



Children in out-of-work benefit households

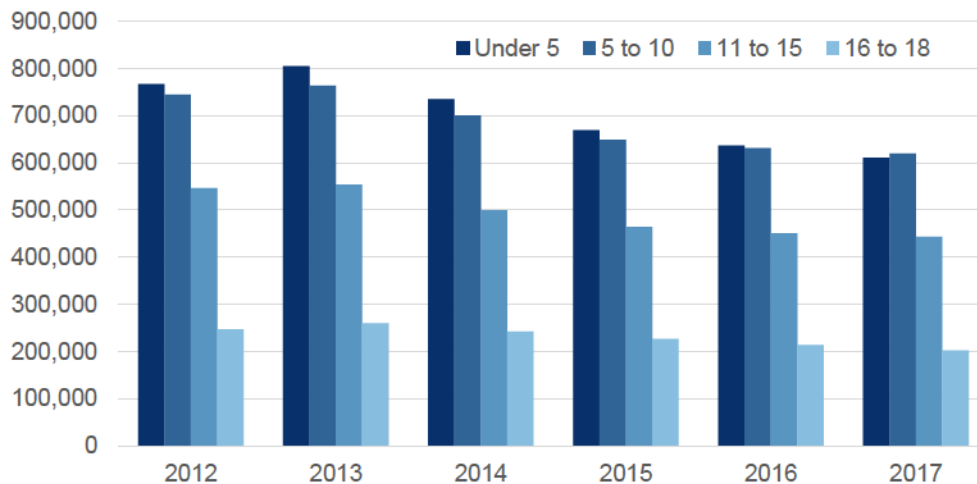
Annual Data for May 2017 Published: 6 December 2018 Great Britain Official Experimental

This release contains annual official statistics on the numbers of children living in Great Britain households where at least one parent or guardian claimed one or more of the following out-of-work benefits: Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance, Pension Credit or Universal Credit at 31 May each year. A claimant may be in receipt of a combination of the above benefits. Please see [about these statistics](#) for more information on how out-of-work claimants have been defined on Universal Credit.

Main stories

- Out-of-work benefits were claimed in 1.0 million households with children at May 2017, a drop of 30 thousand (2.9%) since May 2016.
- The most common out-of-work benefit claimed by households with children is Income Support, with 450 thousand households claiming (45%).
- Of the 1.9 million children living in an out-of-work benefit household, nearly two thirds (1.2 million) were under the age of 10.

1.9 million children living in an out-of-work benefit household at May 2017



The total number of children living in an out-of-work benefit household continues to follow a decreasing trend.

At May 2017 the total number of children living in an out-of-work benefit household was around 1.9 million. This represents a decrease of 55 thousand children (2.9%) compared to May 2016.

Nearly two thirds of these children were under the age of 10.

In May 2017, there were 620 thousand children aged 5 to 10 in out-of-work benefit household (33%). The number of children in this age bracket has decreased by 1.8% since May 2016.

The number of children under the age of 5 decreased by 4.0% over the last year.

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Thoughts? We welcome feedback

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What you need to know

This release contains annual [official statistics](#) on the numbers of children living in Great Britain households where at least one parent or guardian claimed one or more of the following out-of-work benefits: Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance, Pension Credit or Universal Credit at 31 May each year. A claimant may be in receipt of a combination of the above benefits. Universal Credit (UC) has been included in these statistics since May 2016. The UC element of these statistics is labelled [Experimental Statistics](#) as the methodology may develop over time based on user feedback. If you have any comments regarding these statistics please email us at stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

No time series information is available for Universal Credit figures and only data from May 2016 is currently available.

These statistics have been derived by matching DWP out-of-work benefit data with HMRC Child Benefit data. Children are matched through the Child Benefit claimant or partner records to DWP benefit claimants.

There is a considerable overlap in the breakdown by benefit type, as for example, a claimant of Income Support may also be claiming Incapacity Benefit. The total number of children living in an out-of-work benefit household figure only captures children once, irrespective of the combination of benefits being claimed by parents or guardians.

These statistics were released on 6 December 2018 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.

This means that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

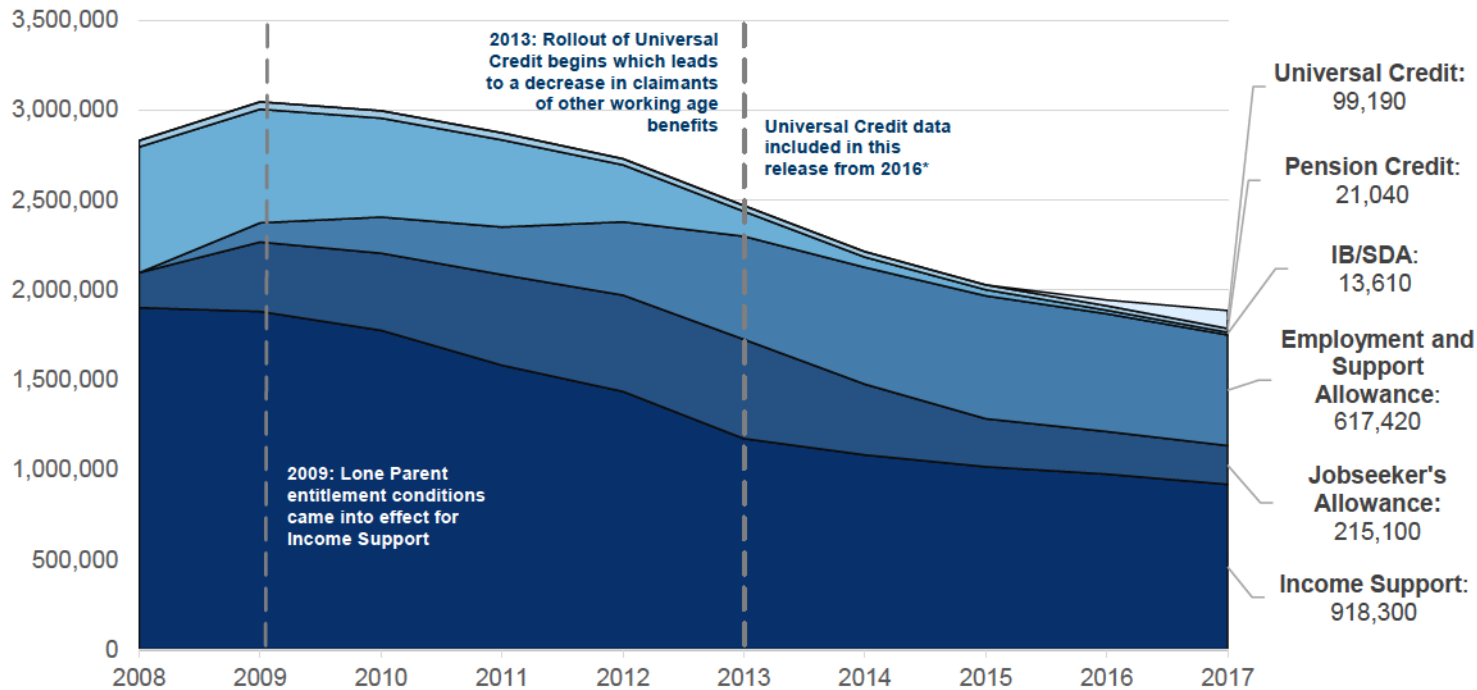
Supporting data tables containing statistical breakdowns (by age, benefit and 2011 lower geographical areas e.g. Local Authority, Parliamentary Constituency, Country, Output Areas), for the period 2010 to 2017 can be found on the [collection page](#). Previous years' data can be found in the [national archives](#).

Please visit the [guidelines on the use and interpretation of these statistics](#) for more background information.

1.9 million children in all out-of-work benefit claimant households

Numbers of children in all legacy benefit groups continue to decrease while the number of children living in Universal Credit claimant households increases

Children in out-of-work benefit households by year and benefit type between May 2008 and May 2017.



*Universal credit was added to this release for data from May 2016, which will have a small impact on this time series prior to that date

The increase in the number of **Universal Credit** claimants means that more children are living in Universal Credit households. At May 2017, there were 99 thousand children in universal credit households, an increase of 67 thousand on a year earlier.

At May 2017, 49% of children in out-of-work benefit households lived in a household where at least one person claimed **Income Support**.

Although the majority of children in out of work benefit households continued to be in households with an Income Support claimant, this represents a fall of 57 thousand (5.8%) from May 2016.

The number of children living in households claiming Income Support began to fall due to the effects of Lone Parent entitlement conditions introduced in November 2008. For more information on changes to Income Support see the [Income Support benefit page on GOV.UK](#).

Comparatively fewer children lived in **Jobseeker's Allowance** (JSA) claimant households when compared to those living with Income Support Claimants, this also represents a year on year fall from 238 thousand to 215 thousand.

Employment and Support Allowance replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims from 27 October 2008. With no new claims to Incapacity Benefit since 2008, the numbers of children in **Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance** households are falling. Numbers in **Employment and Support Allowance** households rose until 2015, but have started to decrease, by 37 thousand in the year to May 2017.

About these statistics

Care should be exercised in interpretation of the term out-of-work benefit household, which means that at least one parent or guardian is claiming an out-of-work benefit. A distinction needs to be drawn between households where no one in the family unit is working.

Universal Credit has been included in these statistics since May 2016.

The following out-of-work benefits will be replaced as Universal Credit rolls out:

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support

Universal Credit claimants have been defined as 'out-of-work' if they are required to undertake intensive work search, if they are expected to work in the future, if they are expected to take reasonable steps to prepare for work or if they are not expected to work at present due to health or caring responsibilities. For more information, please visit the [guidelines on the use and interpretation of these statistics](#).

Future changes to this release

DWP and HMRC are committed to working together to combine the HMRC publication of 'children in low-income families local measure' with this release. We hope to achieve this for the 2019 release.

Producing a combined release will include the development of a more robust methodology for the HMRC release. HMRC's estimates of low income do not currently include UC cases. Therefore as UC rolls out it is becoming increasingly inaccurate in estimating the number of children in low income families.

The purpose of combining publications is to tell a more coherent and joined up story about living standards for children by local area, whilst improving the methodology to include UC in the derivation of HMRC's children in low income families' publication and reviewing the current methodology of DWP's children in out of work benefit households' release.

The HMRC children in low-income-families release can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/personal-tax-credits-children-in-low-income-families-local-measure-2016-snapshot-as-at-31-august-2016>

Where to find out more

This document, supporting data tables and older releases from 2010 can be found on the collection page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-in-out-of-work-benefit-households--2>

Data for years prior to 2010 can be found in the National Archives: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130104024436/http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/ben_hholds/index.php?page=child_ben_hholds

The guidelines on the use and interpretation of these statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidelines-on-the-use-and-interpretation-of-official-statistics-on-children-in-out-of-work-benefit-households>

Details of other National and Official Statistics produced by the Department for Work and Pensions can be accessed via the Statistics at DWP page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/statistics>

Contact Us

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Feedback is welcome. Please email DWP at stats-consultation@dwpgsi.gov.uk

An ongoing questionnaire is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-out-of-work-benefit-households-statistics-user-questionnaire>