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CLIENT GROUP ANALYSIS: QUARTERLY BULLETIN ON THE POPULATION OF WORKING AGE ON KEY BENEFITS – FEBRUARY 2005

4.84 million people of working age were claiming a key benefit in February 2005, down 107 thousand from a year previously, but up 60 thousand from November 2004. The number of male claimants fell by 68 thousand to 2.52 million and the number of female claimants fell by 39 thousand to 2.31 million over the year.

4.52 million people of working age were claiming a key out-of-work benefit in February 2005. There were 2.38 million male claimants and 2.14 million female claimants.

The number of unemployed claimants fell by 68 thousand between February 2004 and February 2005. The number of lone parent and sick and disabled claimants also fell by 37 and 6 thousand respectively over the same period. The number of others increased by 4 thousand.

13.5 per cent of the working age population were claiming a key benefit in February 2005 down slightly from a year previous. The unemployed statistical group showed the largest decrease over the year.

12.6 per cent of the working age population were claiming a key out-of-work benefit in February 2005. The number of IB/SDA claimants decreased by 29 thousand over the year.

Flows

There were 472 thousand new claimants in the quarter to February 2005 i.e. people receiving a key benefit in February 2005 who were not in November 2004. There were 497 thousand new claimants between November 2003 and February 2004.

There were 412 thousand people who flowed off key benefits between November 2004 and February 2005 i.e. people receiving a key benefit in November 2004 who were not in February 2005. There were 428 thousand off-flows between November 2003 and February 2004.

The number of November to February on-flows to the sick/disabled group has decreased between 2004 and 2005. There were 102 thousand sick/disabled on-flows between November 2004 and February 2005, falling from 106 thousand between November 2003 and February 2004.

Age Groups

A decrease has been seen in the number of claimants in all age groups 16 to 24, 25 to 49 and 50 to State Pension age in the year to February 2005. The number of unemployed claimants in the 25 to 49 age group fell by 40 thousand (8.4 per cent) between February 2004 and February 2005.

Regions

The proportion of the working age population claiming a key benefit ranged from 18.4 per cent in the North East to 8.8 per cent in the South East.

The proportion of the working age population on key benefits remained the same in London and the South East in the year to February 2005 but 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 Directorate (IFD) 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 5per cent 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 15th June 2005.

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.

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 IFD 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>

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