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**Health Insurance Authority finds that the health insurance market continues to grow despite average price increases of 12.2%**

* *2024 Annual Market Report shows 2.52 million people have health insurance, up 1.3%*
* *Average annual premiums paid up almost €146 in the last 12 months*

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The Health Insurance Authority (HIA) today published its 2024 Annual Market Report which shows that the number of people with private health insurance continues to grow despite average prices increasing by 12.2%. Some plans have increased by as much as 25.6%. In addition, people over 65 years of age are paying on average 44% for policies as they tend to have policies with higher benefits.

Almost half of the population (46%) now has private health insurance (2.52 million people), paying an average annual premium of €1,740, up almost €146 in the past 12 months. However, the rate of growth is slowing, with an increase in coverage of just 1.3% between 2023 and 2024. There has also been a further decrease in the number of children insured at 21.6% (down from over 23% in 2019).

The total income from health insurance premiums now stands at €3.6 billion, an increase of from €3.2 billion in the previous year, which can be attributed to the price increases on premiums and the moderately increasing numbers purchasing health insurance in the past 12 months.

**Claims**
After a significant increase in claims in the years post-pandemic, the volume of health insurance claims now shows signs of slowing down, with claims increasing by just 6% in 2024 compared to a 15% increase in 2023. While claims for treatment in a private hospital increased by 2% in 2024, on the other hand claims for public hospital treatment decreased by 2% during this period.

Commenting on the launch of report, **CEO of the Health Insurance Authority, Brian Lee** said:

*“Despite recent price increases, our report shows more people are buying health insurance, with almost half of the population holding health insurance policies, so it’s clear it is a product that many people in Ireland value. However, our research shows that affordability is the main reason consumers choose to cancel their health insurance plans as many consumers are under financial strain and can’t sustain the current rate of price increases alongside other increasing costs and inflation.”*

*“We know that there is still a low number of consumers switching providers and the HIA would always recommend shopping around, particularly as you move through different stages of life and your needs will change, and you could be paying for more than you need. Consumers don’t necessarily have to change provider, as switching between plans with the same providers is also an option. We are there to help consumers through our* [*free comparison tool*](https://www.hia.ie/health-insurance-comparison) *where you can compare plans and requirements. Our team is also available by phone and by email for anyone who needs support.”*

Other key findings in the report include:

* There are 338 active inpatient plans in Ireland, but 50% of people are on 1 of just 32 plans.
* While over 65s are paying on average 44% more, they tend to be on plans with higher cover, in particular for orthopaedic procedures (for example, hip or knee replacement surgery).
* 18-39-year-olds have the lowest level of health insurance coverage, with only 2 in 5 (38.9%) of those aged 18-29 having coverage.
* There is an increasing number of day claims compared to overnight stays, reflecting a general move in healthcare to less inpatient care.
* 5% of the insured population are paying a Lifetime Community Rating loading, which is a loading that applies for a maximum of 10 years to anyone over the age of 34 buying health insurance for the first time.

Read the full report at [www.hia.ie/publications/market-reports-and-bulletins](http://www.hia.ie/publications/market-reports-and-bulletins). For impartial information about health insurance or to use the HIA’s free comparison tool, visit [www.hia.ie](http://www.hia.ie).

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**About the Health Insurance Authority (HIA)**

The HIA is the impartial State body that regulates private health insurance in Ireland. We provide consumers with the information and tools to make informed choices about health insurance, and we ensure that the health insurers comply with the regulations. Our vision is a well-functioning and transparent health insurance market, where consumers understand their rights and feel empowered in their decisions. We regularly publish market updates and consumer surveys on our website: <https://www.hia.ie/publications>.