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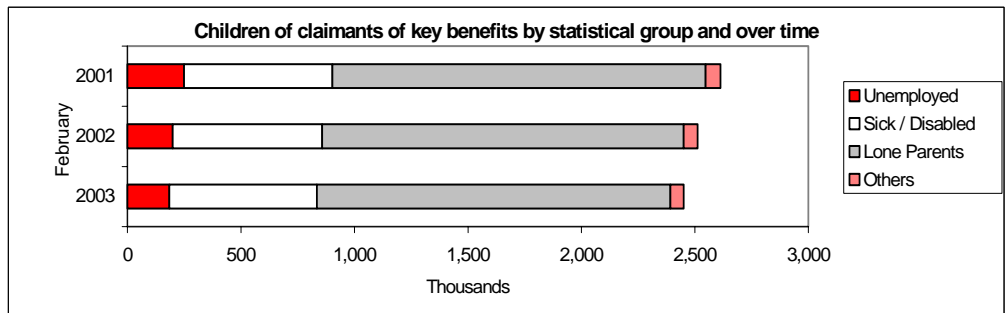
CLIENT GROUP ANALYSIS: QUARTERLY BULLETIN ON FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ON KEY BENEFITS –

February 2003

This analysis is based on 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 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 February 2003, 2.5 million children (19.0% of all children in Great Britain) were living in families claiming a key benefit. This number of children in families claiming a key benefit was down 2.2% from last year. The numbers classed as Unemployed fell by 6.6% over this period, Lone Parents fell by 2.3% and the number of children in the Sick / Disabled category fell by 0.2%.



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67% of key benefit children were in families that were claiming Income Support only.

Although the number of single parent families with children less than 16 years of age 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 (72.7% compared with 72.2% a year earlier).

Family size

While 4.2% of families claiming child benefit had four or more children at the end of November 2002, the figure was 8.5% for families on key benefits. For the Unemployed group the figure was higher at 11.4%.

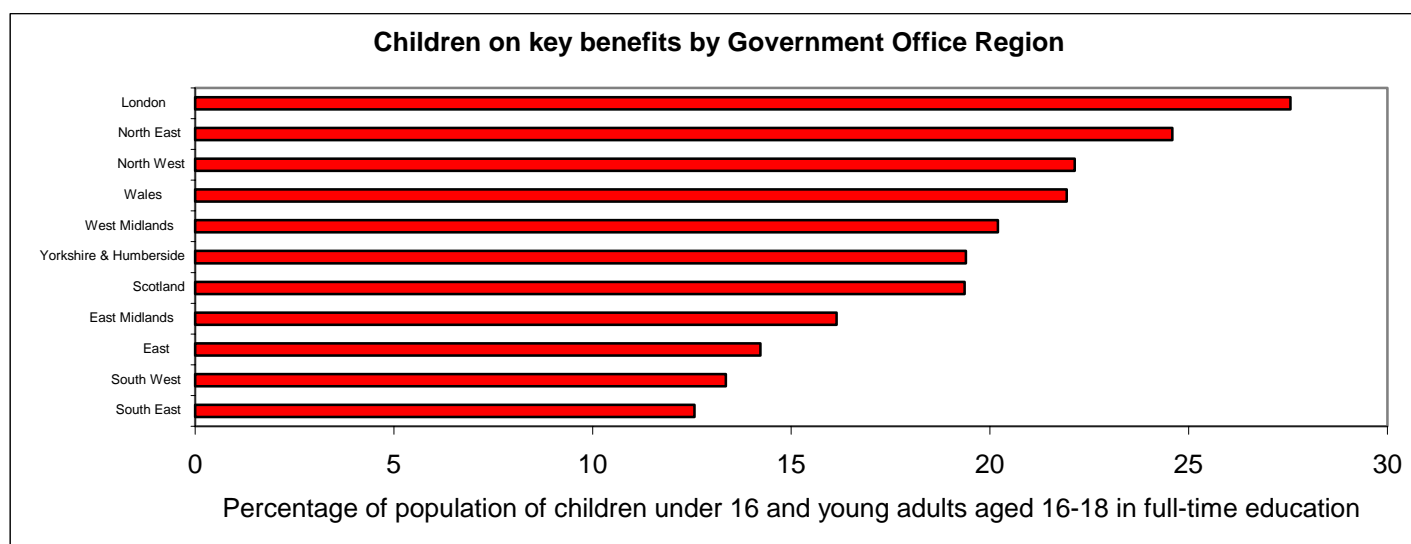
Age Groups

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, an increase from 63% in February 2002. For the Sick / Disabled Group, the figure was higher: 77% at February 2003 compared to 76% at February 2002. The percentage of children in families claiming benefit for under one year has remained at 22% from February 2002 to February 2003.

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 and South West GORs.

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 have 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. 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.

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.

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.