



# Q&A - options for adjusting retirement and partner pensions

Question	Answer
<b>Adjusting retirement and partner pensions</b>	
What is a partner pension?	If the recipient of a retirement pension dies, the partner is entitled to a partner pension under the Pillar 2 provided the requirements set out in the occupational benefits fund regulations are met.
What options are available?	<p>The level of the partner pension is specified in the occupational benefits plan. The partner pension normally amounts to 60 % of your own retirement pension. <b>Insureds can adjust the level of their retirement and partner pensions to suit their circumstances.</b></p> <p>You can increase the partner pension that will be received by your partner to a maximum amount of 80 % to make sure they benefit from a better level of protection. The result of this is that your retirement pension will be lower, as the conversion rate is reduced.</p> <p>You can also increase your own retirement pension to the maximum level by reducing the partner pension to the statutory minimum amount, if – for example – you are single or your partner already enjoys a good level of financial protection, whether through their own pension fund or other financial means. You thus benefit from a higher conversion rate and receive a higher retirement pension.</p>
When can I start to take advantage of these options?	These options can be used by persons retiring from February 1, 2025, onwards.
Who can take advantage of the options for adjusting retirement and partner pensions?	<p>Any insureds who have an extra-mandatory portion of more than 30 % at the time of retirement can make use of these options. Where there is more than one occupational benefits plan, this requirement will apply to each individual plan.</p> <p>Insureds with an extra-mandatory portion of retirement assets of less than 30 % have the standard option of a partner pension generally amounting to 60 %, as defined in the occupational benefits plan.</p> <p><b>Information for insureds in the transitional age category (i.e. those born in 1964 or earlier):</b></p> <p>Insureds in the “transitional” age category who will receive compensatory measures following the adjustment of the conversion rate with effect from January 1, 2025, can have their option applied exclusively to the retirement assets saved as of January 1, 2025. A prerequisite for this is that the extra-mandatory portion of the retirement assets saved as of 2025 amounts to more than 30 % at the time of retirement.</p> <p>The transitional age category includes everyone born in 1964 or earlier who was already insured with the Foundation as at December 31, 2024.</p>
What conditions apply for a partner pension? For example, does the length of the partnership play a role?	The conditions are set out in the occupational benefits plan and in the occupational benefits fund regulations. The length of the marriage/partnership, age of the two persons and age difference between them, and whether or not they are living in the same household are usually the deciding factors.

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Why is the option only open to those with an extra-mandatory portion of retirement assets of more than 30 %?	The Occupational Pensions Act (BVG/OPA) does not provide for any option on retirement pensions; this is why the option only applies to the extra-mandatory portion. The condition of an extra-mandatory portion of retirement assets of at least 30 % ensures that the statutory minimum benefits required under the BVG/OPA are complied with in all cases.
Where can I find the occupational benefits fund regulations?	The occupational benefits fund regulations can be found in the download area of your Foundation's website: <a href="https://www.axa-foundation-for-occupational-benefits.ch">AXA-foundation-for-occupational-benefits.ch</a>
Where can I find the occupational benefits plan that applies to me?	You can view the occupational benefits plan via the myAXA customer portal.

## Conversion rate and pension level

What do we mean by "extra-mandatory retirement assets"?	<p>In Switzerland, all employees who are insured with AHV/OASI and earn a specific minimum salary are compulsorily insured under the second pillar (BVG/OPA). The retirement assets accrued in accordance with the BVG/OPA are "mandatory retirement assets".</p> <p>The following statutory provisions apply in this respect (status 2025):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saving of retirement credits from the age of 24</li> <li>• Savings are accrued by persons on a minimum annual salary of CHF 22,680 up to a maximum annual salary of CHF 90,720</li> <li>• The pensionable salary used to determine retirement credits is calculated based on the annual salary less the "coordination deduction" of CHF 26,460</li> <li>• Retirement credits are age-dependent and amount to 7 %, 10 %, 15 %, or 18 % of the pensionable salary</li> </ul> <p>Any savings accrued in excess of this amount are termed "extra-mandatory retirement assets". Unlike the mandatory portion, the extra-mandatory portion is not subject to any legal requirements in terms of conditions or benefits.</p> <p>Find out more in our blog: <a href="#">Mandatory and voluntary OPA benefits Key points   AXA</a></p>
What is a conversion rate? And how does it impact the level of retirement pension?	<p>The conversion rate determines the percentage rate with which the retirement assets you have saved up are converted into an annual pension when you retire. The following applies in principle:</p> <p>annual retirement pension = retirement assets × conversion rate. With a conversion rate of 5.2 %, someone who has retirement assets of CHF 100,000 will receive an annual retirement pension of CHF 5,200.</p>
Where can I find the conversion rates for the options available?	The conversion rate table, showing the various benefit combinations and a sample calculation, can be found at: <a href="https://www.axa.ch/retirement-option">AXA.ch/retirement-option</a>
Why is the conversion rate – and therefore the retirement pension – reduced when the higher partner pension option is chosen?	Under Pillar 2, you are saving up the retirement assets that will be needed to fund your retirement provision. The available retirement assets are used to finance your own retirement pension as well as the co-insured partner pension that will be paid out if you die. If you want a higher partner pension to be financed out of your retirement assets, this reduces your retirement pension – as both benefits are financed out of the available retirement assets.

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How can the conversion rate be lower than the statutory minimum of 6.8%?	The statutory minimum conversion rate, currently set at 6.8%, applies to mandatory portion of occupational benefits, i.e. the minimum according to the BVG/OPA. In the case of the extra-mandatory portion, the pension fund sets the conversion rate itself. As for the mandatory portion, the minimum BVG/OPA benefits required by law are guaranteed in all cases. To monitor this, a control account (known as a shadow account) is kept for every single insured person.
When will it be possible for the option to be included in the pension calculation on myAXA?	It should be possible in the course of 2025.
<b>When is the right time to decide?</b>	
By when can I/must I make a decision regarding the level of retirement pension and partner pension?	You must notify us of your chosen form of retirement benefits (pension, lump sum – or a combination of the two) – including the option on retirement and partner pension – before you receive payment of your first retirement benefit.
Can I change my mind after retiring?	No, that is not possible.
Is it worth defining the partner pension at a young age?	Generally speaking, it's a good idea to address retirement provision at an early point and to start thinking about financial security in old age. However, circumstances can change during your working life – particularly if you are young. You don't need to decide how to draw your chosen retirement benefits – including your choice of partner pension – until immediately before your retirement date.
Can I transfer the partner pension to a different person at a later date?	It is only when you die that the partner pension will be reviewed in accordance with the provisions as set out in the occupational benefits fund regulations and paid to your surviving partner. The circumstances at that time will therefore be the determining factor.
<b>Retirement date/partial retirement/lump-sum withdrawal</b>	
What impact does the choice of early retirement, retirement after the reference age, and partial retirement have?	If you meet the conditions at the time of retirement, you can also take advantage of the options in the case of early retirement, retirement after the reference age, and each partial retirement step. However, the conversion rate used to calculate your pension will depend on the respective retirement age.
What happens when I withdraw a lump sum?	If you withdraw a portion of your retirement assets in the form of a lump sum, your retirement pension will therefore be lower. This also applies to the co-insured partner pension. You can nevertheless take advantage of the options for adjusting the retirement or partner pension provided you continue to meet the conditions for the option following the lump-sum withdrawal.  If you opt for withdrawal of the full amount in a lump sum instead of a retirement pension, there will be no partner pension.
Can I increase the extra-mandatory retirement assets (e.g. by purchasing additional benefits) in order to take advantage of the option if I have not yet reached the 30% extra-mandatory threshold?	Yes, you can increase the extra-mandatory retirement assets by purchasing additional benefits, for example. Please note that there is a maximum amount you can pay in. Go to the myAXA online portal to calculate your options for purchasing additional benefits and purchase them directly.