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Coverage: Great Britain
Theme: Social and Welfare

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

August 2004

This analysis is based on people of working age who claim a key 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 of claimants rather than claims. It is published on a regular basis via a National Statistics bulletin. Please see Notes to Editors for further details.

Main findings

At August 2004, 2.7 million children (21% of all children in Great Britain) were living in families claiming a key benefit. This figure fell by 131 thousand between August 2003 and August 2004. Similarly, the number of children in families receiving an income-related benefit fell by 141 thousand between August 2003 and August 2004, from 2.38 million (18.6% of all children in GB) to 2.24 million (17.5% of all children in GB).

DWP Department for Work and Pensions

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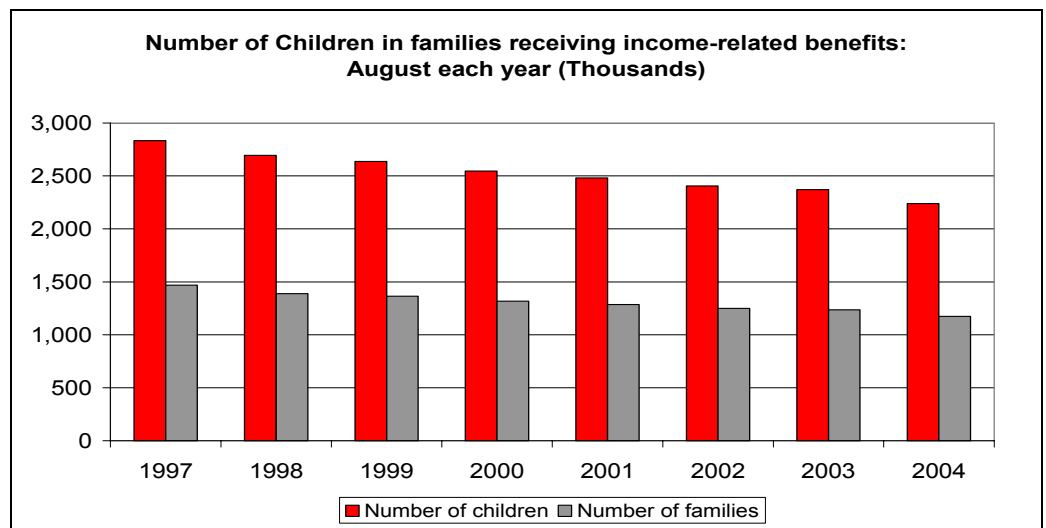
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58% of key benefit children were in families that were claiming Income Support only.

65% of children were living in families where the claimant was single.

Family size

While around 4% of families claiming Child Benefit had four or more children at the end of August 2004, the figure was 7.6% for families on key benefits. For the Unemployed group the figure was higher at 8.9%.

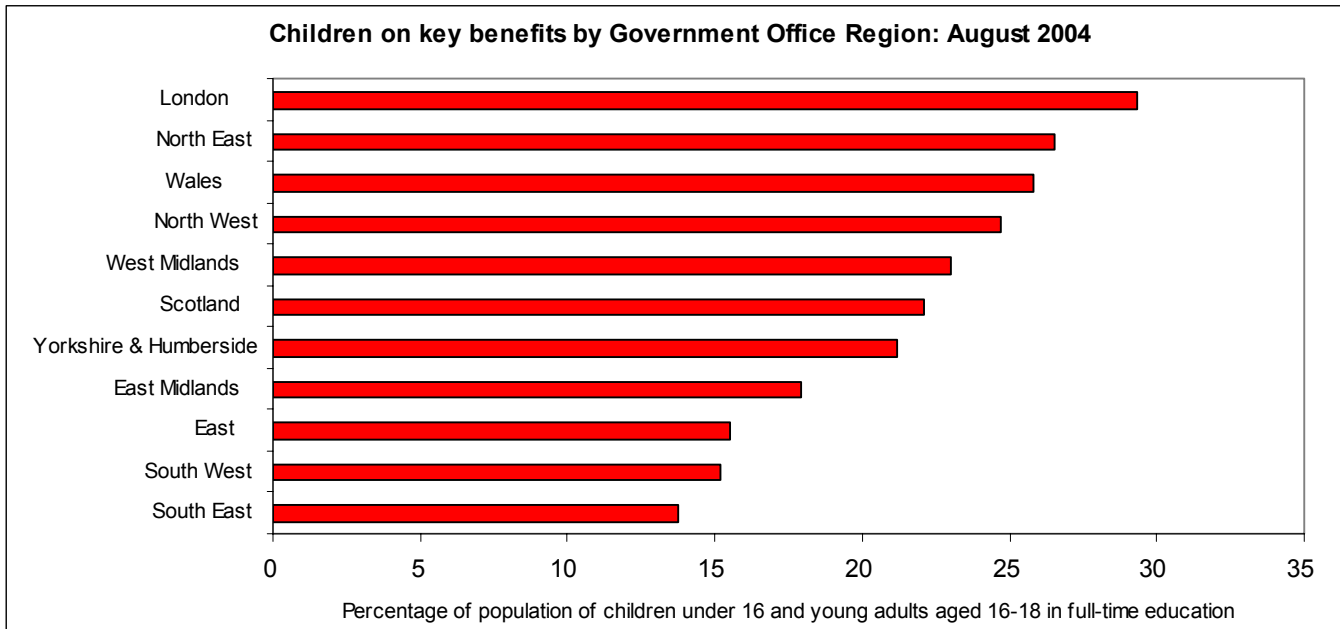
Age Groups

Among the Sick / Disabled Group, 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, 65% had been on benefit for at least two years. For the Sick / Disabled Group, the figure was higher, 75%. The percentage of children in families claiming benefit for less than one year is 21%.

Regions



The percentage of children living in families claiming a key benefit varied from 29% in the London Government Office Region, down to 14% in the South East GOR.

Notes to editors

For the purposes of the statistical bulletin 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 has developed these analyses from existing samples of administrative data on the population of working age claimants. 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 and Bereavement Benefits, 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 and tax credits. This means that analyses of such things as family type are based mainly on those for whom some additional money via benefits or tax credits is payable. The 'children' analyses are based on children in families where the claimant receives additional money via benefits or tax credits for children or young adult dependants i.e. those aged 16-18 and still in full-time education). Full information on children is available from benefit and/or Child Tax Credit (CTC) data regarding families in receipt of income-related benefits.(IS, JSA(IB)). CTC data also provides child information regarding families with children in receipt of non income-related benefits (IB, SDA, DLA, Contributory JSA, JSA Credits). The main gaps are children in families receiving non income-related benefits where there is no entitlement to CTC (e.g. household income is too high) or where there is entitlement but CTC is still not in payment (e.g. it has not been claimed by the family).

The bulletin includes appendices on the Child Support Agency and Maternity Allowance.

Figures are published on a quarterly basis via a 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.

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