefit.

### 3.3.4 Family Protection

For Spanish or foreign families living in Spain there are:

- a) periodic benefits (every month or every three months). These are benefits for having a child in your care, the birth of a new child, or the adoption of a child.
- b) lump-sum benefits in the case of families with lots of children, or families that do not have a mother or a father, if another child is born or adopted. Or if more than one child is born or adopted at once. Also, in the case of disabled mothers.

### 3.3.5 Welfare Level of Unemployment Protection

Benefits at this level are intended for unemployed people who for different reasons have been unable to return to work or receive a benefit according to another model, or rather the contributory model (students may need reminding about what the contributory level was).

The State contributes an amount to provide financial help to the unemployed person and also gives an amount to the Social Security to protect them in situations of need.

### 3.3.6 Social Services

If Miralles, Daniel's grandfather's friend, who we spoke about earlier, returned to Spain, in addition to receiving his **pension** and **health care** (for the doctor and medicine he may need), he could also receive social services.

Social services are benefits that are supplementary to financial benefits and try to improve standards of living, by reducing limitations caused by people's age and disability.

For example, a social worker will visit you at your home to check on your health condition and comfort, they will find you a home if you need one, and they will also help you to occupy your free time if you want: holidays, thermal therapy, etc.

There are people for work for the social services and spend quite a long time with older people, chatting with them, listening to their worries and stories, and in short, helping them.

## 3.4 Activities

- **Planning:** imagine two or three situations in which you have to plan a party or a trip, where some of the friends have little or no way of contributing and others have lots. **Conclusion:** a debate on the importance of solidarity.
- A search for information on cases and situations in the students' lives that provide examples of what the teacher has presented.

- A search for information on the existence of these benefits in other countries.
- Writing compositions with the information collected.
- A debate on the advantages and disadvantages of the society/state taking charge of these benefits (welfare or non-contributory level) based on the information collected in the previous activity.
- Group work to prepare a questionnaire with six questions on the topics covered, aimed at parents and teachers.
- Collating the results of the questionnaire and drawing conclusions from the results of the six questions.
- **Student questionnaire**
  1. *At which level would you place the case of Merche and Andrew, and the case of María?*
    - a) At the basic level.
    - b) At the contributory level.
    - c) At the distributive level.
  2. *In which cases can we receive the Protective Action of the Social Security at its BASIC LEVEL?*
    - a) When we are out of work and without sufficient resources.
    - b) When we are of specific age.
    - c) In the same cases as with the CONTRIBUTORY LEVEL.
  3. *What are the differences between the two levels?*
    - a) At the basic level people have not made contributions to the Social Security and at the contributory level they have.
    - b) At the contributory level it is the State which funds the benefits.
    - c) Spanish citizens are at one level and foreign citizens are at the other.
  4. *Are health care benefits at this level both for Spanish and foreign citizens?*
    - a) Yes, as long as they live in Spain everybody is entitled to them.
    - b) Only foreign women who are pregnant are entitled to them.
    - c) Health care benefits have a special characteristic: they are universal. The entire population can benefit from them.
  5. *What is a special maternity benefit?*
    - a) A benefit for newborn children if the mother gets ill.
    - b) A special year-long rest for mothers.
    - c) A special benefit to care for children intended for mothers who have not been able to make contributions to the Social Security for the necessary time.
  6. *What is the name of the periodic benefits for families without resources or work and with a lot of children?*
    - a) Family benefits.
    - b) Family insurance.
    - c) Health care benefits.

7. *Who is entitled to a non-contributory retirement pension?*
    - a) Older people who, even though they have not made enough contributions, live among us and are 65 years of age.
    - b) Older people who had to live abroad and did not make any contributions, and who now live in Spain.
    - c) The people who do not want to work any more.
  
  8. *What type of protection do workers who cannot find a job have?*
    - a) A health care benefit.
    - b) Early retirement.
    - c) Unemployment protection.
  
  9. *Are there also social services at non-contributory level?*
    - a) They do not exist at this level.
    - b) Only to find a home for elderly people.
    - c) Yes, to check on the health and well-being of all the people who need it.
- Collating the results of the questionnaire and drawing a conclusion from the answers.

## 4 What type of relationship is there between the Social Security and citizens?

### 4.1 Affected Units

**Unit 4.** Legal Relationship with the Social Security. Scope of Application. Affiliation. Registration of Companies. Active Contributor Status. Termination of Active Contributor Status. Schemes.

### 4.2 Previous Reflections

- How do you acquire the right to be protected by the Social Security?
- Do you belong to the Social Security just for being a citizen with a job?
- Does the Social Security also include children?
- How can children belong to the Social Security if they do not work?
- Do all workers, employees and company owners have the same rights and obligations?

### 4.3 Teacher Presentation

The Social Security is the system that resulted from the unification of the various social insurances that existed before it was created. It was formed and developed through a series of stages (see Unit 1. History and Current Model of the Spanish Social Security System). The guiding principle was always **solidarity** along with **fair distribution**.

The Social Security, in accordance with Spain declaring itself a social and democratic state of law, stated in Article 1 of the Constitution, from the offset it was very aware that solidarity is only effective if it is organised and coordinated:

- By the state.
- Through the law.
- Through public organisations (managing bodies and common services), which in accordance with the provisions of the law determine who is entitled to benefits, watch over how these benefits are provided and collect the money to pay for them.

As we are talking about public services it must be made very clear that they are public services as oppose to private services.

#### **What is the difference between public and private?**

A contract is entered into between an individual citizen and a private company, that is, the citizen needs something from the company, the company provides it to them and the citizen pays the company the agreed amount.

**Case:** A family wants to install an alarm system in their home to protect them from being burgled. They call a specialist alarm company, which tells them the prices, method and date of installation and payment. They reach an agreement and settle it between them.

In contrast, the relationship between citizens and the Social Security is provided for through the Law and not in a free manner in which each party (citizens and Social Security) agrees and asks for what they want:

All citizens have the same rights and the Social Security has the same obligations to everybody.

**Case:** Let's continue with the example of the family that wants to install an alarm. If this were one of the Social Security's obligations (WHICH IT ISN'T), the terms and conditions and the price of the alarm would be the same for all citizens who were in the same circumstances of need.

We will revise the basic principles of the Social Security system:

- **Contributive ability:** proportionality between the amount received and the amount contributed.
- **Universality:** inclusion of all citizens under the protective action.
- **Intergenerational solidarity:** while we are working we make contributions to fund current pensions.
- **Equity and equality of rights,** irrespective of the time and place of residence of the insured person.
- **Sufficiency:** guarantee and improvement of the levels of well-being through appropriate benefits.
- **General Fund:** the State is the sole owner of all the Social Security resources, obligations and benefits, so all people receive the same amount in accordance with the law.

The result is the commitment to **help the entire population** in a fair way both if people are at contributory level, that is they are contributing part of their earnings, and non-contributory level, due to their life circumstances.

**How does the state know whether companies and citizens are meeting their obligations? How does it know if workers are protected?**

Affiliation with the Social Security is when a person doing a professional activity for the first time is included in the System. It is like signing up on a list to become a member of a group or organisation. This list is prepared and controlled at the General Treasury of the Social Security. Affiliation is obligatory, unique, lifelong, exclusive and therefore people are subject to rights and obligations.

The acquisition of active contributor status is an administrative decision through which the TGSS grants a person who starts an activity their status of being included in the scope of application of a specific Social Security Scheme. Active contributor status is compulsory and, like the termination of active contributor status, expresses the current situation of the workers depending on whether or not they are carrying out a professional activity that is included within one of the System's schemes.

The termination of active contributor status is an administrative decision that determines the end of the professional activity, but does not terminate the legal relationship with the Social Security.

Whereas affiliation is unique, the acquisition and termination of active contributor status can be multiple, successive or even simultaneous if workers are carrying out more than one activity.

Contribution to the Social Security is compulsory. The obligation to pay contributions begins as soon as the employment activity commences. Contributions are made, that is, the worker contributes part of their earnings, while they have active contributor status and this obligation only comes to an end when they stop providing services and their active contributor status is terminated. Employers and self-employed workers also make contributions.

When you are making contributions and you meet certain requirements you are entitled to the contributory benefits that the Social Security offers because you have a protective relationship with it: for affiliated workers, the State recognises the situation of need when it occurs and provides the benefit to meet this need.

#### **And what if the citizen is not at the contributory level and is not affiliated?**

As we have already said, all citizens are entitled to the Social Security's protective action. In order to be a "protected individual", you must be in one of two situations:

1. Working and paying contributions and therefore entitled to contributory benefits. This is valid for all Spanish citizens residing in Spain as well as foreign citizens who live and work in Spain, provided that certain requirements are met.
2. Meeting the requirements for need and lack of resources provided for in the regulations, which gives entitlement to non-contributory benefits.  
It is valid for Spanish citizens residing in Spain and for Hispanic-American, Portuguese, Brazilian, Andorran and Philippine citizens who reside in Spanish territory.

#### **And what about citizens from other countries?**

It depends on what has been agreed between Spain and one of the other countries through treaties and agreements. Also, *it acts by doing the same thing with citizens of another country as that country does with Spanish citizens. This is the principle of reciprocity.*

There are also some special cases that cannot be included in the previous paragraphs. These examples are:

- Spanish citizens residing abroad.
- Foreign citizens living in Spain (they have the same rights as Spanish citizens at contributory level).
- Refugees, provided that they are residing in Spain legally.

**Affiliation** is for life and exclusive, because, even if a worker has three jobs at different places, the Social Security is unique for all companies.

Think, if the worker is not included on this list, and is not affiliated, the System cannot protect them.

Both the employer, with regard to their employees, and self-employed workers, have to inform the General Treasury of the Social Security of their affiliation. If they don't, the Treasury will do it itself, and the Labour and Social Security Inspectors will report them.

#### **Where and when do you have to become affiliated?**

At the offices of the General Treasury of the Social Security. It is always best to go to the office in the same region as the company.

**Is there a document that proves you are affiliated?**

Yes, there is. This document includes the affiliation number the Social Security has given to each worker and it is recorded in a general file.

**And do companies have to register too?**

Of course, it is extremely important, because if they don't do so before starting to hire employees, they can't give anyone active contributor status or make contributions or anything, they would be breaking the law.

They have to register, by submitting all of the necessary documentation to the General Treasury. They can then give their workers active contributor status, insure them against accidents and occupational diseases and cover financial benefits for the temporary disability of their employees.

**By doing all of these things, workers will be protected by the Social Security system.**

In addition, with regard to occupational injuries or diseases, the General Social Security Act gives companies the right to choose whether to join the so-called "Mutual Societies for Work-Related Injuries and Occupational Diseases". If the company choose to join, the Mutual Society is responsible for all the procedures related to these cases.

We already said that the Social Security covers the needs of people who are unable to work. When people stop working due to an illness, maternity or any other cause provided for in the law, something known as **assimilated contributor status** takes place. It is usually said that the worker is "on leave" from the company, but in fact, even though they have stopped work, their relationship with the Social Security continues, since the protective action was designed for precisely these situations of need.

If an individual is in a situation in which they should be protected and they do not have active contributor status, the law states that they have **active contributor status with full rights** and will be receive help in event of work-related and non work-related injuries, occupational or common diseases, unemployment and maternity.

Affiliation is unique and the affiliation number stays the same for life, whereas there can be many acquisitions and terminations of active contributor status, which can be successive or even simultaneous if a person is doing more than one job.

The Social Security system's contributory level is organised into **several types of schemes**. **The scheme that people belong to depends on the type of occupational activity they are doing.**

**4.3.1 General Scheme.**

This is the most important scheme in the Social Security and its protection regulations are used as a model.

The General Scheme includes employed workers or assimilated employees from industry and services, over 16 years of age, irrespective of their gender, marital or professional

status and also whether they are domestic, temporary, seasonal, permanent or intermittent workers.

***Most workers belong to this General Scheme.***

You can find the detailed list in Article 97.2 of the LGSS.

### 4.3.2 Special Schemes

#### **Special Scheme for Self-Employed Workers**

Generally includes workers over 18 years of age who, regularly, personally and directly perform an economic activity for profit without being subject to an employment contract, although they may use the remunerated service of other persons.

#### **Special Agricultural Scheme**

Includes employed workers, over the age of 16, who regularly and as a fundamental means of earning a living carry out agricultural, forestry or livestock work.

#### **Special Scheme for Sea Workers**

It includes both employed and self-employed workers who carry out maritime fishing activities.

#### **Special Scheme for Coal Mining**

Established for employed workers who provide their service for companies that carry out activities related to coal mining.

#### **Special Scheme for Domestic Employees**

For workers who carry out exclusively domestic work, for one or more heads of household.

## 4.4 Activities

- Distinguishing between public and private services:
  - Stating the differences between a public swimming pool and a pool in a private home.
  - Classifying the following services into public or private: Local library, Banco Santander, Antena 3, TVE, La Paz Hospital, Ruber Clinic, the Spanish state police, IES Gerardo Diego.
- A search for information on mutual societies.
- A debate on the rights and obligations of citizens in relation to the Social Security. affiliation, registration, acquisition and termination of active contributor states, qualifying for pensions, pensions, benefits, etc.
- Group work to prepare a questionnaire with six questions on the topics covered, aimed at parents and teachers.
- Collating the results of the questionnaire and drawing conclusions from the answers to the six questions.

▪ **Questionnaire for students**

1. *When is the solidarity that the Social Security is aiming to achieve effective?*
  - a) When it is organised and coordinated by the State.
  - b) When it is organised and coordinated through the law.
  - c) When it is organised and coordinated by the State, through the law and via public organisations.
  
2. *How is the relationship between the Social Security and citizens established?*
  - a) The Social Security reaches an individual and different agreement with each person through the law, which is the same for everyone.
  - b) The Social Security puts adverts on TV for citizens to sign up for its services.
  - c) Citizens, through affiliation, starts a relationship with the Social Security.
  
3. *Who is the sole owner of Social Security resources, obligations and benefits?*
  - a) The TGSS is the owner of the Social Security General Fund, under the surveillance and supervision of the State.
  - b) The King.
  - c) The Bank of Spain.
  
4. *How can the State check that citizens are meeting their obligations in order to be protected by the Social Security?*
  - a) By company registration and worker affiliation in the General Treasury register.
  - b) By signing all people up to the Social Security when they are born.
  - c) By monitoring the entire population using a private detective service.
  
5. *What special characteristics does Social Security affiliation have?*
  - a) It is compulsory, it stays the same for life, it is unique and exclusive.
  - b) It is compulsory and temporary.
  - c) It is compulsory and can be done every time a person changes job.
  
6. *Where do you have to go for registration and affiliation?*
  - a) To the bank.
  - b) To the company itself.
  - c) The General Treasury of the Social Security.
  
7. *If at a certain time in their life a citizen is not at contributory or occupational level, but rather at welfare level, are they affiliated?*
  - a) If they were once affiliated they will be always be affiliated as affiliation is for life.
  - b) They are longer affiliated if they lose their job, even if this is only temporary.
  - c) Some citizens are not entitled to affiliation.
  
8. *Is there a way of knowing who is affiliated?*
  - a) Yes, the affiliation number is entered in the General Treasury register and is included on some of the worker's and the company's documents.
  - b) Yes, on the DNI (National Identity Document).
  - c) Yes, in the company's list of telephone numbers.
  
9. *What is the General Scheme of the Social Security?*

- a) It is the scheme that includes the group of workers from the countryside, mountains and forests.
  - b) It is the scheme that includes most Spanish workers, both inside and outside Spanish territory.
  - c) It is the scheme that includes most workers: employed workers from industry, over the age of 16, irrespective of their occupation, marital status and gender, whether they are domestic, permanent, temporary or intermittent employees.
- 10.** *Are there other schemes as well as the General Scheme?*
- a) Yes, they are called the specific schemes.
  - b) Yes, they are schemes for young people who study and work far away from their hometown.
  - c) Yes, they are called the special schemes, which include: self-employed workers, agricultural workers, workers in companies related to mining, domestic employees, etc.
- Collating the results of the questionnaire and drawing a conclusion from the answers.

## 5 How does the Social Security get its money to offer and provide its help?

### 5.1 Affected Units

**Unit 5.** Funding. The Social Security Budget.

**Unit 6.** Contributions

### 5.2 Previous Reflections

- From where do you think the money the Social Security needs to pay for pensions and benefits comes from?
- Is it appropriate to save money, when you have a little extra, to then use it in a situation of need?
- Do you think that citizens contribute a bit of money so that there is a Social Security for everyone?

### 5.3 Teacher Presentation

Social Security benefits are for an enormous number of citizens, not to say all of the population, given that we have all needed them or will all need them at some point in life. For this reason the economic cost of these benefits is extremely high and control is totally necessary to ensure that all citizens meet their obligation to contribute.

If all citizens meet their obligation they will achieve equality of treatment and solidarity for all because it is the State that is solely responsible for the **distribution** of these funds, which are gradually built up with the contributions from all workers and employers.

#### 5.3.1 Social Security System Income

##### **River Metaphor - Main Social Security Income.**

To understand it we could imagine the following: the Social Security has an amount of money that would be something like this huge lake, in which several rivers, some big and some small, flow into it.

The largest river, which feeds the lake, is made up of the contributions of the people required to make contributions: workers and employers.

Another smaller river is the one that is filled with the funds that the State gradually supplies.

The "river" of citizenship comes from the work of each individual, but what is the "river" of the State fed by?

The State collects money through taxes, both direct taxes, which are paid periodically and in proportion to the amount each person has, and indirect taxes (the most well-known being VAT).

These taxes could be something like a sort of a huge underground spring, which is where its river comes from because, with the collection of taxes, the State's aim is for the income from the contributors to be shared out again. The Social Security, with its protection and assistance activities, takes part in this share-out or redistribution.

A third, much smaller river, is formed with the money that comes from the fines and charges that have to be paid by the people who are warned they have forgotten to pay their Social Security contributions and, in spite of this warning and deadline, take a very long time to pay what they owe.

These are the **Social Security's main sources of income.**

This income is used to fund the two levels of benefit we spoke about previously:

- **Contributory** or protection level (with the citizens' contributions, without resorting to State funds).
- **Non-contributory or welfare level.** (with State funds).

### 5.3.2 Contributions vs. Benefits

We have to make the relationship that there is between **contributions** and **benefits** very clear. That is, between to amount contributed and the help that can be received.

We said that the river that provides the greatest flow to the Social Security Great Lake is the river of contributions, or rather amounts of money given by the workers and companies that are part of the Social Security.

The students should already be familiar with the following basic concepts:

- In general, without contributions there is no protection. *Although the non-contributory protection that we covered earlier does exist.*
- The people with the highest salary contribute a higher amount to the Social Security, and in the long-term, will receive a higher pension.
- A greater effort means more compensation in the future.

These simple concepts should also serve to emphasize the exceptions; non-contributory protection, for example, with the aim of clarifying the difference between contributions and benefits, given that **we all have the same right to be helped and protected.**

There are jobs that are totally different and therefore it is difficult to establish equal regulations for all types of occupations: sailors, agricultural workers, miners, domestic employees, etc. That is why all the special schemes exist and there is also a difference between the contributions that each of them pay.

The Social Security system is a **distribution system**, that is, the amounts collected or paid in now from the contributions of workers and employers is used to pay current pensions (for example, my father's job is used to pay for my grandfather's retirement pension or my friend's orphan's pension).

But with regard to the amount we can receive, this is going to depend on what we have contributed to the Social Security.

**Example for students:**

If one afternoon you discovered that a new ice-cream parlour had opened near the park, all your friends would put together what they had in their pockets at the time and with the money collected buy ice-creams for everyone and share them out equally, wouldn't they? If your friend Javi, just on that day, didn't have any money, would he be left without an ice-cream?

**Association of ideas:**

River or source of funding: contributions, different, of all your friends

SS Great Lake: the money collected together.

Trees and plants on the shores: the benefits that appear and are shared out: the ice-creams!!!

The Social Security pays for the benefits that are included at CONTRIBUTORY LEVEL with the contributions from citizens, without resorting to State funds. The State, on the other hand, is responsible for the welfare or NON-CONTRIBUTORY LEVEL, or in other words, the benefits for citizens who have been unable to contribute.

Each Autonomous Community has its own funding system to cover health care and social services.

**Do different forms or systems of funding exist?**

They do, there are several financial techniques for covering the cost of the protective action of the Social Security. Remember which ways we saw that could fund the rental cost for a film and a snack.

There is a technique that involves "**capitalising**". "Capital" is gradually built up from what each of us contributes in such a way that at the end each person has an individual account. For example, to organise a huge meal at the end of the school year, one of you is in charge of collecting the amounts that each person gives each month. You collect the amounts each person wants to and is able to give, and you put them in an envelope with their name on it. This envelope contains the individual capital of each person, and also your parents reward you by putting in 1 euro for every 10 euros you put into your envelope, so your capital increases. When the day comes, you look inside your envelope and decide what you are going to contribute to the snack; whether you are going to put in all you have collected or a part that is the same everyone, and save the rest.

Another technique is **distribution**, in which there are no individual accounts. Instead the benefits are shared out as the contributions are collected, without keeping them. Then, everything is the equal for everybody; the individual "envelopes" don't increase because the money isn't saved but rather constantly collected and distributed. **This method of funding is more in line with the Social Security's aim of being SUPPORTIVE**

**We will revise of the concepts of intergenerational and interterritorial solidarity, as well as solidarity between all citizens**

**Distribution** places sacrifices upon young people with respect to the old; the healthy with respect to the sick; the employed with respect to the unemployed; the living with respect to the families with deceased members; those with families responsibilities with respect to

those who don't have them; and, in short, those who carry out prosperous activities with respect to those in the deprived sectors.

In general, contributions that come from residents in one region of the country will compensate the less favourable situation that may be occurring in another region at any given time.

This **solidarity between regions** is based on the concept of the **general fund**, that is, contributions collected throughout Spain are used to fund benefits for all Spanish citizens.

This Social Security system is unthinkable without the concept of intergenerational and interterritorial solidarity, as well as solidarity between all citizens.

Equality for all Spanish citizens before the Social Security will be effective:

- if the contributions made over time and in any part of Spain are used to pay all the benefits in any area where they are needed.
- if they are all of the same amount and are required equally by each Autonomous Community.
- if the regulations on affiliation, registration, acquisition and termination of active contributor status and benefits are uniform, in other words, equal for all citizens and are also fulfilled equally.

### 5.3.3 Budget

Every year the Social Security prepares its BUDGET for the following year.

#### **What does it mean?**

It is the way of expressing in figures and in an organised manner, the income (rights) and expenditure (obligations) that it is calculated the Social Security is going to have during a certain period of time, normally a year, when implementing its protective action.

#### **It is possible to know how much money is required to meet all of the objectives that we have been talking about?**

You can find out this amount by consulting the General State Budget ([http://www.sgpg.pap.meh.es/SGPG/CIn\\_Principal/Presupuestos/](http://www.sgpg.pap.meh.es/SGPG/CIn_Principal/Presupuestos/)) for the current year.

#### **How are all of these figures and transactions organised so that the people who examine them can see the results clearly?**

In the same way that maths students are required to present the solutions to their problems: in an organised manner, without mixing the data. If, for example, we are talking about a train journey and how long it takes to complete it, the distances would be placed on one side and the times on the other. In the case of the budgets, the income and the expenditure are organised separately.

#### **Who prepares and supervises it? How is it done?**

- Every year, at the end of May a Ministerial Order is published and that sets out the rules for drafting a initial Social Security Budget Proposal within a 20-day period.
- Then, the Ministry of Employment and Social Security merges the General Treasury's proposal with the others that have been submitted by the other organisations.

- It is sent to the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness and from there onto the government so that they can approve it and include it in the General State Budget Proposal.
- When the Council of Ministers has approved it, it is sent to the Spanish Parliament before 1 October and the documents from all the SS accounts from the previous year are attached.
- The Spanish Parliament will pass it as if it were another Law. First a full Parliament will vote on its general approval or the amendments to it presented by parliamentary groups, which if successful mean the full text is returned to the government. After this process, the partial amendments are studied, the capacity of which to modify the text is subject to not altering the budget balance, first by the existing committees and then before a full Parliament. Once it is approved in this chamber, it passes to the Senate, where it is read for a second time. The parliamentary groups use this opportunity to introduce amendments that they were unable to propose in the previous stage, although taking into account that the possibilities for change are very limited. Having been approved in the Senate, it goes back to Parliament for a final vote and approval of the definitive text.

This process must be finished, including the publication of the text in the BOE, before 31 December.

## 5.4 Activities

- Preparing lists: study in detail the money needed for an end-of-year party in which awards are going to be given. This has to include the costs, the best dancers and the best singers.
- A study of the funding system: a search for possible "sources". Where do we get the money from?
- Debate: Would we prefer to capitalise, given that we have a year ahead of us, or distribute? Because the costs of the big party are going to keep on arising from now on and not only at the end.
- Compositions: the advantages, the tangible and intangible aspects, and inconveniences of supportive distribution.
- A search for information on Social Security budgets on the internet.
- Preparing a questionnaire for parents and teachers on what should be the sources of funding of the Social Security.
- Collating the results and drawing conclusions from the answers to the questionnaire.
- **Student questionnaire**
  1. *Where does the Social Security income come from?*
    - a) The State provides it.
    - b) The State provides a part, another comes from Social Security contributions and another is collected from fines and charges.
    - c) Foreign capital.

2. *How does the State try to make sure the contributors' income is redistributed appropriately?*
    - a) By charging taxes.
    - b) By helping the Social Security to fund its protective action for the entire population, even though some people make contributions and others don't.
    - c) By weekly lotteries with lots of prizes.
  
  3. *Which of the three most-used models or forms of funding means greater cooperation and solidarity by and between all?*
    - a) Capitalisation.
    - b) Distribution.
    - c) Loan.
  
  4. *What does the Social Security budget involve?*
    - a) It is the way of expressing in figures, the costs and income that it is calculated this system will have over a specific period of time (the following year).
    - b) It is a figure that tells us what the the State has set aside to give to the Social Security.
    - c) It is an amount of money intended for health care benefits.
  
  5. *When is the plan of income and expenditure presented to Parliament for approval? What measure is used to ensure that the budget can be clearly understood?*
    - a) It is structured by placing the costs on one side and the income which which these costs are going to be covered on the other.
    - b) First, the costs are classified according to whom they are intended for and then the costs are classified by order of "arrival".
    - c) It is not always done in the same way, it depends on who drafts the budget.
- Collating the results and drawing a conclusion from the answers to the questionnaire.

## 6 What means does the Social Security have for communicating with citizens?

### 6.1 Affected Units

**Unit 7.** Services and Means of Communication with the Social Security Administration.

### 6.2 Previous Reflections

- How do we get in contact with the Social Security?
- Are there Social Security offices?
- Can you make enquires by telephone? And over the Internet?
- How do we say what we like and what can be improved?

### 6.3 Teacher Presentation

#### 6.3.1 Online Support

Since 2002, the Social Security has had a website, [www.seg-social.es](http://www.seg-social.es), which is constantly being developed and updated, with the electronic services available gradually being increased.

From the website, you can access three sections which are differentiated according to the people they are intended for:

- Workers.
- Pensioners.
- Employers.

The "Forms" section is also very interesting because there you can find the various forms that have to be filled out in order to communicate with the Social Security.

If we are unsure of how to access the Social Security service, the best thing to do is search in the section called "Processes and Procedures". To ask for general information you should go to "Enquiries".

The website can be viewed in all languages that are spoken in Spain (the official languages of Spain) and also in English and French.

For the great effort that was made so that all citizens found it easy to access the website, in 2005 it won the TAW Web Accessibility award.

The "ELECTRONIC OFFICE" section [www.sede.seg-social.gob.es](http://www.sede.seg-social.gob.es) can also be found on the website. This is a place where people attend to you in a similar way to how they do in the offices and you can carry out processes on it. Access to Electronic Registration has also been added. This allows citizens to electronically submit applications, documents and communications related to the procedures currently available in the Office. In addition, as published on the Social Security Bulletin and Notice Board, the Secure Electronic

Notification Service has been activated to manage electronic notifications between Social Security bodies and organisations, companies and citizens. You can access the RED System services and data transfer for Civil Service departments from the website.

For some of these services you sometimes need a Digital Certificate, which is like an *Identity Card* or electronic DNI. When everybody has an electronic DNI, this certificate will no longer be necessary. Its purpose is so that nobody can use personal services except the person in question: there is **confidential information that only interests the person requesting it**.

In any case, if a report is requested and a digital certificate is not available, certain information must be provided to prove the applicant's identity, and it is sent to their home address. However, if a digital certificate is available, the information will be provided directly on screen and can be printed at home.

Information and communication technologies allow us to avoid waiting and delays. They also enable people with mobility problems or who live in remote places to now be in the same situation as other people. It allows them to become integrated in social, cultural and work-related life.

#### **What is the RED System?**

The RED System (Automatic Data Transfer) is a service that enables the exchange of documents and information between the TGSS and companies over the internet. The option to send contribution and affiliation documents and medical discharge and sick leave certificates at any time of the day and without having to leave the office is a great help to companies.

### **6.3.2 Telephone Support**

These services help you to carry out processes and find out information over the telephone, without having to travel.

If you call the TGSS for example, on 901 50 20 50, you will be given 4 options to choose from:

- Option 1: Requesting Working Life Reports.
- Option 2: Red System (Automatic Data Transfer).
  - 2.1. Digital certificate, software installation and communications incident.
  - 2.2. Temporary Disability certificate incident.
  - 2.3. Enquiries or information.
- Option 3: General information on the TGSS.
- Option 4: Information or enquiries on Working Life and Contribution Bases Campaigns.

The freephone number 900 16 65 65, for general and personal information belongs to the INSS. The hours of service are from 9:00 to 14:00 from Monday to Friday and from 16:00 to 18:00 from Monday to Thursday. You can call from any location.

With the telephone service, the offices check the identity of the person calling and then give them the information. If documents need to be sent, they thoroughly check the address details.

### 6.3.3 Face-to-Face Support

The Social Security's experience in dealing with the public has enabled them to see that citizens want:

- to be dealt with quickly.
- that the issue is resolved in a short time.
- that they are dealt with in an efficient and friendly manner, taking their particular case into account.

Since the government considers that the service that it offers to citizens is so vital, the Social Security is trying to adapt its structure and organisation to the new challenges that are put before it; seeking to modernise its services, improve its quality and increase the number of support centres so that all citizens have one near to their home address and promote electronic services.

As a result of the collaboration between the Social Security Managing Bodies and Common Services, the **Comprehensive Social Security Offices** have been created, which bring together all the Social Security services into a single office.

Another very important factor when speaking about quality of service **is the human element**, in other words, the people who work dealing with the public:

- because the knowledge these people have to have is very technical and specific.
- because they also need to be skilled at dealing with the public, friendly, calm, good-natured, patient, and know how to put themselves in the position of others and understand their situation and difficulties (social and emotional skills).

They are always collecting information to be able to do this.

#### **Can citizens also do something to help improve these services?"**

They can help through:

- Surveys and questionnaires.
- Suggestions and enquiries in the mailboxes
- Suggestions and Complaints

We never do them, we can't be bothered, they surely can't be of any use. But there is no harm in trying.

You can find evaluation questionnaires in the public service areas. The comments, suggestions and opinions of citizens on the support that the Social Security provides them are extremely important so that the system can continue to improve.

The bodies have Portfolios of Services, which are documents that state the services they offer to citizens, together with the quality commitments and measures intended to improve the Social Security's public support services such as:

- Ensuring equality between men and women.
- Eliminating architectural barriers so the people with mobility problems can have easy access to the offices.
- Maintaining good environmental conditions.
- Creating suitable environments with both the furniture and the space.

## 6.4 Activities

- Preparing lists on the things they think could improve the Social Security system and putting them in the suggestions mailboxes.
- A document search: go to the website ([www.seg-social.es](http://www.seg-social.es)) and find information on pensions and online services.
- A group trip to a Social Security public support centre.
- Compositions: a detailed write-up of what has been observed on the trip.
- Group work: writing a questionnaire on the most commonly used communication methods for resolving Social Security-related matters.
- Asking questions to parents and teachers using the prepared questionnaire as a basis. Are they happy with the support they receive?
- Collating the results: commenting on and organising the results.
- **Student questionnaire**
  1. *What means do the Social Security have for dealing with the public?*
    - a) Online, telephone and face-to-face support.
    - b) Health care, telephone support and personal support.
    - c) Complete and synchronised satellite support.
  2. *Which area is the Electronic Office a part of?*
    - a) Online.
    - b) Telephone.
    - c) Face-to-face.
  3. *Which document do you need to get direct information on screen at the electronic office?*
    - a) A DNI.
    - b) An electronic DNI.
    - c) A Visa card.
  4. *What is the download area in the electronic office for?*
    - a) To download games.
    - b) To download forms that you have to fill out in different cases.
    - c) To ask for information through the enquiries mailbox.
  5. *Can citizens help to improve the services provided by the Social Security system?*
    - a) Yes, through surveys, questionnaires, complaints, suggestions and enquiries.
    - b) Yes, but it isn't easy to find a way to help.
    - c) No, you can't improve on what there is.