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Coverage: Great Britain
Theme: Social and Welfare

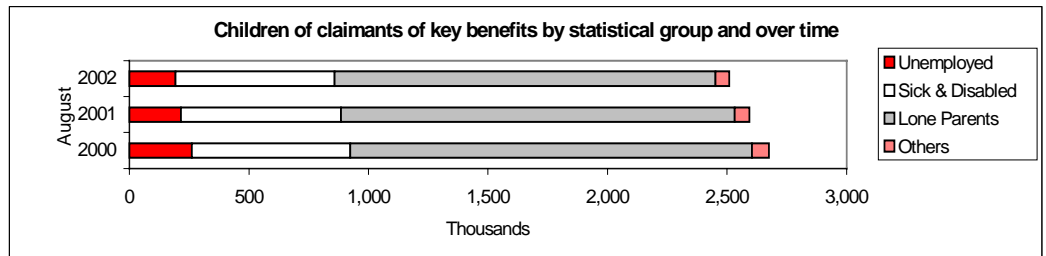
CLIENT GROUP ANALYSIS: QUARTERLY BULLETIN ON FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ON KEY BENEFITS –

AUGUST 2002

This series comprises people of working age who claim a key social security benefit and who receive an additional allowance for a child under 16 years of age or for a young adult dependant aged between 16 and 18 in full-time education. It has been developed from existing data on individual benefits to give a more coherent picture for this group. It is published on a regular basis via the attached statistical bulletin. Please see Notes to Editors for further details.

Main findings

At August 2002, 2.5 million children (19.4% of all children in Great Britain) were living in families claiming a key benefit (in this publication the term “children” refers collectively to children aged 0-15 and young adult dependants aged 16-18 in full-time education). This number of children in families claiming a key benefit was down 3.3% from last year. While numbers classed as “unemployed” fell by 10.2% over this period, and those classed as “lone parents” by 3.2%, the number of children in families claiming a key benefit in the “sick and/or disabled” category fell by 0.9%.



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67% of “key benefit” children were in families that were claiming IS only.

Although the number of families with children less than 16 years, where the benefit claimant was single fell from the previous year (as did the number where the claimant had a partner), a greater proportion of children were living in families where the claimant was single (73.1% compared with 72.4% a year earlier).

Family size

While 4% of families claiming child benefit had four or more children (August 2002), the figure was 8.5% for families on key benefits. For the unemployed statistical group the figure was even higher at 11.3%.

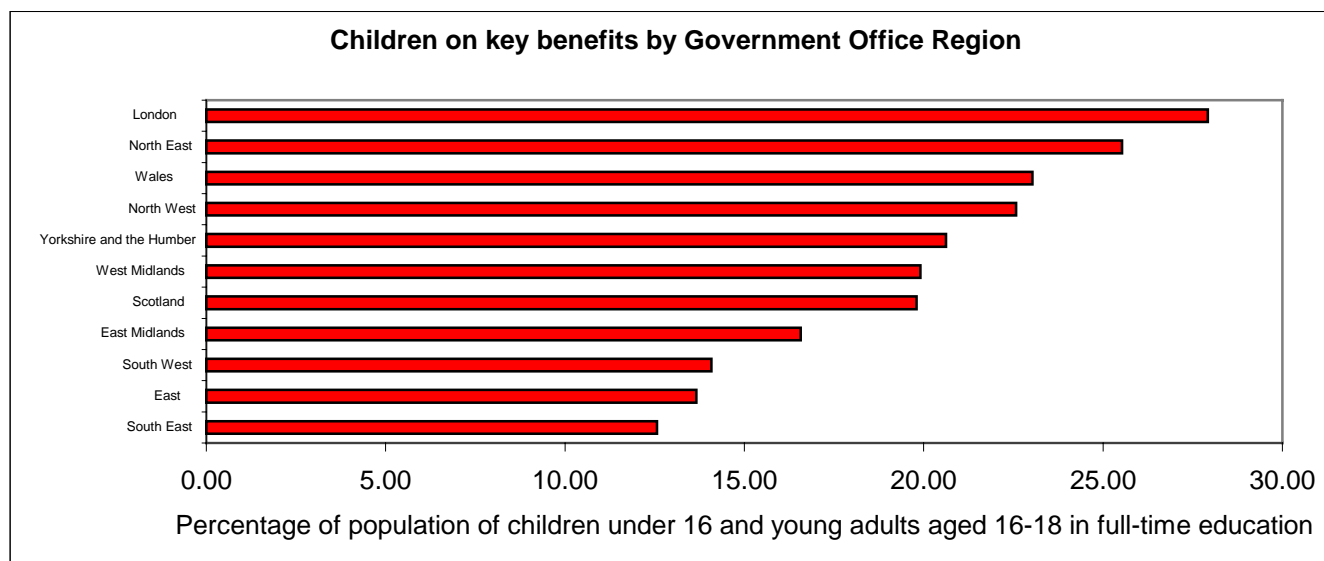
Age Groups

Among the Sick and Disabled, proportionally fewer children were under the age of five compared to other statistical groups. This reflects the older age profile of those claiming a sickness and/or disability benefit.

Duration of claim

Of those children in families on a key benefit, 64% had been on benefit for at least two years. This increased from 62% in August 2001. Conversely, the percentage of children on benefit for under one year has dropped from 23% in August 2001 to 22% in August 2002. For the Sick and Disabled Group, the figure was higher: 77% at August 2002 compared to 75% at August 2001.

Regions



The percentage of children living in families claiming a key benefit varied from 28% in the London government office region down to 13% in the South East GOR.

Notes to editors

Key benefits are defined as:

- Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Incapacity Benefit (IB)
- Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Income Support (IS)
- National Insurance Credits (through JSA or IB)

The Information and Analysis Directorate (IAD) of DWP have developed these analyses from existing samples of administrative data on the population of working age. This work was done primarily to help improve the relevance of DWP data to monitor the government's welfare reform agenda.

By matching data from individual 5% samples, an estimate can be made of the number of people who were claiming at least one of the key benefits that are available to the population of working age people. The main exceptions are Widow's Benefit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. Information on the characteristics of these claimants is also available, such as age, sex, geography, family type, client group, duration of claim and number of children. It is also possible to look at changes in the composition of this group in the benefits system over time, including those that affect individual claimants.

These analyses are based on information collected for the administration of benefits. This means that analyses of such things as family type and number of children are based only on those for whom some additional allowance of benefit is payable.

The bulletin includes appendices on Child Benefit, the Child Support Agency and Maternity Allowance. The latest quarterly Maternity Allowance figures are also available from today on request.

Figures are published on a quarterly basis via the attached statistical bulletin. The definitive estimates of caseloads and characteristics of claimants of each individual benefit can be found in the separate publications and press releases that IAD also issues on behalf of DWP.

Tables 14 to 20 cover children in families on benefits and/or tax credits. Family Credit (FC) and Disability Working Allowance (DWA) ceased to be available to new claimants in October 1999 and were completely phased out by April 2000. They were replaced by Working Families' Tax Credit (WFTC) and Disabled Person's Tax Credit (DPTC) and are administered by Inland Revenue. Data on awards of WFTC and DPTC are supplied by, and used with agreement of, Inland Revenue.

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