

Northern Ireland Benefits Statistics Summary

May 2017



Request for User Feedback

Analytical Services Unit (ASU) are continuing to reach out to users of this publication to better understand how the statistics are being used and whether there are any improvements that can be made.

Statisticians in ASU are committed to following best practice when producing statistics. For all our statistical publications, we aim to follow the 'Code of Practice for Official Statistics'. Many of our publications are listed as 'National Statistics' and for those we *must* follow these rules. This ensures that our National Statistics meet the highest standards for statistical publications. The Benefit Statistics Summary was designated as a National Statistic in June 2013.

As part of our responsibilities under the Code of Practice, we want to hear from people who use the figures within the Benefit Statistics Summary. We would like to find out what people use the statistics for and to make sure that the publication is as useful as it can be. ASU also wishes to assess how we communicate with users on an ongoing basis.

We would appreciate if you completed a short questionnaire to give us your views on the publication.

An online version of this questionnaire is available at the following link:

<http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/U2UE1/>

Alternatively, a hard copy can be requested by emailing asu@communities-ni.gov.uk

Many thanks for your time!

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KEY FINDINGS

Unless stated otherwise, the figures are at May 2017. The key findings include:

- The number of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants was 30,030. This represents a decrease of 5,530 in the last year.
- The number of Employment and Support Allowance claimants was 127,900 and the number of Employment and Support Allowance recipients was 119,260. This represents an increase in claimants of 6,180 on a year earlier.
- As at June the number of Incapacity Benefit claimants was 1,970 and there were no recipients of Incapacity Benefit.
- As at June the number of Severe Disablement Allowance claimants was 1,350 and the number of Severe Disablement Allowance recipients was 1,310.
- There were 36,320 claimants of Income Support. This represents a fall of 2,320 in the last year.
- There were 246,160 people of working age claiming a key benefit. This has fallen by 6,720 from a year earlier. This fall is partly due to the managed reassessment of the existing Disability Living Allowance caseload to Personal Independence Payment, for which data is not yet included.
- As at June the number of State Pension claimants was 306,860 a decrease of 690 on a year earlier.
- There were 76,140 claimants and 92,530 beneficiaries of Pension Credit. Claimants have fallen by 4,440 since May 2016, mainly as a result of an increase in the age of entitlement and increases in State Pension amounts.
- There were 312,030 people over State Pension age claiming a key benefit, a decrease of 70 in the last year.
- The number of Disability Living Allowance recipients was 199,680. This has fallen by 12,530 in the last year, mainly due to the introduction of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for people of working age.
- The number of Attendance Allowance recipients was 51,100 representing a fall of 480 on a year earlier.
- The number of Carer's Allowance claimants was 72,970. This represents an increase of 1,750 in the last year.

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Benefit Statistics Summary is produced each quarter by the Analytical Services Unit (ASU) of the Department for Communities.

The Summary provides an up to date and concise overview of the main benefits* administered by the Department for Communities (DfC):

- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment & Support Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance
- Income Support
- State Pension
- Pension Credit
- Disability Living Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Carer's Allowance

More detailed statistics are available as supplementary tables for each benefit and are available on the DfC website at <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) figures are not yet included within this publication and will be published separately as Experimental Statistics until assessed as National Statistics.

Background Notes

Trends in certain benefits will be affected by changes to State Pension age which were introduced on 6th April 2010. This included a gradual rise in women's State Pension age. The State Pension age for men is 65 whilst the State Pension age for women is rising from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. From 2018 the State Pension age will continue to increase for both men and women.

Data Notes

Users should be aware that the data has been assessed for disclosure risk and methods of protection have been applied.

Figures are rounded to the nearest ten to protect individual records. Some additional disclosure control has also been applied. Figures are only slightly affected by these procedures.

Average amounts are shown as pounds per week and rounded to the nearest penny. Totals may not sum due to rounding. Percentages are rounded to whole numbers.

Further Information

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1. Working Age Benefits

1.1 Jobseeker's Allowance

Background Information

Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) was introduced on 7th October 1996 and has both contributory and income-related elements. It is paid to people under State Pension age who are available for and actively seeking work.

The official source of JSA figures is the [DfE/ONS claimant count measure](#) (which is seasonally adjusted). The figures also include clerical cases, which these do not. ASU produce a separate set of Jobseeker's Allowance figures to enable cross-benefit analysis and supply a wider range of breakdowns, and these are provided in the supplementary tables of this release.

Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/jobseekers-allowance>.

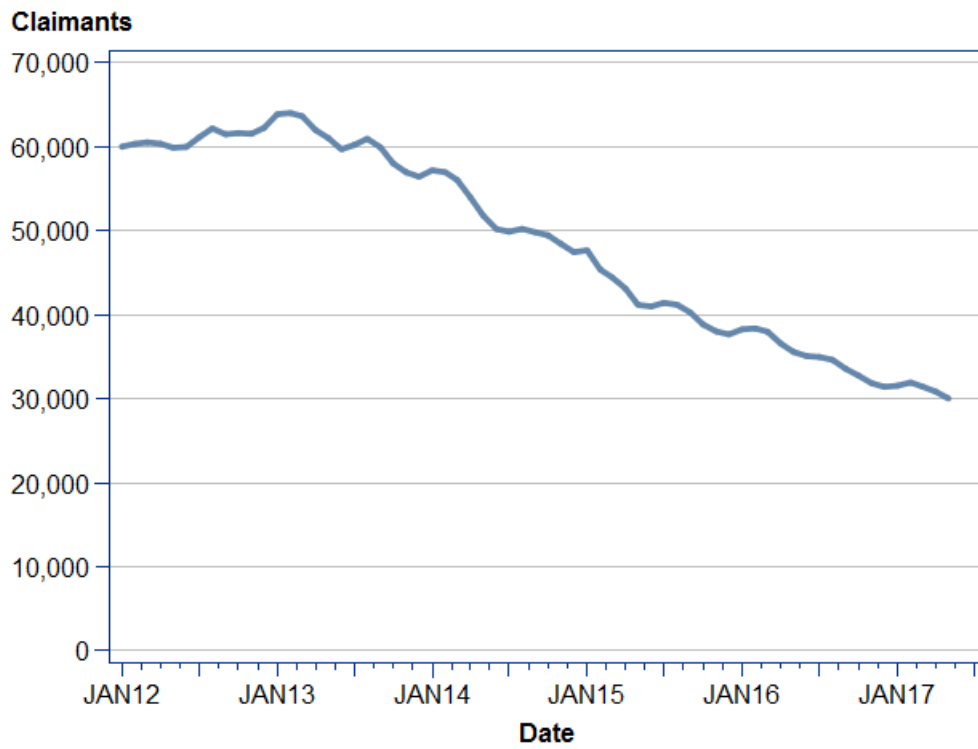
Facts and Figures

At May 2017 the total number of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants was 30,030. Female claimants represented 32% of the JSA caseload, while males represented 68%. The total caseload represents a decrease of 5,530 on a year earlier. The number of JSA claimants is largely dependent on the current state of the economy and the availability of jobs.

Table 1: Jobseeker's Allowance Claimants and Recipients

Date	All Claimants	Payment Type		
		Recipients	Credits Only	
2012	February	60,330	56,270	4,050
	May	59,860	55,770	4,080
	August	62,160	58,160	3,990
	November	61,520	57,640	3,880
2013	February	63,990	59,860	4,130
	May	61,020	56,860	4,160
	August	60,930	57,120	3,810
	November	56,920	53,310	3,610
2014	February	56,940	53,300	3,640
	May	51,790	48,280	3,510
	August	50,210	46,940	3,270
	November	48,390	44,810	3,580
2015	February	45,350	42,260	3,090
	May	41,150	38,250	2,910
	August	41,170	38,140	3,030
	November	38,010	35,280	2,730
2016	February	38,360	35,680	2,690
	May	35,560	33,040	2,520
	August	34,620	32,210	2,420
	November	31,840	29,530	2,310
2017	February	31,930	29,630	2,300
	May	30,030	27,710	2,320

Figure 1: Jobseeker's Allowance claimants time series



Latest statistical data available from:
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

1.2 Employment and Support Allowance

Background Information

From 27th October 2008, Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims.

Reassessment of existing Incapacity Benefit cases started gradually from October 2010 (with a small pilot), with full national implementation from February 2011 to 2014. It was extended to Severe Disablement Allowance in December 2013. These claimants would then be subject to the standard conditions of an ESA claim i.e. to undertake a work capability assessment.

Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/employment-and-support-allowance>.

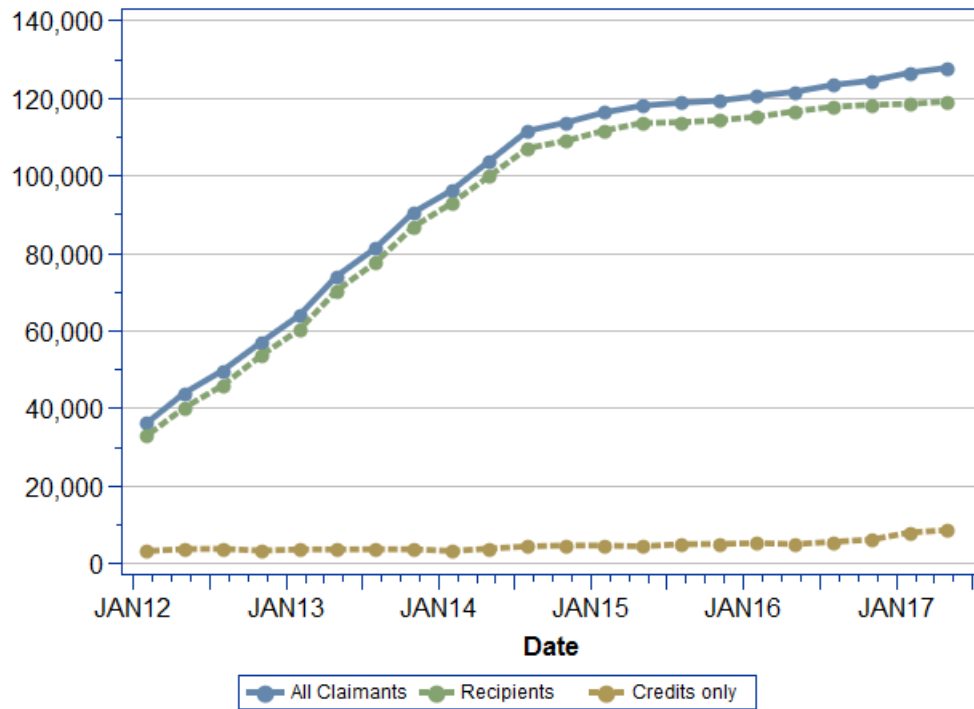
Facts and Figures

At May 2017, there were 127,900 claimants of Employment and Support Allowance. This represents an increase of 6,180 on a year earlier. Of the 127,900 total claimants, 52% were men and 48% women.

Table 2: Employment & Support Allowance Claimants and Recipients

	Date	All Claimants	Recipients	Credits Only
2012	February	36,280	33,020	3,260
	May	44,020	40,240	3,780
	August	49,830	45,990	3,840
	November	57,110	53,740	3,370
2013	February	64,100	60,400	3,700
	May	74,190	70,500	3,690
	August	81,340	77,610	3,730
	November	90,650	86,930	3,730
2014	February	96,340	93,060	3,280
	May	103,860	99,950	3,910
	August	111,670	107,190	4,480
	November	113,800	109,090	4,710
2015	February	116,430	111,730	4,690
	May	118,140	113,670	4,470
	August	118,900	113,870	5,030
	November	119,450	114,370	5,090
2016	February	120,620	115,290	5,320
	May	121,720	116,680	5,040
	August	123,500	117,850	5,650
	November	124,590	118,380	6,210
2017	February	126,660	118,600	8,060
	May	127,900	119,260	8,650

Figure 2: Employment & Support Allowance claimants and recipients time series



Latest statistical data available from:
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

1.3 Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance

Background Information

Incapacity Benefit (IB) replaced Sickness Benefit and Invalidity Benefit from 13th April 1995. It is paid to people who are assessed as being incapable of work and who meet certain contribution conditions.

Claimants who are assessed as not being capable of work and do not meet the contribution conditions can receive 'IB Credits only'. They do not receive any IB payment but their National Insurance account is credited for the duration of their claim. They are referred to as claimants but are not recipients (they are not receiving a monetary benefit). Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/incapacity-benefit>

Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) replaced Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension and Housewives Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension from 29 November 1984. Until April 2001, people who were incapable of work and did not satisfy the contribution conditions for IB could get SDA.

IB was replaced by Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) for new claims from October 2008. In October 2010 a pilot commenced to move existing IB customers to ESA by reassessing their eligibility to the benefit, with the full reassessment starting in February 2011. It was extended to SDA in December 2013. By September 2014 the reassessment for IB and SDA was completed, with a relatively small number of claimants left on each benefit. Numbers since then have decreased slightly due to attrition. At present there are no plans or legislation in place to reassess the remaining customers. Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/incapacity-benefit-people-with-disabilities> and <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/severe-disablement-allowance>.

Facts and Figures

At June 2017, there were 1,970 claimants of Incapacity Benefit a decrease of 410 on a year earlier.

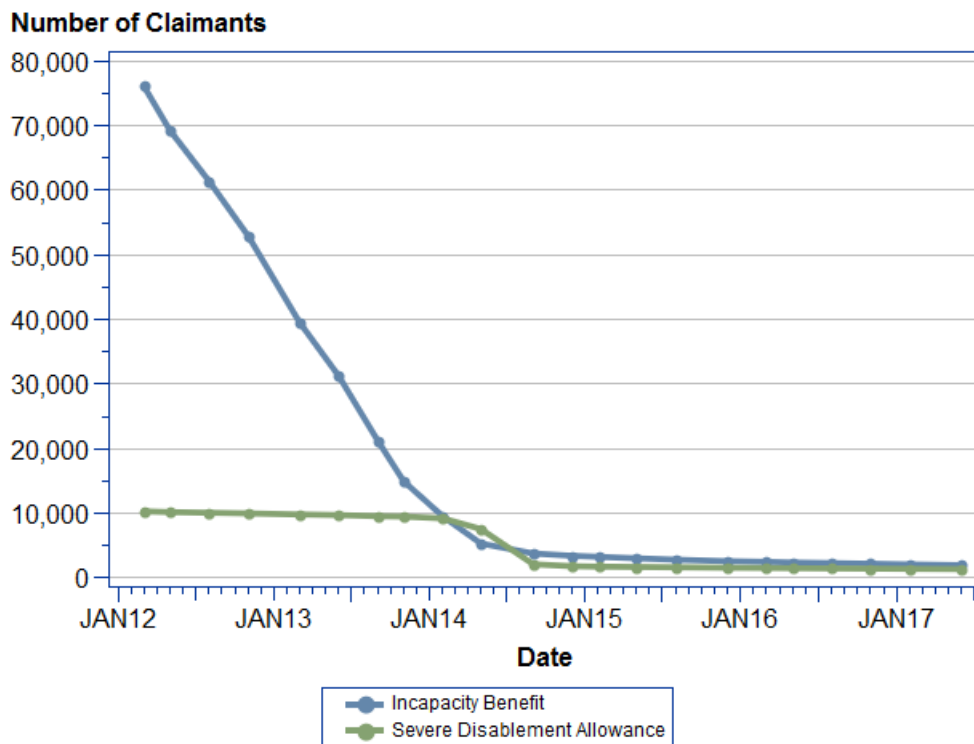
At June 2017 there were 1,350 claimants of Severe Disablement Allowance a decrease of 150 on a year earlier.

Table 3: Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance claimants and recipients

Date		Benefit			
		Incapacity Benefit		Severe Disablement Allowance	
		Claimants	Recipients	Claimants	Recipients
2012	February	76,110	46,790	10,300	10,070
	May	69,270	42,690	10,180	9,940
	August	61,410	38,090	10,080	9,860
	November	52,910	33,000	9,980	9,760
2013	February	39,600	24,870	9,820	9,600
	May	31,290	19,870	9,720	9,500
	August	21,250	13,680	9,550	9,330
	November	14,940	8,770	9,490	9,280
2014	February	9,510	4,090	9,210	9,010
	May	5,320	920	7,560	7,360
	August	3,780	180	2,110	2,020
	November	3,430	100	1,810	1,750
2015	February	3,260	90	1,740	1,680
	May	3,040	50	1,690	1,630
	August	2,820	40	1,640	1,590
	November	2,580	10	1,570	1,530
2016	February	2,480	10	1,540	1,500
	May	2,380	10	1,500	1,460
	August	2,290	10	1,460	1,420
	November	2,190	10	1,430	1,400
2017	February	2,090	0	1,390	1,360
	June	1,970	0	1,350	1,310

Please note: Due to the diminishing numbers in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance, primarily because of the migration of cases to Employment and Support Allowance, the supplementary tables are no longer published with this release.

Figure 3: Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance claimants time series



Please note: Due to the diminishing numbers in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance, primarily because of the migration of cases to Employment and Support Allowance, the supplementary tables are no longer published with this release.

1.4 Income Support

Background Information

Income Support is intended to help people on low incomes who do not have to be available for employment. It can normally be claimed by people who are:

- aged 16 or over;
- not working or working under 16 hours per week (and/or with a partner working under 24 hours);
- not required to be available for full-time employment;
- and in receipt of insufficient income to meet prescribed needs.

The main types of people who receive it are lone parents, the long and short-term sick, people with disabilities and other special groups such as carers.

From 27th October 2008, Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims. Migration of existing Disabled Income Support customers began in February 2011.

Changes to IS Lone Parents (LPs) were introduced in November 2008 where customers were no longer able to make a new or repeat claim for IS solely on the basis of their parental status for youngest children aged 12 or more. From March 2009 existing IS LPs with youngest child aged 12 or over had their eligibility removed, at October 2009 this policy was extended to youngest child aged either 10 or 11 and from October 2010 it was for youngest child aged 7 or over. From January 2017, the policy has been extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 5 or over.

Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/income-support-0>

Facts and Figures

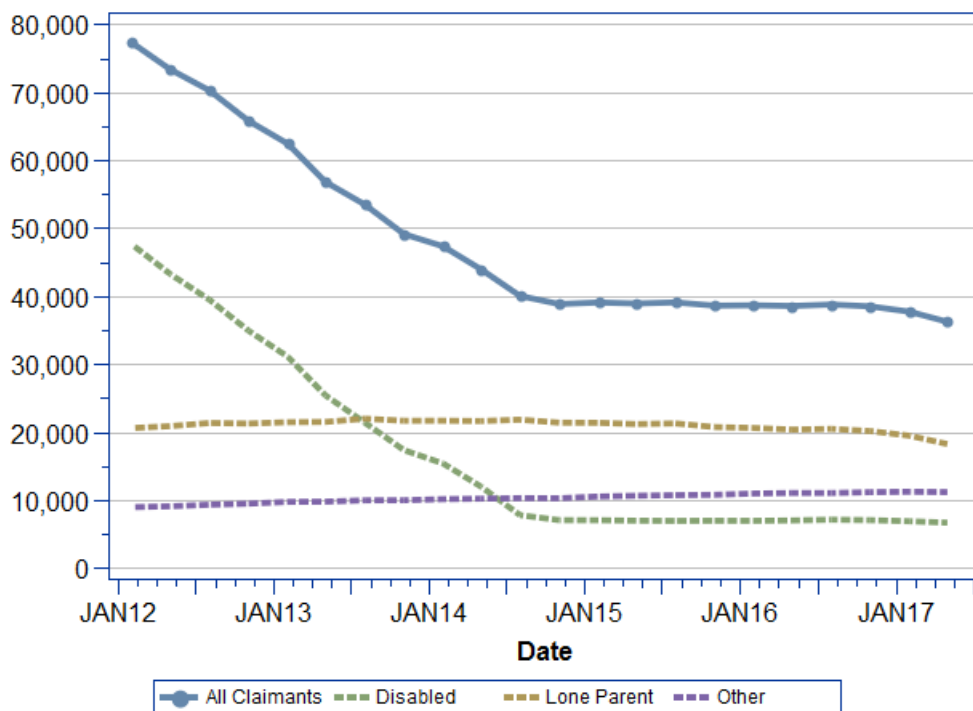
At May 2017, the total number of Income Support (IS) claimants was 36,320. Disabled claimants represented 19% (6,750) of all IS customers. Lone Parents represented 50% (18,320) of all IS customers, while "other" claimants (including carers) represented 31% (11,250) of all IS customers.

The number of Income Support claimants has fallen by 2,320 since May 2016. Disabled claimants have fallen by 330. Disabled customers can remain on Income Support if they also qualify for another reason e.g. they are a Lone Parent or Carer.

Table 4: Income Support Claimants by Type of Claim

Date	All Claimants	Claim Type			
		Disabled	Lone Parent	Other	
2012	February	77,390	47,690	20,670	9,030
	May	73,460	43,340	20,960	9,160
	August	70,370	39,560	21,420	9,390
	November	65,880	35,000	21,340	9,550
2013	February	62,530	31,180	21,540	9,810
	May	56,890	25,470	21,580	9,840
	August	53,570	21,480	22,060	10,040
	November	49,230	17,430	21,750	10,050
2014	February	47,420	15,460	21,760	10,210
	May	44,050	12,060	21,710	10,280
	August	40,130	7,850	21,910	10,360
	November	38,930	7,120	21,470	10,340
2015	February	39,160	7,110	21,450	10,600
	May	39,020	7,040	21,260	10,710
	August	39,160	7,010	21,360	10,800
	November	38,710	7,030	20,820	10,850
2016	February	38,740	7,020	20,690	11,040
	May	38,640	7,080	20,450	11,120
	August	38,860	7,190	20,560	11,110
	November	38,580	7,120	20,230	11,240
2017	February	37,800	6,960	19,550	11,300
	May	36,320	6,750	18,320	11,250

Figure 4: Income Support claimants by type of claim time series



Latest statistical data available from:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

1.5 Working Age Client Group

Background Information

Data collected through the administration of individual 'key' benefits are merged together to create 'Client Group' data. Each customer is classified just once. This gives an estimate of the overall number of customers claiming benefit. The client groups are 'Clients of working age' and 'Clients of pension age'.

The 'key' benefits for the Working Age Client Group are Job Seeker's Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Carer's Allowance, Widow's Benefit, Bereavement Benefit and Income Support for working age claimants (including Pension Credit for males aged 60 to 64). Personal Independence Payment will be included once figures have been assessed as suitably robust.

The number of claimants of individual benefits quoted in the Client Group publication may differ to the numbers published in the individual benefit publications. Claimants have been allocated to statistical groups to give an indication of the main reason why they are claiming benefit. The benefits are arranged hierarchically and claimants are assigned to the first benefit they receive. Thus a lone parent receiving both Income Support and Incapacity Benefit would be assigned to the 'Employment & Support Allowance and incapacity benefits' group. For this reason, the 'Lone parent' group will not contain all lone parents claiming Income Support. This also explains the disparity between the "Disabled" client group figures and the number of Disability Living Allowance recipients as the majority of working age DLA recipients are also receiving Employment and Support Allowance. The statistical group hierarchy is given in the table below.

Statistical group	Benefit being claimed
Job Seeker	Job Seeker's Allowance
Employment and Support Allowance and incapacity benefits	Employment & Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance
Lone Parent	Income Support with a child aged under 16 and no partner
Carer	Carer's Allowance
Others on income related benefit	Other Income Support or Pension Credit
Disabled	Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance
Bereaved	Bereavement Benefit or Widow's Benefit
Claiming State Pension only	State Pension

The age at which women reach State Pension age is gradually increasing from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. From 2018 the State Pension age will continue to increase for both men and women. The changes will introduce a small increase to the number of working age benefit claimants and a small reduction to the number of pension age claimants.

Facts and Figures

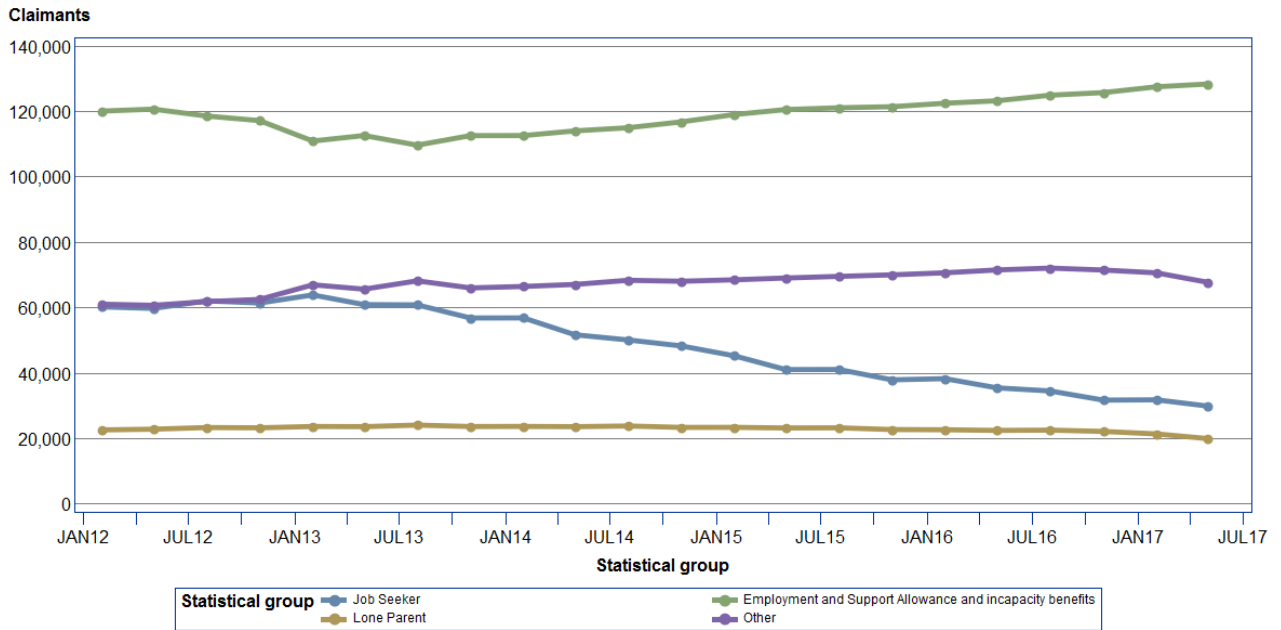
Between May 2016 and May 2017 the working age client group has decreased by 6,720 in total. This is largely as a result of a decrease in Working Age Job Seekers by 5,560. The number of disabled people has decreased by 3,770 and the number of carers has increased by 1,020. The number of Employment and Support Allowance and incapacity benefits has also increased by 5,120.

The decrease in the number of claimants in the “Disabled” statistical group is mainly due to the introduction of Personal Independence Payment (PIP). With the introduction of PIP, there have been no new working age claimants to DLA from June 2016. PIP data will be published separately as Experimental Statistics until assessed as National Statistics.

Table 5: Working Age Client Group by Statistical Group

Date		Statistical group						Total	
		Job Seeker	Employment and Support Allowance and incapacity benefits	Lone Parent	Carer	Others on income related benefit	Disabled		Bereaved
2012	February	60,290	120,110	22,680	29,450	5,530	23,290	2,830	264,170
	May	59,810	120,710	22,900	29,960	4,750	23,260	2,790	264,170
	August	62,120	118,610	23,400	30,690	4,770	23,620	2,810	266,010
	November	61,460	117,200	23,320	31,360	4,580	23,880	2,740	264,540
2013	February	63,920	110,970	23,730	31,840	6,760	25,690	2,730	265,640
	May	60,970	112,650	23,670	32,220	5,340	25,360	2,770	262,980
	August	60,890	109,710	24,150	32,870	6,090	26,510	2,770	262,980
	November	56,890	112,620	23,710	33,230	4,450	25,710	2,690	259,300
2014	February	56,910	112,640	23,740	33,530	4,300	25,980	2,710	259,810
	May	51,750	114,070	23,670	33,770	3,860	26,820	2,690	256,630
	August	50,170	115,030	23,880	34,350	3,850	27,700	2,500	257,480
	November	48,350	116,820	23,440	34,670	3,500	27,410	2,530	256,720
2015	February	45,330	119,060	23,460	35,080	3,360	27,550	2,560	256,400
	May	41,120	120,580	23,270	35,510	3,100	27,940	2,550	254,080
	August	41,140	121,130	23,320	35,990	2,920	28,090	2,590	255,180
	November	37,980	121,460	22,790	36,330	2,810	28,430	2,500	252,290
2016	February	38,340	122,510	22,720	36,560	2,680	28,950	2,510	254,270
	May	35,520	123,270	22,520	37,100	2,470	29,480	2,510	252,880
	August	34,580	124,970	22,610	37,590	2,240	29,780	2,520	254,290
	November	31,790	125,770	22,210	38,000	2,070	29,110	2,360	251,300
2017	February	31,870	127,540	21,460	38,200	1,770	28,320	2,390	251,540
	May	29,960	128,390	20,020	38,120	1,600	25,710	2,370	246,160

Working age claimants by statistical group time series



Latest statistical data available from:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

2. Pension Age Benefits

2.1 State Pension

Background Information

State Pension (SP) was introduced on 1st January 1909 and is paid to people who have reached the State Pension age and who fulfil the residency and contributions conditions. The State Pension age for men is 65 whilst the State Pension age for women born on or after 6th April 1950 but before 6th December 1953 is rising from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. State Pension age is planned to increase for both men and women from age 65 to 68 between 2018 and 2039. Figures from May 2010 onwards reflect this change. Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/state-pension>.

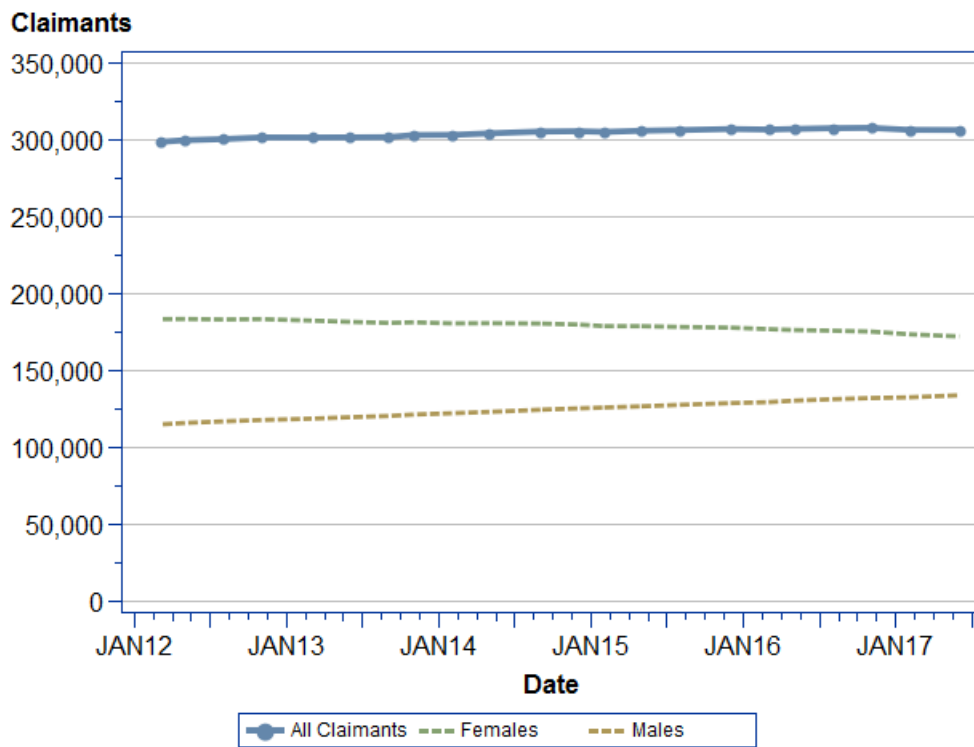
Facts and Figures

At June 2017, there were 306,860 claimants of State Pension, a fall of 690 on a year earlier. Of these, 44% of claimants were men and 56% women.

Table 6: State Pension Claimants by Category

	Date	All Claimants	Gender of claimant	
			Female	Male
2012	March	299,100	183,800	115,300
	May	300,210	183,910	116,300
	August	300,940	183,610	117,320
	November	302,030	183,830	118,200
2013	March	301,980	182,870	119,100
	June	302,080	182,060	120,020
	September	302,190	181,370	120,820
	November	303,560	181,770	121,790
2014	February	303,670	181,070	122,610
	May	304,670	181,190	123,480
	September	305,850	180,930	124,910
	December	306,070	180,300	125,770
2015	February	305,610	179,270	126,330
	May	306,370	179,250	127,120
	August	306,800	178,740	128,060
	December	307,500	178,280	129,220
2016	March	307,150	177,310	129,840
	May	307,550	176,760	130,790
	August	308,050	176,320	131,730
	November	308,250	175,750	132,500
2017	February	306,950	173,990	132,960
	June	306,860	172,560	134,300

Figure 6: State Pension claimants time series



Latest statistical data available from:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

2.2 Pension Credit

Background Information

Pension Credit (PC) was introduced on 6th October 2003 and replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). In the case of a couple, either may claim if both are of qualifying age but only one partner can get Pension Credit at any one time. Only one member of a couple needs to be of eligible age to claim Pension Credit (PC).

For people aged over the female State Pension age, the Guarantee Credit element guarantees an income at a set level. People aged 65 or over (and couples where one member is 65 or over) may also be entitled to Savings Credit if they have modest income from savings, investments or a second pension.

The age at which customers become entitled to Pension Credit is increasing in line with the age at which women reach State Pension age. The State Pension age for men is 65 whilst the State Pension age for women is rising from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. From 2018 the State Pension age will continue to increase for both men and women. The changes will introduce a small reduction to the number of Pension Credit claimants over time as the eligible age increases.

Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/state-pension/pension-credit>.

Facts and Figures

At May 2017, there were 76,140 claimants of Pension Credit (92,530 including partners), a fall of 4,440 since May 2016.

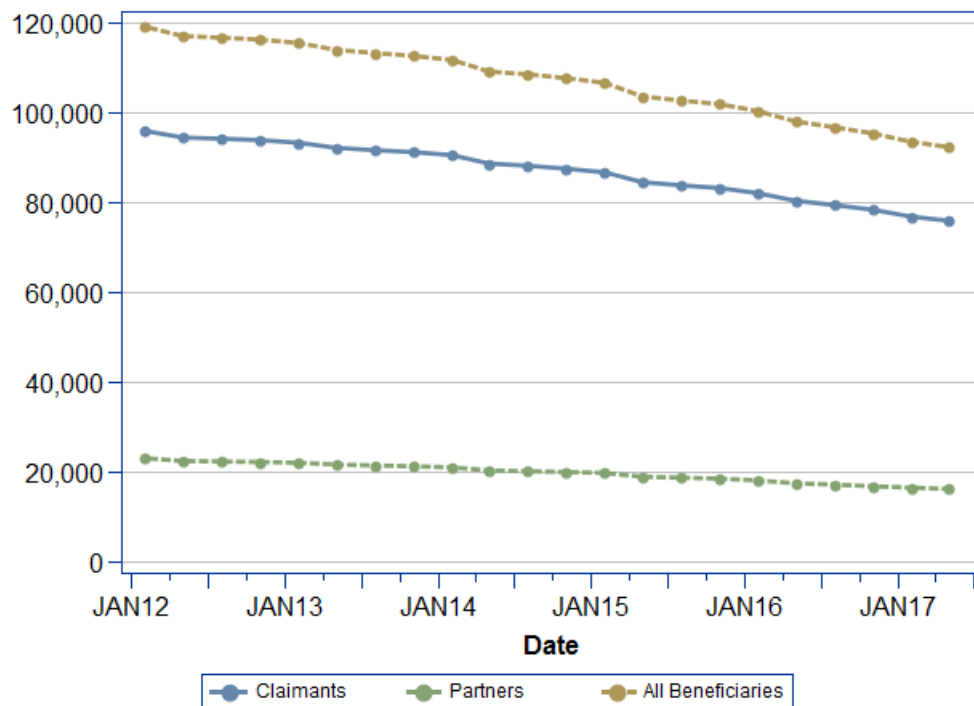
Of all beneficiaries (claimants and partners) 53% were female, 47% were male. Of all claimants 59% were female and 41% were male.

Pension Credit is continuing to decrease, mainly due to the increase in the State Pension amounts and the gradual increase in the pension age.

Table 7: Pension Credit Claimants and Partners

	Date	Claimants	Partners	All Beneficiaries
2012	February	96,120	23,230	119,340
	May	94,650	22,610	117,250
	August	94,400	22,510	116,910
	November	94,070	22,400	116,470
2013	February	93,500	22,220	115,720
	May	92,360	21,820	114,180
	August	91,850	21,630	113,480
	November	91,410	21,440	112,840
2014	February	90,750	21,210	111,960
	May	88,860	20,500	109,360
	August	88,380	20,340	108,730
	November	87,720	20,150	107,880
2015	February	86,900	19,940	106,840
	May	84,730	19,100	103,830
	August	84,020	18,890	102,910
	November	83,410	18,690	102,100
2016	February	82,270	18,290	100,560
	May	80,580	17,650	98,230
	August	79,620	17,340	96,960
	November	78,580	17,000	95,580
2017	February	77,030	16,660	93,690
	May	76,140	16,390	92,530

Figure 7: Pension Credit claimants and partners time series



Latest statistical data available from:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

2.3 Pensioner Client Group

Background Information

Data collected through the administration of individual 'key' benefits are merged together to create 'Client Group' data. Each customer is classified just once. This gives an estimate of the overall number of customers claiming benefit. The client groups are 'Clients of working age' and 'Clients of pension age'.

The 'key' benefits for the Pension Age Client Group are State Pension, Pension Credit, Attendance Allowance, Widow's Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, and Severe Disablement Allowance.

The number of claimants of individual benefits quoted in the Client Group publication may differ to the numbers published in the individual benefit publications. Claimants have been allocated to a pensioner statistical group based on whether claiming State Pension/Pension Credit and whether disabled. A customer is classed as disabled if claiming Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance.

The age at which women reach State Pension age is gradually increasing from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. From 2018 the State Pension age will continue to increase for both men and women. The changes will introduce a small increase to the number of working age benefit claimants and a small reduction to the number of pension age claimants.

Facts and Figures

At May 2017, there were 312,030 claimants in the Pensioner Client Group, a decrease of 70 since May 2016. Of these, 24% were in receipt of Pension Credit. Of these Pension Credit claimants, 70% were also claiming Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance.

Table 8: Pensioner Client Group by Pensioner Statistical Group

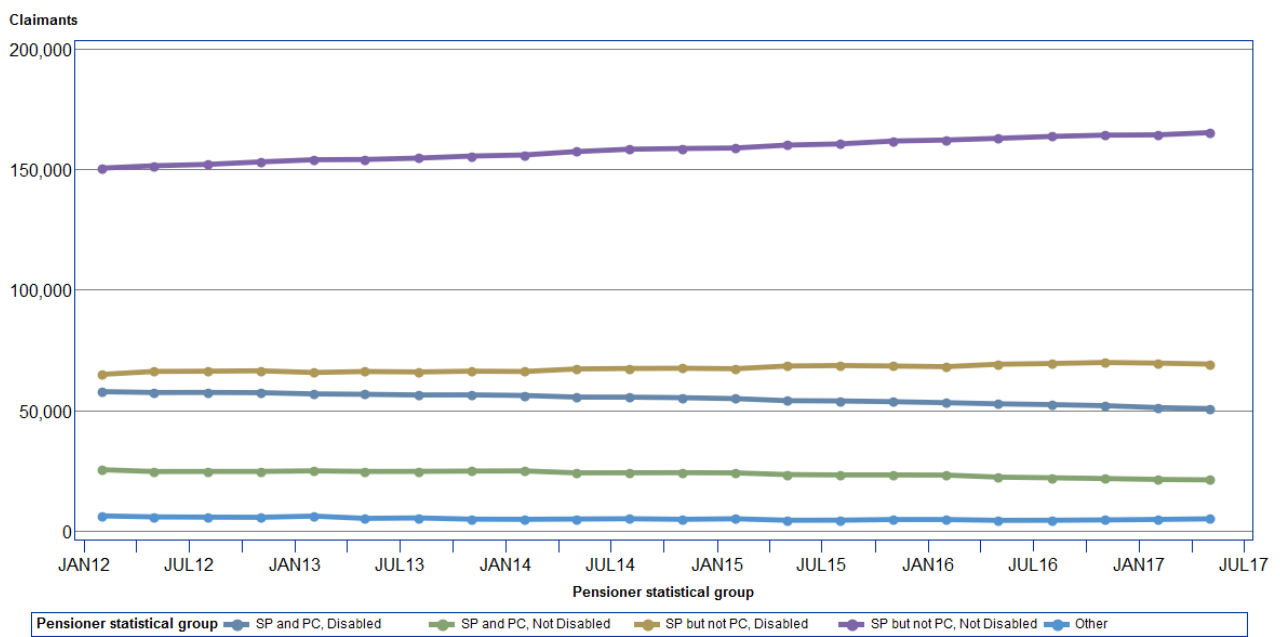
Date	Pensioner statistical group								Total	
	SP and PC, Disabled	SP and PC, Not Disabled	SP but not PC, Disabled	SP but not PC, Not Disabled	PC but not SP, Disabled	PC but not SP, Not Disabled	Not SP nor PC, Disabled	Not SP nor PC, Not Disabled		
2012	February	57,910	25,540	65,070	150,590	3,110	1,310	1,720	270	305,510
	May	57,550	24,800	66,290	151,570	3,010	1,290	1,410	270	306,190
	August	57,590	24,830	66,400	152,130	2,970	1,280	1,380	260	306,820
	November	57,480	24,830	66,560	153,160	2,910	1,260	1,360	280	307,840
2013	February	56,980	25,080	65,860	154,060	3,080	1,170	1,820	250	308,290
	May	56,810	24,830	66,270	154,180	2,710	1,190	1,230	250	307,450
	August	56,540	24,850	66,070	154,730	2,770	1,190	1,350	250	307,750
	November	56,580	24,990	66,410	155,590	2,570	1,100	1,150	230	308,610
2014	February	56,320	25,040	66,260	156,050	2,500	1,080	1,160	230	308,650
	May	55,660	24,250	67,320	157,440	2,530	1,100	1,230	240	309,760
	August	55,630	24,280	67,520	158,420	2,540	1,110	1,350	220	311,070
	November	55,410	24,320	67,610	158,720	2,400	990	1,380	210	311,040
2015	February	55,020	24,240	67,420	158,930	2,390	990	1,610	220	310,810
	May	54,170	23,530	68,530	160,140	2,240	980	1,140	230	310,950
	August	54,060	23,380	68,740	160,630	2,190	1,000	1,150	300	311,430
	November	53,750	23,390	68,540	161,820	2,290	950	1,420	230	312,400
2016	February	53,330	23,320	68,270	162,250	2,040	920	1,710	220	312,050
	May	52,860	22,470	69,280	162,940	2,040	920	1,280	320	312,100
	August	52,530	22,200	69,580	163,730	2,040	930	1,280	340	312,640
	November	52,090	21,880	70,010	164,260	2,010	910	1,460	350	312,980
2017	February	51,300	21,520	69,750	164,390	1,960	910	1,660	410	311,880
	May	50,880	21,330	69,340	165,300	1,920	930	1,820	510	312,030

Notes:

SP = State Pension

PC = Pension Credit

Figure 8: Pensioner client group by pensioner statistical group time series



Latest statistical data available from:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

Disabled and Carer's Benefits

3.1 Personal Independence Payment

From 20 June 2016, DLA has been replaced for Working Age claimants by the new benefit, Personal Independence Payment (PIP). There will be no new working age claimants to DLA from this date.

Reassessment of the existing DLA caseload to PIP commenced in December 2016.

Further details of these changes can be found at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/personal-independence-payment>.

Facts and Figures

Statistics on Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will be sourced from the DWP PIP Computer System, and checks undertaken to ensure they are quality assured and meaningful ahead of publication. The exact content of the outputs produced will depend on factors such as data availability and data quality. The Department is working to guidelines set by the UK Statistics Authority to ensure we are able to publish statistics that meet high quality standards at the earliest opportunity. There is currently no fixed schedule for the release of these statistics, however their publication will be pre announced in accordance with UKSA release protocols. The initial outputs will also be given an 'Experimental Statistics' badge until they are assessed under National Statistic criteria.

3.2 Disability Living Allowance

Background Information

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) provides a contribution towards the disability-related extra costs of severely disabled people who claim help with those costs before the age of 65. DLA has two components which can be paid together or on their own:

A care component - for people who have needed help with personal care (i.e. attention in connection with their bodily functions and/or continual supervision to avoid substantial danger to themselves or others) for at least 3 months (the 'qualifying period') and are likely to go on needing that help for at least a further 6 months (the 'prospective test'). The care component is paid at three rates – Higher, Middle and Lower.

A mobility component - for people who have had walking difficulties for at least 3 months and are likely to continue to have those difficulties for at least a further 6 months. It is paid at two rates – Higher and Middle.

Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/disability-living-allowance-dla>.

With the introduction of PIP, there will be no new working age claimants to DLA from June 2016. The managed reassessment of the existing DLA caseload to PIP commenced in December 2016 and will see a progressive reduction in the DLA caseload.

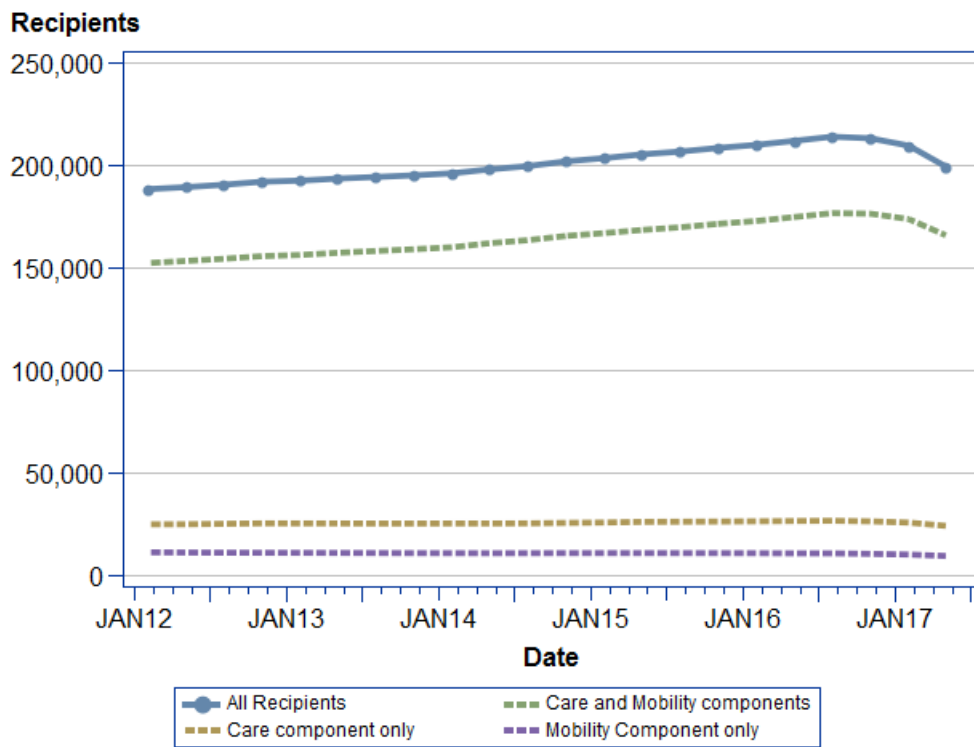
Facts and Figures

At May 2017, 199,680 people were receiving Disability Living Allowance (not including suspended cases), a fall of 12,530 on a year earlier. Of these, 49% were male and 51% female. The male recipients have decreased by 5,490 and the female recipients have decreased by 7,040 in the year to May 2017.

Table 9: Disability Living Allowance Recipients by Claim Component

Date	All Recipients	Care component, Mobility component, or both components.			
		Care component only	Mobility Component only	Care and Mobility components	
2012	February	188,640	24,900	11,220	152,520
	May	189,590	24,930	11,110	153,550
	August	190,790	25,150	11,040	154,610
	November	192,280	25,370	10,990	155,910
2013	February	192,800	25,340	10,970	156,490
	May	193,790	25,330	10,920	157,540
	August	194,580	25,280	10,870	158,430
	November	195,390	25,280	10,830	159,290
2014	February	196,390	25,310	10,810	160,260
	May	198,310	25,310	10,780	162,220
	August	199,880	25,370	10,800	163,710
	November	202,210	25,600	10,840	165,780
2015	February	203,790	25,780	10,850	167,160
	May	205,610	26,100	10,840	168,680
	August	206,980	26,170	10,830	169,980
	November	208,760	26,260	10,830	171,680
2016	February	210,260	26,390	10,800	173,080
	May	212,210	26,530	10,710	174,970
	August	214,260	26,640	10,720	176,910
	November	213,480	26,360	10,470	176,640
2017	February	209,890	25,750	10,130	174,000
	May	199,680	24,150	9,440	166,100

Figure 9: Disability Living Allowance recipients by claim component time series



Latest statistical data available from:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

3.3 Attendance Allowance

Background Information

Attendance Allowance (AA) provides a non-contributory, non-means-tested and tax-free contribution towards the disability-related extra costs of severely disabled people who are aged 65 and over when they claim help with those costs. It can be awarded for a fixed or an indefinite period and is paid at 2 rates – Higher and Lower.

Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/attendance-allowance>.

Facts and Figures

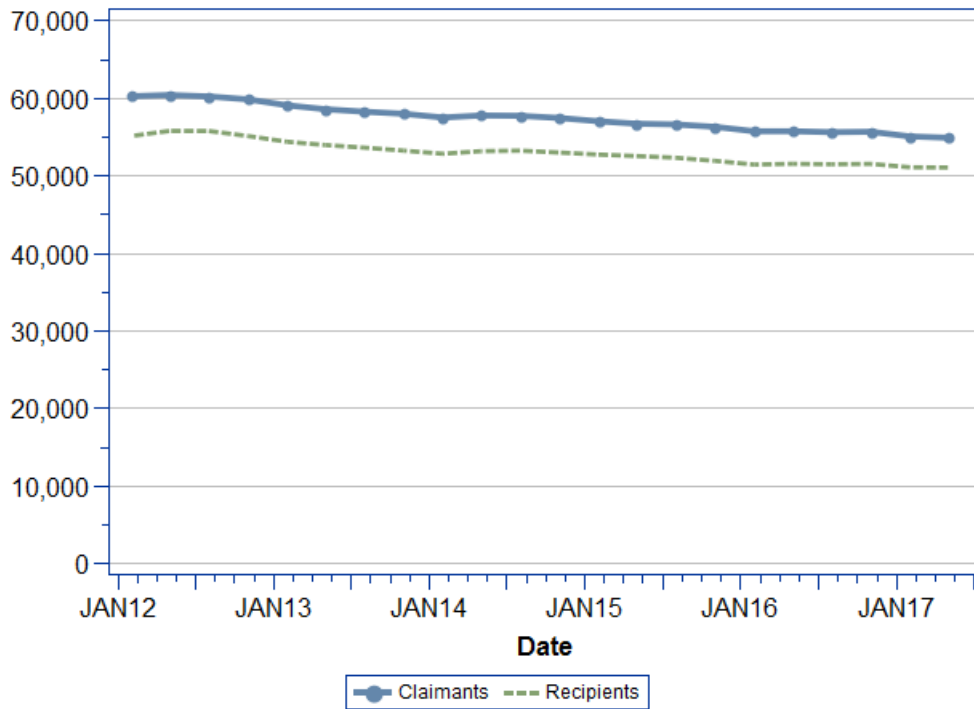
At May 2017, there were 51,100 people receiving Attendance Allowance (excluding suspended cases), a fall of 480 on a year earlier. Of these, 37% were male and 63% female. The male recipients have increased by 90 and the female recipients have decreased by 570 in the year to May 2017.

At May 2017, 64% of recipients were aged 80 or over.

Table 10: Attendance Allowance Claimants and Recipients

	Date	Claimants	Recipients
2012	February	60,300	55,160
	May	60,450	55,820
	August	60,270	55,810
	November	59,890	55,160
2013	February	59,120	54,420
	May	58,620	54,000
	August	58,300	53,660
	November	58,030	53,280
2014	February	57,550	52,870
	May	57,810	53,210
	August	57,770	53,280
	November	57,490	53,030
2015	February	57,070	52,770
	May	56,750	52,580
	August	56,660	52,360
	November	56,350	51,960
2016	February	55,780	51,480
	May	55,780	51,580
	August	55,660	51,520
	November	55,710	51,570
2017	February	55,110	51,130
	May	54,940	51,100

Figure 10: Attendance Allowance claimants and recipients time series



Latest statistical data available from:
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

3.4 Carer's Allowance

Background Information

Carer's Allowance (CA) is a non-contributory benefit for people:

- who look after a person for at least 35 hours a week
- who are not gainfully employed (i.e. not earning more than £110 per week after certain deductions)
- who are 16 and over
- who are not in full-time education
- the person that is being cared for must be already getting one of these benefits (1) Disability Living Allowance - Middle or High rate care (2) Attendance Allowance (3) Constant Attendance Allowance at or above the normal maximum rate with an Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit, or basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension (4) Armed Forces Independence Payment

Some claimants are entitled to receive CA, because they satisfy the conditions listed above, but do not actually receive a payment. This is because they receive another benefit (e.g. Incapacity Benefit for people of working age, or State Pension for people of State Pension age) which equals or exceeds their weekly rate of CA.

Further information is available in Annex 1 and from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/money-matters/carers-allowance>.

Facts and Figures

At May 2017, the number of Carer's Allowance claimants was 72,970, a rise of 1,750 in the last year.

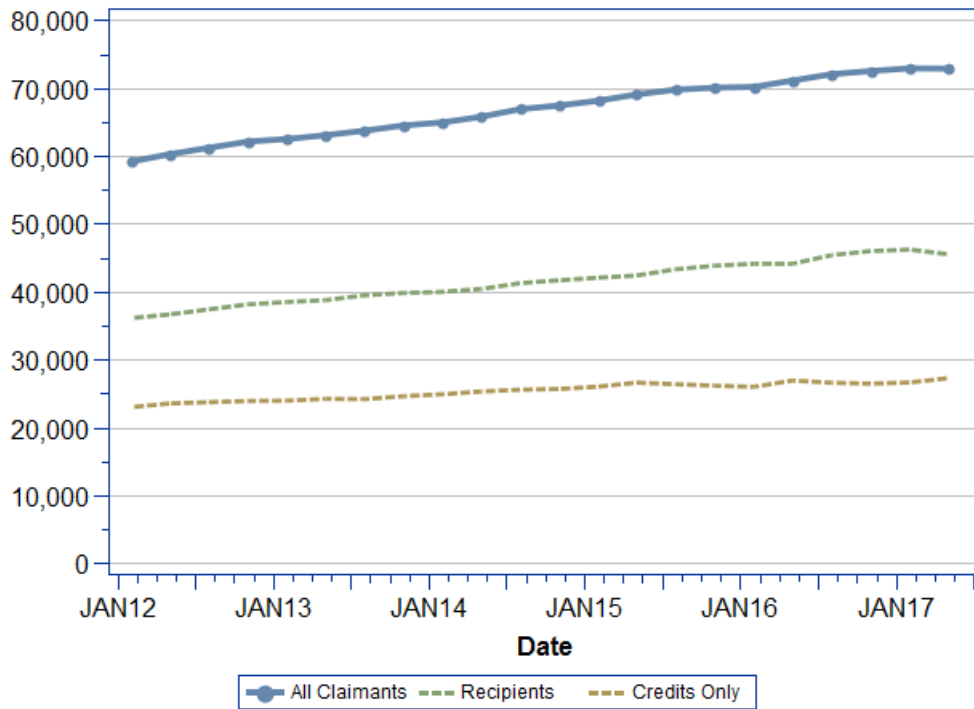
At May 2017, the number of Carer's Allowance recipients was 45,610, a rise of 1,400 on a year earlier. Of these, 32% were male and 68% female. The male recipients have increased by 110 and the female recipients have increased by 1,290 in the year to May 2017.

A decrease in the number of Carer's Allowance cases in May 2017 may coincide with the introduction of Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Table 11: Carer's Allowance Claimants and Recipients

	Date	All Claimants	Recipients	Credits Only
2012	February	59,270	36,200	23,070
	May	60,360	36,740	23,620
	August	61,300	37,490	23,810
	November	62,220	38,230	23,990
2013	February	62,600	38,570	24,040
	May	63,160	38,850	24,300
	August	63,820	39,560	24,260
	November	64,600	39,910	24,690
2014	February	65,050	40,080	24,980
	May	65,870	40,490	25,380
	August	67,000	41,350	25,650
	November	67,540	41,780	25,760
2015	February	68,250	42,160	26,100
	May	69,170	42,480	26,690
	August	69,870	43,400	26,460
	November	70,170	43,930	26,240
2016	February	70,280	44,210	26,070
	May	71,220	44,210	27,010
	August	72,150	45,480	26,670
	November	72,630	46,090	26,540
2017	February	73,020	46,300	26,720
	May	72,970	45,610	27,350

Figure 11: Carer's Allowance claimants and recipients time series



Latest statistical data available from:
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/benefits-statistics>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Claimants	Number of clients on the administrative system at the reference date
Recipients	Number of clients on the administrative system at the reference date who received a benefit payment.
Credits only	Number of clients entitled to the benefit, but who do not actually receive a payment.

ACRONYMS

AA – Attendance Allowance

ASU – Analytical Services Unit

BB – Bereavement Benefit

CA – Carer's Allowance

DLA – Disability Living Allowance

DfC – Department for Communities

DfE – Department for the Economy

DWP – Department for Work and Pensions

ESA – Employment and Support Allowance

HMRC – HM Revenue and Customs

IB – Incapacity Benefit

IBLT – Incapacity Benefit Long Term Rate

IBST (L) – Incapacity Benefit Short Term Lower Rate

IBST (H) – Incapacity Benefit Short Term Higher Rate

IIB – Industrial Injuries Benefit

IS – Income Support

JSA – Job Seeker's Allowance

LP – Lone Parents

MA – Maternity Allowance

MIG – Minimum Income Guarantee

MobA – Mobility Allowance

NINIS – Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service

NINO – National Insurance Number

NISRA – Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency

ONS – Office for National Statistics

PC – Pension Credit

PCA – Personal Capability Assessment

PIP – Personal Independence Payment

SDA – Severe Disablement Allowance

SP – State Pension

SSP – Statutory Sick Pay

UC – Universal Credit

WCA – Work Capability Assessment

NOTES

1. Benefit Summary Statistics

The Department for Communities (DfC) publishes the Benefits Statistics Summary Bulletin each quarter. The DfC Benefit Statistics Summary brings together key National Statistics on the main DfC administered benefits.

In addition to the summary document, there are a large number of tables which enable the user to delve into further detail of each benefit. These are provided to the user as:

- Supplementary benefit statistics tables – for each Benefit Statistics Summary Bulletin release, Excel spreadsheets are produced containing a large number of tables with much more detailed breakdowns for each DfC administered benefit and also client group analysis.
- Jobseeker Statistics for Northern Ireland statistics are available via Nomis (<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/Default.asp>)
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) statistics are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>
- Geographic statistics are available on NINIS <http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/>

2. National Statistics Code of Practice

In June 2013, the United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is a producer's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean 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.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The letter to confirm designation of the bulletin as a National Statistic is available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/confirmation-of-designation-letters/letter-of-confirmation-as-national-statistics---assessment-report-211--1-.pdf>

The full assessment report is also available:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-211---statistics-on-housing-and-benefits-in-northern-ireland.pdf>

Detailed policy statements and statement of compliance with the pre-release access to official statistics order 2008 are available:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/about-national-statistics-protocols-and-compliance>

DfC would like to hear your views on our statistical publications. If you use any of our statistics publications, we would be interested in hearing what you use them for and how well they meet your requirements. Please complete feedback at <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/U2UE1/> or email asu@communities-ni.gov.uk to request a copy of the questionnaire.

3. Data Source and Quality

All statistics are based on 100% extracts from the benefit administrative systems. Data is partially validated and is deemed of sufficiently high quality to report on. Data is extracted at 2 weekly, 4 weekly or 6 weekly intervals. Data is represented as end of reported month to aid presentation, but actual extract data will not generally be exactly this date. The statistics show the number of people claiming benefit on the extract date.

Client Group statistics are based on a database that combines all data from all scans. The number of claimants of individual benefits quoted in the Client Group publication may differ to the numbers published in the individual benefit publications.

As data is taken from live administrative systems, it relies on the customer reporting correct information about themselves and staff correctly inputting this data into the system. This does not always occur. Recent estimates indicate that approximately 1.3% of expenditure on benefits is misallocated due to Fraud and Error. Additional errors that do not result in an incorrect payment can also occur. The Department engages in initiatives to reduce the amount of Fraud and Error in the benefit systems on an ongoing basis.

Quality assurance of the data begins as soon as the extracts from administrative systems are received and continues right through to publication. The initial quality focus is on the volume of cases in each file. Subsequent assurance examines individual fields in detail to ensure that any unexpected changes are understood and represent genuine changes.

4. Rounding/Disclosure control

The accuracy of statistics may be slightly effected by rounding and/or disclosure control. Even when data (either administrative or sample) do not contain NINO, name and address it may still be possible to identify someone. Say, for example, a data table showed disability type, by ethnicity, within small geographic areas. Some of the cells in the table may only have one person in. It is possible in such cases for personal and sensitive information to be deduced. This is data disclosure and in DfC steps are taken to ensure that it doesn't happen. As an additional protective measure, details of the disclosure control methodology are not published.

5. Statistical groups

DfC has a typology to define Statistical Groups within the client group classifications. The aim of the Statistical Group typology is to present each person by the main reasons they are in contact with the Department. Like the client group classification, each client is classified just once, permitting the estimation of the total number of people claiming one or more benefits. The Statistical Group hierarchy is:

- a] Jobseeker
- b] Employment and Support Allowance and incapacity benefits
- c] Lone parents
- d] Carers
- e] Other income-related benefits
- f] Disabled
- g] Bereaved
- h] State Pension only recipients

From February 2009 the "incapacity benefits statistical group" includes Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). ESA replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims from 27th October 2008.

6. Jobseeker's Allowance figures at ONS

The preferred source of numbers for Jobseeker's Allowance is the DfE/ONS claimant count figure; these are more up to date and contain clerical cases. However, the reason we use the DfC JSA figures is that they are consistent with the other benefits used to produce DfC National Statistics, and permit a wider set of breakdowns. The DETI figures are available from <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/claimant-count> and also via Nomis (<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/Default.asp>).

7. Welfare Reform

The Lone Parent Obligation policy came into effect from 24th November 2008; Lone Parents (LPs) with a youngest child aged 12 or over were no longer able to make a new or repeat claim for Income Support (IS) solely on the basis of their parental status. Existing IS LPs with a youngest child aged 12 or over are having their eligibility removed over a period of time commencing 2nd March 2009. From October 2009, this policy was extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 10 or 11 and from October 2010, the policy was extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 7 or over. From January 2017, the policy has been extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 5 or over.

Many affected LPs will leave IS and claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). However, there are exceptions to these rules where the youngest child can legitimately be over the ages mentioned above. Similarly, some former LPs remain on IS for other reasons (e.g. they have a long term caring responsibility and claim Carer's Allowance).

From 20 June 2016, DLA has been replaced for Working Age claimants by the new benefit, Personal Independence Payment (PIP). There will be no new working age claimants to DLA from this date. Reassessment of existing DLA caseload to PIP began in December 2016.

The age at which women reach State Pension age will gradually increase from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. From 2018 the State Pension age will continue to increase for both men and women. The changes will introduce a small increase to the number of working age benefit recipients and a small reduction to the number of pension age recipients.

8. Known Issues, Changes and Revisions to the Statistical Summary

Changes for this release

May 2017 – Figures for the old Local Government Districts will no longer be published but are available on request. Tables for the New Local Government Districts (LGD2014) continue to be published as normal and have been updated to include the most recent (2016) mid-year population estimates. Estimates can be found on the following Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) page: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/population>

Previous Changes

May 2015 – The mid year population estimates, which are used for the some of the tables, updated to the most recent available (2013). Estimates can be found on the following Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) page:

<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp17.htm>

May 2015 – The Central Postcode Directory, which is used to work out which Local Government District or Assembly Area each customer lives in, updated to current year (2015). This update ensures more customers are allocated to the correct area and there are fewer “Unknown” areas. Details can be found on the NISRA website: <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/geography/postcode.htm>

August 2015 – From 1 April 2015, 11 new councils took over from the previous 26. Therefore a new table has been added to the supplementary tables to show the number of claimants by New Local Government District (LGD2014).

February 2016 - Data cut off prior to 2011 in order to improve publication. Historical data can be found on publication issued in November 2015. <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/benefits-statistics-summary-publication-national-statistic-november-2015>

February 2016 – on 9th May 2016 the number of Government departments reduced from twelve to nine.

The new Department for Communities (DfC) has taken over the functions of the previous Department for Social Development (DSD). Logos, branding, internet links and email contact details have been updated to reflect the new department.

Statutory rules which came into operation on 24 February 2016 changed the name of three Local Government Districts (LGD2014), namely:

- ‘Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon’ will now be known as ‘Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon’
- ‘Derry and Strabane’ will now be known as ‘Derry City and Strabane’
- ‘North Down and Ards’ will now be known as ‘Ards and North Down’

The supplementary tables showing the number of claimants by New Local Government District (LGD2014) have been updated to reflect this change.

May 2016 - A new category has been added to State Pension breakdowns to reflect the introduction of the 'New State Pension'.

November 2016 - Due to the upcoming move to central processing for Income Support (IS) and Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants, a methodological change has been made to the supplementary tables showing the breakdown by Jobs and Benefits office for both of these benefits (table 10 for IS, and table 8 for JSA). These tables were previously based on a 'Branch Office Code' variable which will no longer be recorded. Claimants are now assigned to a Jobs and Benefits office based on their home postcode. Figures prior to this release will not be directly comparable.

February 2017 - The mid year population estimates, which are used for the some of the tables, updated to the most recent available (2015). Estimates can be found on the following Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) page: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/population>

February 2017 - The Central Postcode Directory, which is used to work out which Local Government District or Assembly Area each customer lives in, updated to most recent available (2016). This update ensures more customers are allocated to the correct area and there are fewer "Unknown" areas.

9. Uses and users of the Summary

The Summary Bulletin and the supplementary tables provide definitive numbers of people claiming benefits in Northern Ireland. To meet customers' needs, figures are provided for both claimants (includes people in paid receipt of the benefit and those where entitlement has been suspended) and recipients (people actually in paid receipt of the benefit). The statistics can be used for:

- exploring the characteristics of those claiming benefit
- providing the evidence base for assessing the potential effect of policy options
- policy development and evaluation
- answering Assembly Questions and Freedom of Information requests
- producing other statistical series e.g. geographical breakdowns for the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service
- academic research

As the Summary Bulletin is released via the internet, information is not available on all the varied uses and users of the statistics. However, known users include the Department for Communities, Department for Work and Pensions, other Government Departments and academics.

10. Notification of future changes to the Summary

Analytical Services Unit intend to restructure the format of the Benefit Statistics Summary publication, moving to a more simplified and visually appealing format. When completed this should result in a shorter, more focussed and more accessible publication without sacrificing the breadth of statistical analysis currently provided. We would welcome any input you may have, feedback can be given in this short survey: <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/U2UE1/>

11. Great Britain Statistics

Benefit statistics to cover Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) only are produced by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and are available here:

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=tabtool>

12. Tax Credits

Tax credits are administered by HMRC. Statistics related to tax credits can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-tax-credits-provisional-statistics-2013-to-2009>

13. Other National and Official Statistics issued by the Department for Communities

Other National and Official Statistics produced by the Department for Communities can be found on the DfC website at the following link:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/dsd-statistics-and-research>

Annex 1

A1.1 Jobseeker's Allowance

Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) was introduced on 7th October 1996 and has both contributory and income-related elements. It is paid to people under State Pension age who are available for and actively seeking work.

To get Jobseeker's Allowance you must be:

- available for, capable of and actively seeking work
- aged 18 or over but below State Pension age
- working less than 16 hours per week on average, depending on the amount of your wage
- not be in certain types of education
- not be receiving certain other benefits
- resident in Northern Ireland

Jobseeker's Allowance isn't normally paid to 16 or 17 year olds, except in special cases.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/jobseekers-allowance>.

A1.2 Employment and Support Allowance

From 27th October 2008, Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims.

When a new customer applies for ESA they will initially enter an assessment phase lasting 13 weeks. During this phase the customer will have their ability to work assessed to determine their entitlement, this is called the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). During the assessment the customer will be paid based on the Jobseeker's Allowance personal allowance (subject to customers satisfying the relevant contribution condition and/or income tests).

ESA claimants' longer term entitlement to claim the benefit is dependent on the outcome of the WCA. Atos Healthcare are contracted by the Department for Communities (DfC) to conduct the WCA, however the final outcome from the WCA will be made by a decision maker within DfC. The possible outcomes of the WCA are that claimants can be assessed as: a) suitable for the ESA Work Related Activity Group (where work is feasible in the short to medium term), b) suitable for the ESA Support Group (for those people with the most severe conditions), or c) fit for work and therefore not entitled to continue claiming, although there is a right of appeal.

When ESA was initially introduced, it was announced that existing Incapacity Benefit claimants (including Income Support on the grounds of incapacity) would be reassessed. Reassessment started gradually from October 2010 (with a small pilot), with full national implementation from February 2011 to 2014. These claimants would then be subject to the standard conditions of an ESA claim i.e. to undertake a work capability assessment.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/employment-and-support-allowance>.

A1.3 Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Benefit

Incapacity Benefit replaced Sickness Benefit and Invalidity Benefit from 13th April 1995. It is paid to people who are assessed as being incapable of work and who meet certain contribution conditions.

Assessment is through the Personal Capability Assessment (PCA) which measures the claimant's ability to perform a range of every-day activities. Incapacity Benefit was replaced by Employment and Support Allowance for new claims from October 2008. Under the ESA regime, new claimants have to undergo the

Work Capability assessment. From February 2011 Incapacity Benefit recipients also began to undertake this assessment (a small pilot started in October 2010). The process of re-assessment was extended to include Severe Disablement Allowance customers in December 2013.

Claimant's who are assessed as being incapable of work and do not meet the contribution conditions can receive 'IB Credits only'. They do not receive any IB payment but their National Insurance account is credited for the duration of their claim. They are referred to as claimants but are not beneficiaries (they are getting no monetary benefit). For those who do meet the contribution conditions there are three rates of Incapacity Benefit. There are two short-term rates: the Lower rate (IBST (L)) is paid for the first 28 weeks of sickness and the Higher rate (IBST (H)) for weeks 29 to 52. The Long-term rate (IBLT) applies to those who have been sick for more than a year. The Higher short-term rate and the Long-term rate are treated as taxable income.

People who reached State Pension age before 13th April 1995, who were in receipt of Invalidity Benefit, were able to get Incapacity Benefit for up to five years beyond pension age. This means that by May 2000 the entitlement of all these cases should have ceased. The short term rate is now payable for people over pension age for up to a year, but only if incapacity began before they reached pension age.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) can be paid by the employer for up to 28 weeks. If the incapacity continues beyond the 28 week period, the period of SSP will be regarded as the customer having spent 28 weeks on the short term low rate. The claimant/ beneficiary will be eligible to receive the short term higher rate from the onset of their claim to incapacity benefit. The rate of Statutory Sick Pay paid by the employer is the same as the IB short term higher rate.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/incapacity-benefit>

Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) replaced Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension and Housewives Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension from 29 November 1984. Until April 2001, people who were incapable of work and did not satisfy the contribution conditions for Incapacity Benefit (IB) could get SDA.

Until April 2001, people who were incapable of work and did not satisfy the contribution conditions for Incapacity Benefit (IB) could get SDA. People had to be aged between 16 and 65 when they made their claim. There is no upper age limit for receiving the allowance once it has been awarded. People had to have been incapable of work for at least 28 weeks. Anyone who became incapable of work before their 20th birthday could qualify on this basis alone, people who became incapable of work after their 20th birthday also had to prove they had been 80% disabled for at least 28 weeks.

IB was replaced by Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) for new claims from October 2008. In October 2010 a pilot commenced to move existing IB customers to ESA by reassessing their eligibility to the benefit, with the full reassessment starting in February 2011. It was extended to SDA in December 2013. By September 2014 the reassessment for IB and SDA was completed. Numbers since then have decreased slightly due to attrition. At present there are no plans or legislation in place to reassess the remaining customers.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/incapacity-benefit> and <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/severe-disablement-allowance>.

A1.4 Income Support

Income Support is intended to help people on low incomes who do not have to be available for employment. It can normally be claimed by people who are:

- aged 16 or over;
- not working or working under 16 hours per week (and/or with a partner working under 24 hours);
- not required to be available for full-time employment;
- and in receipt of insufficient income to meet prescribed needs.

The main types of people who receive it are lone parents, the long and short-term sick, people with disabilities and other special groups such as carers.

Income Support (IS) was introduced on 11th April 1988 and is an income-related benefit that can be claimed by adults under State Pension age that work fewer than 16 hours a week and have insufficient income to meet their needs. Prior to the introduction of Pension Credit in October 2003, IS was available to people aged 60 and over.

From 27th October 2008, Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims. Migration of existing Disabled Income Support customers began in February 2011. From 24th November 2008, Lone Parents (LPs) with a youngest child aged 12 or over were no longer able to make a new or repeat claim for IS solely on the basis of their parental status. Existing IS LPs with a youngest child aged 12 or over had their eligibility removed over a period of time commencing 2nd March 2009. From October 2009, this policy was extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 10 or 11 and from October 2010, the policy was extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 7 or over. From January 2017, the policy has been extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 5 or over.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/income-support-0>

A1.5 State Pension

State Pension (SP) was introduced on 1st January 1909 and is paid to people who have reached the State Pension age and who fulfil the residency and contributions conditions.

The State Pension age for men is 65 whilst the State Pension age for women born on or after 6th April 1950 but before 6th December 1953 is rising from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. State Pension age is planned to increase for both men and women from age 65 to 68 between 2024 and 2039.

The two categories of contributory State Pension are:

- Category A - based on a person's own National Insurance contributions, and
- Category B - dependant on the contributions paid by a spouse/civil partner.

A composite pension (Category ABL) based on both the personal and spouse's/civil partner's contributions up to a maximum amount of 60% of the standard category A rate.

Category AB pension is based on the personal and spouse's/civil partner's contributions.

A Category BL pension is based solely on the spouse's/civil partner's contributions.

The categories of non-contributory State Pension are:

- Category C - payable to people over State Pension age on 5th July 1948. The widow of a man who was over 65 in July 1948 can also get a category C pension.
- Category D - is awarded to people who:
 - reach the age of 80
 - satisfy certain residency conditions, and
 - failed to qualify for a category A or B pension, or
 - receive less than the non-contributory rate

New State Pension: The new State Pension is a regular payment that you can claim if you reach State Pension Age on or after 6 April 2016. Those who reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016 claim under the previous State Pension scheme. To qualify for a new State Pension ten qualifying years are usually required and 35 are required to get a full new State Pension. The qualifying years don't need to be consecutive.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/state-pension>.

A1.6 Pension Credit

Pension Credit (PC) was introduced on 6th October 2003 and replaced Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). In the case of a couple, either may claim if both are of qualifying age but only one partner can get Pension Credit at any one time. Only one member of a couple needs to be of eligible age to claim Pension Credit (PC).

For people aged over the female State Pension age, the Guarantee Credit element guarantees an income at a set level. These amounts may be more if you are disabled, have caring responsibilities or certain housing costs, such as mortgage interest payments. People aged 65 or over (and couples where one member is 65 or over) may also be entitled to Savings Credit if they have modest income from savings, investments or a second pension.

The age at which customers become entitled to Pension Credit is increasing in line with the age at which women reach State Pension age. This will gradually increase from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2018. From 2018 the State Pension age will continue to increase for both men and women. The changes will introduce a small reduction to the number of Pension Credit claimants over time as the eligible age increases.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/state-pension/pension-credit>.

A1.7 Disability Living Allowance

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) provides a non-contributory, non means-tested and tax-free contribution towards the disability-related extra costs of severely disabled people who claim help with those costs before the age of 65. It replaced and extended Attendance Allowance (AA) and Mobility Allowance (MobA) for people in this age group from April 1992. DLA has two components which can be paid together or on their own:

A care component - for people who have needed help with personal care (i.e. attention in connection with their bodily functions and/or continual supervision to avoid substantial danger to themselves or others) for at least 3 months (the 'qualifying period') and are likely to go on needing that help for at least a further 6 months (the 'prospective test'). The care component is paid at three rates:

- Higher rate - for people who need help with personal care throughout the day and during the night;
- Middle rate - for people who need help with personal care throughout the day or during the night;
- Lower rate - for people who need help with personal care during some of the day or are so severely disabled that they cannot prepare a cooked main meal for themselves if they have the ingredients.

A mobility component - for people who have had walking difficulties for at least 3 months and are likely to continue to have those difficulties for at least a further 6 months. It is paid at two rates:

- Higher rate - for people who are physically unable, or virtually unable, to walk;
- Lower rate - for people who can walk, but need guidance or supervision from another person when walking out of doors on unfamiliar routes.

If you go into hospital, nothing will usually happen to your Disability Living Allowance (DLA) straight away.

If DLA is paid for someone aged 16 or over, it will usually stop (be suspended) after the person has been in hospital for four weeks. If DLA is paid for a child under 16, it will usually stop (be suspended) after the child has been in hospital for 12 weeks.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/disability-living-allowance-dla>.

A1.8 Attendance Allowance

Attendance Allowance (AA) provides a non-contributory, non-means-tested and tax-free contribution towards the disability-related extra costs of severely disabled people who are aged 65 and over when they claim help with those costs. It can be awarded for a fixed or an indefinite period and is paid at 2 rates – Higher and Lower.

To qualify, people must have needed help with personal care (i.e. attention in connection with their bodily functions and/or continual supervision to avoid substantial danger to themselves or others) for at least 6 months (the 'qualifying period').

The allowance is paid at two rates:

- Higher rate - for people who need help with personal care throughout the day and during the night;
- Lower rate - for people who need help with personal care throughout the day or during the night.

People who are terminally ill (i.e. have a progressive disease from which death can reasonably be expected within 6 months) automatically qualify for the higher rate. They do not have to satisfy the qualifying period.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/attendance-allowance>.

A1.9 Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance (CA) is a non-contributory benefit for people:

- who look after a severely disabled person for at least 35 hours a week
- who are not gainfully employed (i.e. not earning more than £100 per week after certain deductions) and
- who are 16 and over and not in full-time education

The severely disabled person must be getting either the highest or middle rate of Disability Living Allowance care component, or Attendance Allowance, or a Constant Attendance Allowance at the maximum rate under the War Pensions or Industrial Injuries Scheme.

To claim CA the customer has to be aged 16 or over.

From April 2003 Carer's Allowance became the new name for Invalid Care Allowance.

Some claimants are entitled to receive CA, because they satisfy the conditions listed above, but do not actually receive a payment. This is because they receive another benefit (e.g. Incapacity Benefit for people of working age, or State Pension for people of State Pension age) which equals or exceeds their weekly rate of CA. Where the overlapping benefit paid is less than the weekly rate of CA, only the amount of CA which exceeds the amount of the overlapping benefit is paid. Carers who are on low income and entitled to Carer's Allowance (whether in payment or not) may receive extra money with their Income Support/Jobseeker's Allowance/ Pension Credit/Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit.

Further information is available from <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/money-matters/carers-allowance>.