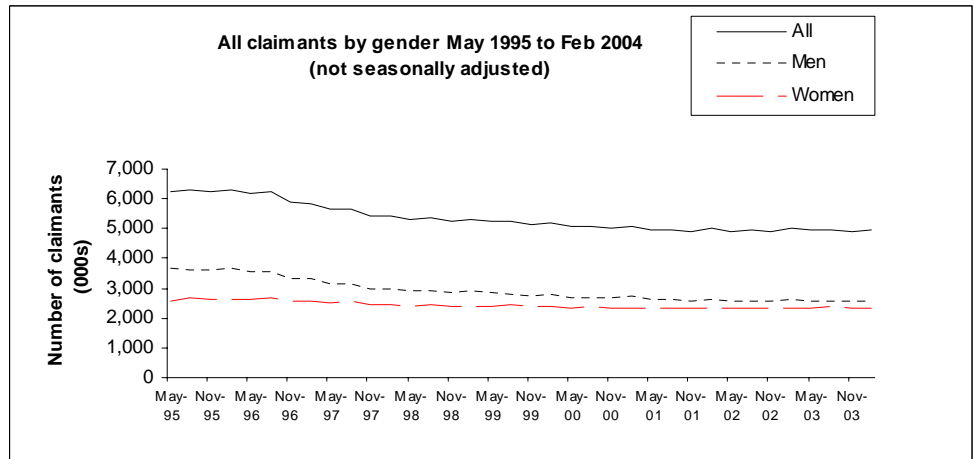


16th June 2004
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Coverage: Great Britain
Theme: Social and Welfare

CLIENT GROUP ANALYSIS: QUARTERLY BULLETIN ON THE POPULATION OF WORKING AGE ON KEY BENEFITS – FEBRUARY 2004

4.95 million people of working age were claiming a key benefit in February 2004, down 45 thousand from a year previously, but up 69 thousand from November 2003. The number of male claimants fell by 41 thousand to 2.59 million and the number of female claimants fell by 4 thousand to 2.35 million over the year.



DWP Department for Work and Pensions

Issued by:
Information Centre
Information and Analysis Directorate
Department for Work and Pensions

Telephone :
Press Office : 020 7238 0866
Public Enquiries : 020 7712 2171

DWP website :
www.dwp.gov.uk

Statistician:
Neil Sorensen
Information Centre
Information and Analysis Directorate
Department for Work and Pensions
Room 157A
Benton Park View
Benton Park Road
Longbenton
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
NE98 1YX

Telephone : 0191 225 3760
Facsimile : 0191 225 7983
email :
neil.sorensen@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

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The number of unemployed claimants fell by 52 thousand between February 2003 and February 2004 and the number of others rose by 2 thousand, while lone parents fell by 18 thousand. The number of claimants who were sick/disabled increased by 23 thousand.

13.9% of the working age population were claiming a key benefit in February 2004 down slightly from a year previous. The sick/disabled statistical group increased from 8.6% to 8.7% over the year.

	February 04		Change on a year ago	
	Claimants (Thousands)	% of population working age	Thousands	Percentage points
All	4,947	13.9	-45	-0.1
Unemployed	884	2.5	-52	-0.1
Sick/Disabled	3,072	8.7	23	0.1
Lone Parents	798	2.2	-18	-0.1
Others	193	0.5	2	-

Flows

There were 497 thousand new claimants in the quarter to February 2004 i.e. people receiving a key benefit in February 2004 who were not in November 2003. There were 527 thousand new claimants between November 2002 and February 2003.

There were 428 thousand people who flowed off key benefits between November 2003 and February 2004 i.e. people receiving a key benefit in November 2003 who were not in February 2004. There were 431 thousand off-flows between November 2002 and February 2003.

The number of November to February in-flows to the sick and disabled group has decreased between 2003 and 2004. There were 106 thousand sick and disabled in-flows between November 2003 and February 2004, falling from 112 thousand between November 2002 and February 2003.

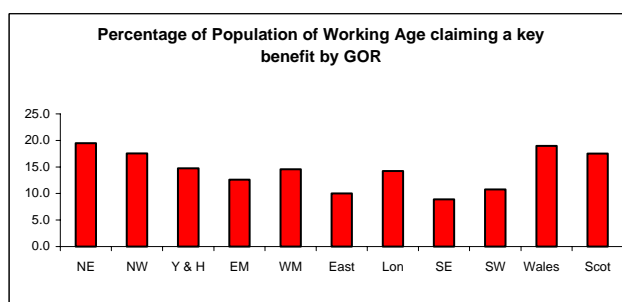
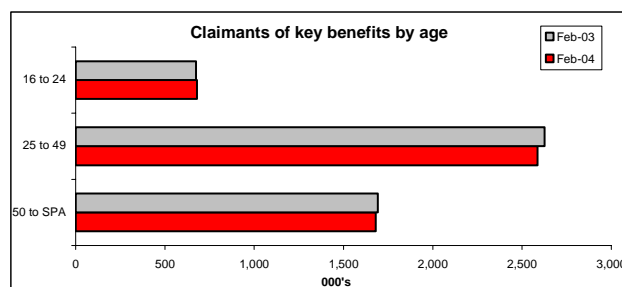
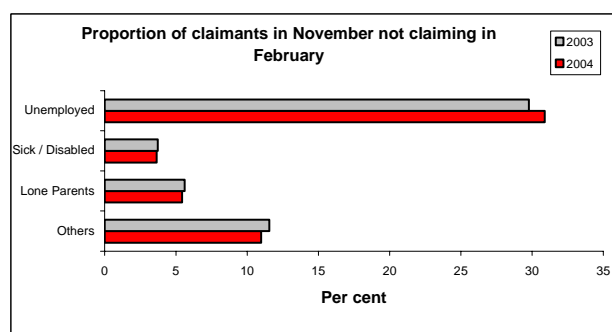
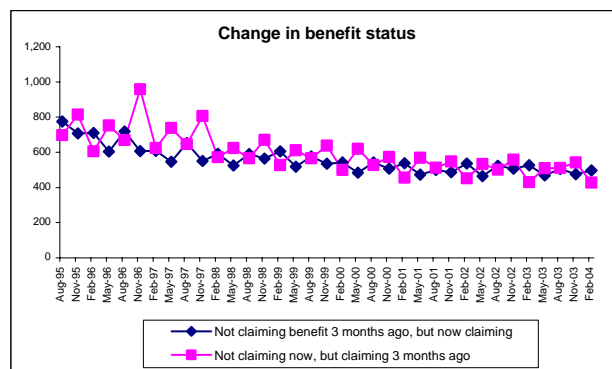
Age Groups

A decrease has been seen in the number of claimants in the age groups 25 to 49 and 50 to State Pension age in the year to February 2004, although there has been an increase in the 16 to 24 age group. The number of unemployed claimants in the 25 to 49 age group fell by 41 thousand (8.0%) between February 2003 and February 2004.

Regions

The proportion of the working age population claiming a key benefit ranged from 19.5% in the North East to 8.9% in the South East.

The proportion of the working age population on key benefits increased in the year to February 2004 in the South East, but stayed the same or decreased in all other regions.



Key Benefits

Claimants who receive at least one of:

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

Notes to editors

DWP Information and Analysis Directorate (IAD) have developed these analyses from its 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 with the main exception of Bereavement Benefit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. Information on the key characteristics of these claimants is also available, such as age, sex, geography, family type, statistical group and duration of claim. 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.

Sections 6 and 7, which previously contained information on children, are no longer included in this bulletin. This information is included in "Client Group Analysis: Quarterly Bulletin on families with children on key benefits", which is also published on 16th June 2004.

These analyses are based on information collected for the administration of benefits. 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.

Important changes are planned to many of the National Statistics published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to utilise the new Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS). We would like to hear the views of you, our customers, about our proposals and give you the opportunity to feed your opinions into the modernisation process. The consultation has now begun and runs until 30th July 2004. The consultation document can be downloaded from:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/stats_consultation/stats_consultation.asp

Figures in these tables are affected by the introduction of new tax credits in April 2003. Please see the Methodology section for further details.

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 tables that IAD also issues on behalf of DWP.

Previous issues of the bulletin relating to November 1999 and before included those claiming Family Credit (FC) or Disability Working Allowance (DWA). These benefits 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) which were administered by Inland Revenue. WFTC and DPTC were replaced by the Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) in April 2003. (WTC and CTC are collectively known as 'new tax credits').

The full version of this bulletin in adobe acrobat format is placed on the Internet on the DWP website. The full address is: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/cga.asp>

For further copies contact:
Steve Topping
IAD Information Centre
Department for Work and Pensions
Room 157A
Benton Park View
Benton Park Road
Longbenton
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
NE98 1YX

Telephone : 0191 225 7336
Facsimile : 0191 225 7983
Email : steve.topping@dwp.gsi.gov.uk