

15 August 2002

Coverage: Great Britain
Theme: Social and Welfare

STATE PENSION (SP) SUMMARY OF STATISTICS: MARCH 2002

The State Pension Summary of Statistics for March 2002 is published today. The publication details numbers of state pensioners, broken down by country, government office region, sex and age, plus amounts of pension in payment. All tables and charts are based on 'live' cases on the Pension Strategy Computer System at 31st March 2002.

The main findings are:

- The number of state pension recipients was 11.15Mn at March 2002 (up 0.7% on a year earlier), with 10.26Mn resident in Great Britain (GB) and 0.88 million overseas. The GB caseload increased by 56 thousand in the year to March 2002 and the overseas caseload by 24 thousand.
- The number and proportion of people in GB receiving the state pension is increasing, now standing at 97% of the total population over state pension age. This is explained by the increasing proportion of women reaching state pension age who qualify immediately for the basic state pension on their own contributions.

DWP Department for Work and Pensions

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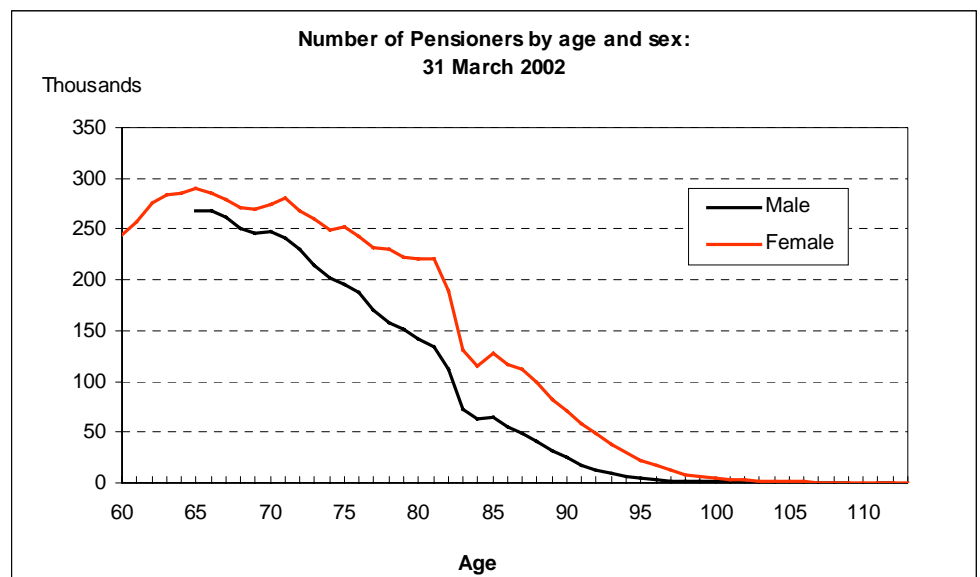
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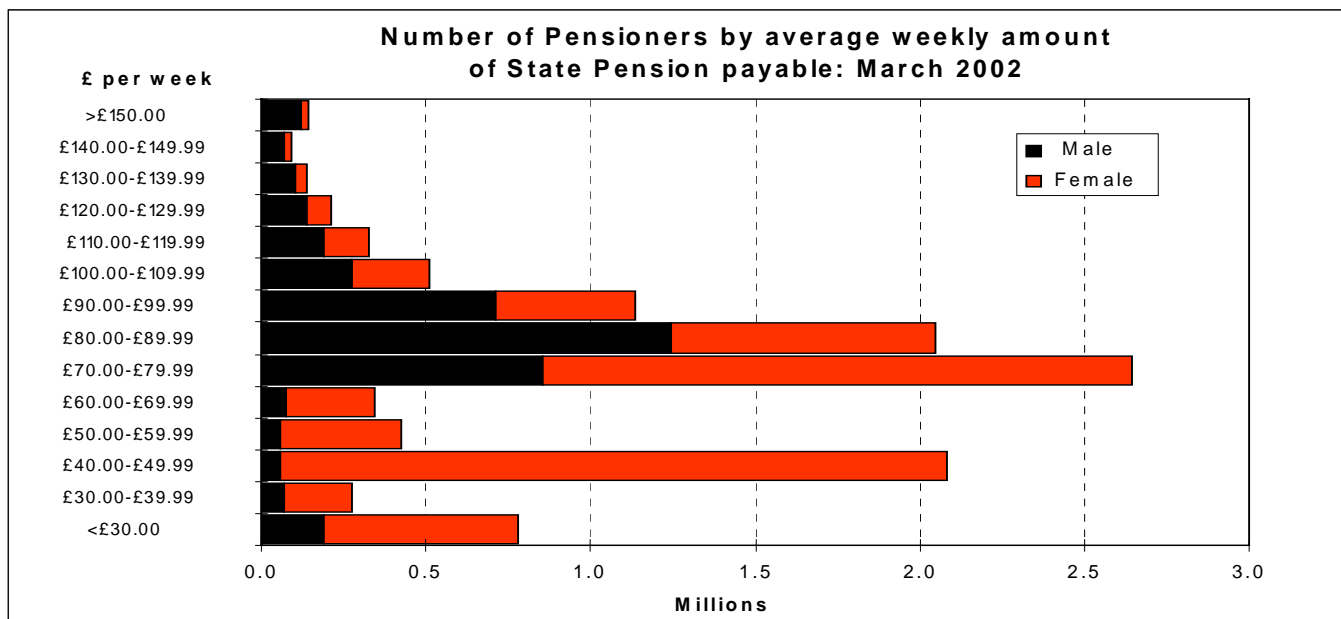
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- Of the 11.15Mn total caseload, 4.15 million (37%) are male and 7.00 million (63%) are female. The chart above shows gender by age for all people receiving the state pension.

Average Amounts of Pension Entitlement

The average amount of state pension entitlement at March 2002 was £72.92pw (an annual increase of 8%). This consists of several different components: principally the basic state pension (BSP) and additional pension (AP), or its forerunner, the graduated retirement benefit (GRB). Within the overall annual increase of 8%, average BSP rose by 7% (from £56.04pw to £60.11pw), and average AP by 12% (from £8.68pw to £9.74pw).



The Recently Retired

In the recently retired category, defined as men aged 65 and women aged 60, there are 249 thousand males (up 2.4% on a year earlier) and 232 thousand females (up 3.3%). The number of new female pensioners is relatively low because of the low birth rates during the Second World War. The average entitlement to a state pension for men aged 60 and women aged 65 is £95.83pw for men and £59.45pw for women, representing annual increases of 6.7% and 11.7% respectively. For men, average BSP rose by 7% (from £65.70pw to £70.52pw), reflecting the above-inflation increase in full BSP at April 2001. Average AP rose by 5% in the year to March 2002 (from £19.95pw to £21.02pw). For women, average BSP rose by 11% (from £43.97pw to £49.02pw) and average AP by 14% (from £8.31pw to £9.44pw).

Notes to editors

This publication contains data taken by the Analytical Services Directorate of the Department for Work and Pensions from scans of the Pensions Strategy Computer System taken every six months.

Until September 1995 the results were derived from a 10 per cent sample of records. From September 1995 this sample was replaced by a 5 per cent scan of the 'live' cases on the computer system.

All data within the tables have been grossed to the total 'live' state pensioner caseload for Great Britain (including overseas but excluding Northern Ireland cases). Please note the publication includes analysis by Government Office Region and a Local Authority level map. They are representative at March 2002. As with any grossed sample, the results are subject to sampling error (see Appendix A of publication).

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