

This report looks at estimates of take-up for the main income-related benefits. These are Pension Credit (PC), Housing Benefit (HB), Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-based) (JSA(IB)) and Income Support and Employment and Support Allowance (Income-related) (IS/ESA(IR)). Take-up refers to the receipt of benefits someone is entitled to and we estimate take-up in two ways – by caseload and expenditure.

Pension Credit



6 out of 10 of those entitled to PC claimed the benefit



69 per cent of the total amount of PC that could have been claimed was claimed

Housing Benefit



8 out of 10 of those entitled to HB claimed the benefit



86 per cent of the total amount of HB that could have been claimed was claimed

JSA Income-based



5 out of 10 of those entitled to JSA (IB) claimed the benefit



57 per cent of the total amount of JSA (IB) that could have been claimed was claimed

IS/ESA Income-related



8 out of 10 of those entitled to IS/ESA (IR) claimed the benefit



84 per cent of the total amount of IS/ESA (IR) that could have been claimed was claimed

What you need to know

Introduction

This report provides estimates of the take-up for the main income-related benefits in Great Britain for the financial year 2014/15: Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-based) and Income Support and Employment and Support Allowance (Income-related).

Take-up refers to the receipt of benefits someone is entitled to. There are some people who are entitled to benefits but not receiving them.

Take-up of benefits can be affected by a number of factors. Trying to explain the reasons for non-take-up is difficult and we do not have the data in our modelling to do this. But it is useful to outline some of the broad factors that have been found to have an effect to help put the results included here into context. Take-up may be affected by factors such as the attractiveness of the benefit, lack of awareness of the benefit or application procedure, lack of awareness of entitlement, the perceived stigma of receiving a benefit or other factors (Eurofound 2014, see page 9).

Content of the report

In this report we estimate take-up in two ways:

👤 Caseload: Over a one year period, the average number of benefit recipients who received each benefit compared to the number there would have been if everyone entitled to the benefit claimed it. The caseload figures are rounded to the nearest 10,000 and percentages are rounded to the nearest percentage point.

£ Expenditure: Over a one year period, the average amount of a benefit claimed compared to the total amount that could have been claimed if everyone entitled to the benefit had claimed it. The amounts claimed and unclaimed are rounded to the nearest £10 million and percentages are rounded to the nearest percentage point.

Caseload and expenditure take-up rates are estimated using a formula. A point estimate is calculated, together with lower and upper bound estimates.

Throughout this report a family refers to either a single adult or couple living as married, and any dependent children.

In reporting the average annual amount unclaimed (page 3) we have used the mean weekly amount to be consistent with the estimated total amount unclaimed. Information on the median weekly amount unclaimed is available in the reference tables.

Further information

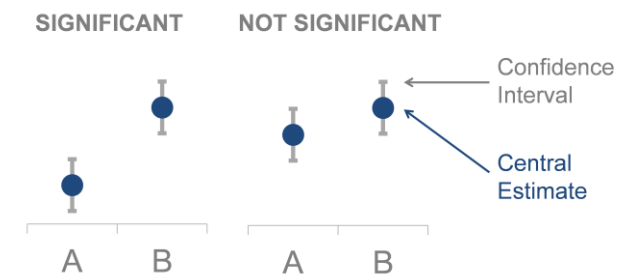
A comprehensive set of reference tables breaking down headline results presented in this publication are available online along with a quick guide on how to use the tables;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-201415>. Tables from these workbooks are referenced throughout the report.

Statistical significance

Statistical significance is an expression that says whether an estimated value is likely to have arisen only from variations in the sampling. It is most often used when talking about a change or a difference: a *significant change or difference* is one that is not likely to be due only to the sampling, and therefore likely to be a real change/difference. Plotting estimates and their confidence intervals (a measure of the uncertainty of an estimate) gives an indication of whether or not a difference is significant. In general, if the confidence intervals of two estimates do not overlap, the estimates are significantly different.

None of the changes in this release are statistically significant unless specifically stated.



Lead Statistician: Joanne Burrage

IRB.TAKEUP@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK

DWP Press Office: 0203 267 5129

Comments? Feedback is welcome

Published 28 June 2016

Next edition May/June 2017

ISBN 978-1-78425-803-0

Take-up 2014/15: Estimates of non-take-up for families and expenditure

Pension Credit



Up to 1.4 million families who were entitled to receive Pension Credit did not claim the benefit.



Up to £3.1 billion of available Pension Credit went unclaimed. On average this amounted to around £2,000 per year for each family entitled to receive Pension Credit who did not claim the benefit.

Housing Benefit



Up to 1.4 million families who were entitled to receive Housing Benefit did not claim the benefit.



Up to £4.6 billion of available Housing Benefit went unclaimed. On average this amounted to around £3,000 per year for each family entitled to receive Housing Benefit who did not claim the benefit.

JSA (IB)



Up to 0.8 million families who were entitled to receive JSA (IB) did not claim the benefit.



Up to £2.4 billion of available JSA (IB) went unclaimed. On average this amounted to around £3,000 per year for each family entitled to receive JSA (IB) who did not claim the benefit.

IS/ESA (IR)



Up to 0.6 million families who were entitled to receive IS/ESA (IR) did not claim the benefit.

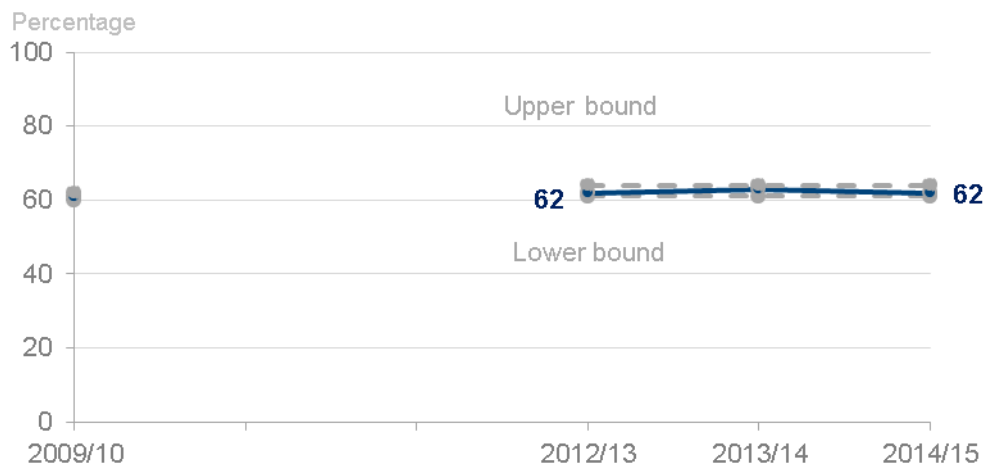


Up to £2.9 billion of available IS/ESA (IR) went unclaimed. On average this amounted to around £4,500 per year for each family entitled to receive IS/ESA (IR) who did not claim the benefit.

Pension Credit

Six out of ten of those entitled to Pension Credit received the benefit

Take-up range (caseload) of Pension Credit, 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain



In 2014/15 an estimated 62 per cent of families who were entitled to Pension Credit received it. The estimated take-up rate has been relatively stable since 2009/10.

Take-up of Guarantee Credit (68 per cent) continued to be higher than take-up of Savings Credit only (48 per cent). This could be influenced by the difference in the level of entitlement. Those entitled to Guarantee Credit received a substantially higher average weekly amount than those entitled to Savings Credit only.

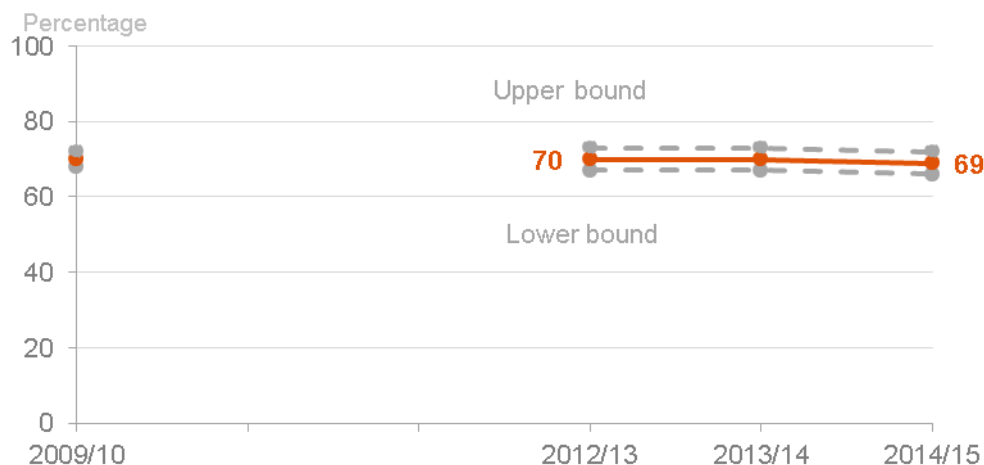
Take-up of Pension Credit by couples (55 per cent) continued to be lower than that of single men (67 per cent) and single women (64 per cent). Across all years, there was a statistically significant difference in the take-up rate of Pension Credit amongst couples compared to that of single males and females.

Take-up of Pension Credit by those under 75 (65 per cent) continued to be higher than those 75 or over (60 per cent).

See table **PC1** for full data.

Sixty-nine per cent of the total amount of Pension Credit that could have been claimed was claimed

Take-up range (expenditure) of Pension Credit, 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain



In 2014/15 an estimated 69 per cent of the total amount of Pension Credit that could have been claimed was claimed. The estimated take-up rate has been relatively stable since 2009/10.

Expenditure take-up of Guarantee Credit (70 per cent) continued to be higher than expenditure take-up of Savings Credit only (53 per cent). However, the take-up expenditure rate of Guarantee Credit amongst single males was 10 percentage points lower than in 2009/10, a statistically significant change.

Expenditure take-up of Pension Credit by couples (66 per cent) continued to be lower than that of single men (70 per cent) and single women (71 per cent).

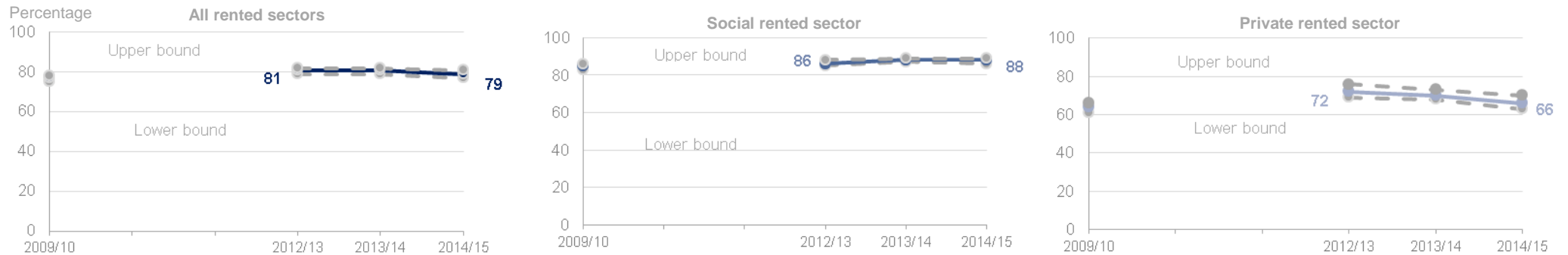
Expenditure take-up of Pension Credit by those under 75 (70 per cent) continued to be higher than that of those 75 or over (68 per cent).

See table **PC2** for full data.

Housing Benefit

Take-up of HB was highest in the social rented sector, 9 out of 10 of those entitled received the benefit

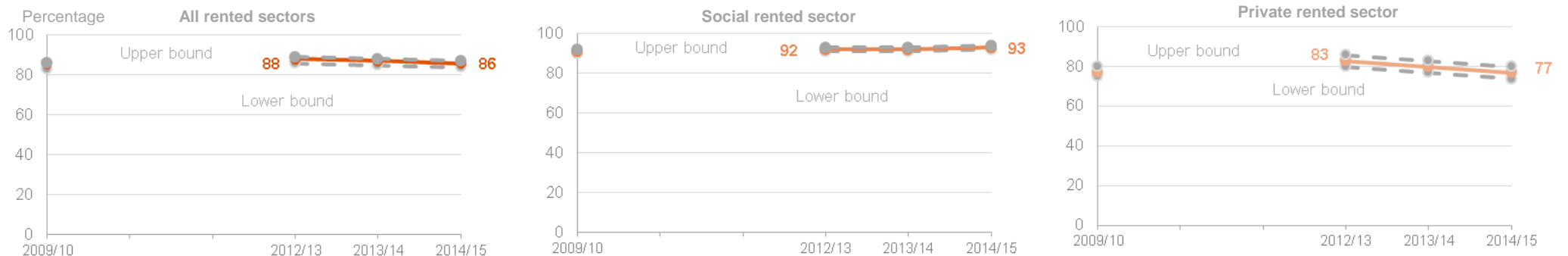
Take-up (caseload) of Housing Benefit by rented sector type, 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain



An estimated 79 per cent of those entitled to Housing Benefit received it in 2014/15, 2 percentage points higher than in 2009/10. Take-up of Housing Benefit varied by rental sector. Across all years there was a statistically significant difference in the take-up rates for families receiving Housing Benefit in the social rented sector compared to the private rented sector. Take-up of Housing Benefit amongst those in employment significantly increased in 2014/15 compared to 2009/10, rising from 38 per cent in 2009/10 to 55 per cent in 2014/15; this was a statistically significant change. See table **HB5** for full data.

Eighty-six per cent of the total amount of HB that could be claimed was claimed

Take-up (expenditure) of Housing Benefit by rented sector type, 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain



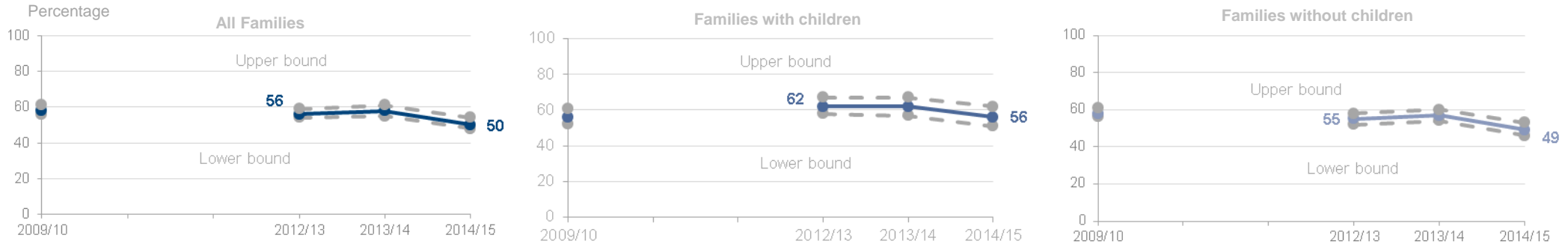
In 2014/15, an estimated 86 per cent of the total amount of Housing Benefit that could have been claimed was claimed, falling by 2 percentage points compared to 2012/13. Expenditure take-up of Housing Benefit varied by rental sector. Across all years there was a statistically significant difference in expenditure take-up rates for families receiving Housing Benefit in the social rented sector compared to the private rented sector. Expenditure take-up of Housing Benefit amongst those in employment rose from 54 per cent in 2009/10 to 68 per cent in 2014/15 which was a statistically significant change.

See table **HB6** for full data.

Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-based)

Half of all families entitled to Jobseeker's Allowance received the benefit

Take-up (caseload) of JSA (IB) by family type, 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain

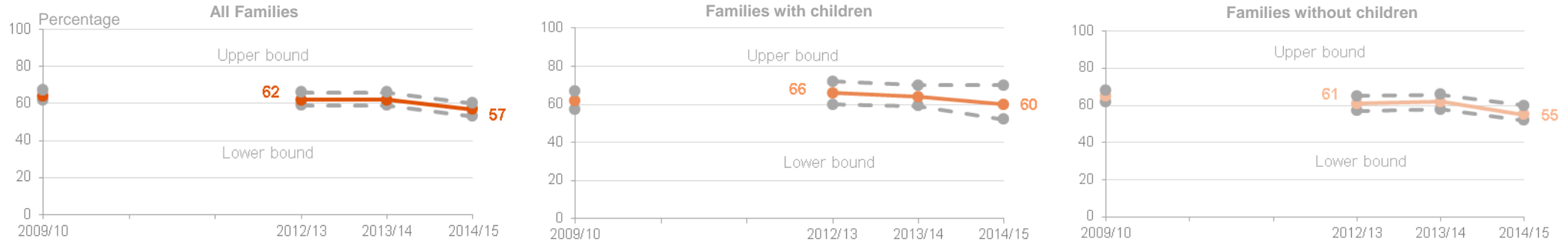


In 2014/15, an estimated 50 per cent of all families entitled to JSA (IB) received the benefit; this was a statistically significant decrease of 8 percentage points since 2009/10. In particular the take-up rate for families without children fell from 58 per cent in 2009/10 to 49 per cent in 2014/15, which was a statistically significant change.

See table **JSA1** for full data.

Fifty-seven per cent of the total amount of Jobseeker's Allowance that could have been claimed was claimed

Take-up (expenditure) of JSA (IB) by family type, 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain



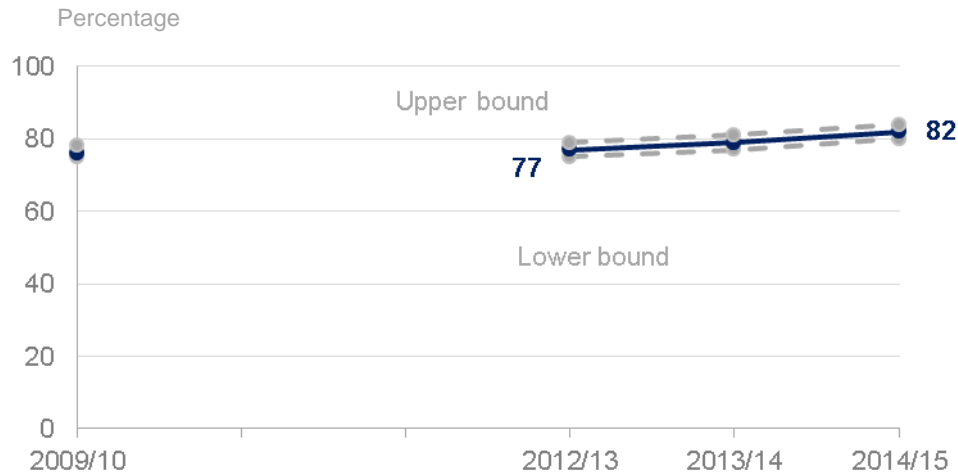
In 2014/15 an estimated 57 per cent of the total amount of JSA (IB) that could have been claimed was claimed this was 7 percentage points lower than in 2009/10; a statistically significant change. Take-up expenditure varied by family type; an estimated 60 per cent of the amount available to families with children was claimed compared to 55 per cent of the total amount available to families without children. The take-up expenditure rates amongst families without children decreased by 10 percentage points from 2009/10 to 2014/15 which was a statistically significant change.

See table **JSA2** for full data.

Income Support/ Employment and Support Allowance (Income-related)

Eight out of ten of those entitled to IS/ ESA (IR) received the benefit

Take-up range (caseloads) of IS/ESA (IR), 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain



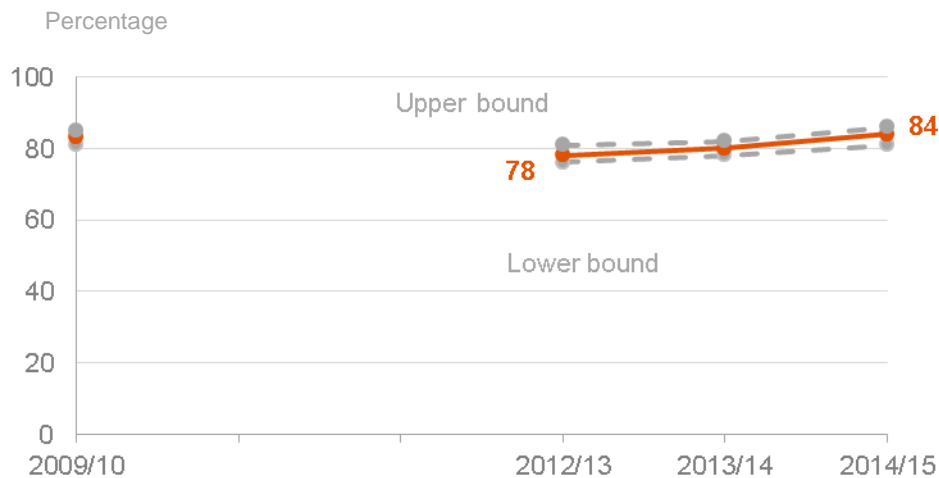
An estimated 82 per cent of families who were entitled to IS/ESA (IR) in 2014/15 received the benefit.

The percentage of families opting to take-up IS/ESA (IR) increased by 6 percentage points in 2014/15 compared to 2009/10.

See table **ISESA1** for full data.

Eighty-four per cent of the total amount of IS/ESA that could have been claimed was claimed

Take-up range (expenditure) of IS/ESA (IR), 2009/10 and 2012/13 to 2014/15, Great Britain



In 2014/15 an estimated 84 per cent of the total amount of IS/ESA (IR) that could have been claimed was claimed. This was an increase of 1 percentage point from 2009/10 and 4 percentage points compared to 2013/14.

See table **ISESA2** for full data.

Overview of Methodology

The methodology for deriving the estimates of take up is complex. Figures in this report are based on DWP administrative data, Local Authority administrative data and data from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). The survey data from the FRS are then modelled using an econometric model known as the Policy Simulation Model (PSM). The PSM is a microsimulation model of the tax and benefit system of the UK. Only the GB component of this has been used to derive these statistics. The source data for the model comes primarily from the FRS with benefit/credit entitlement and tax/National Insurance liability calculated for each FRS family.

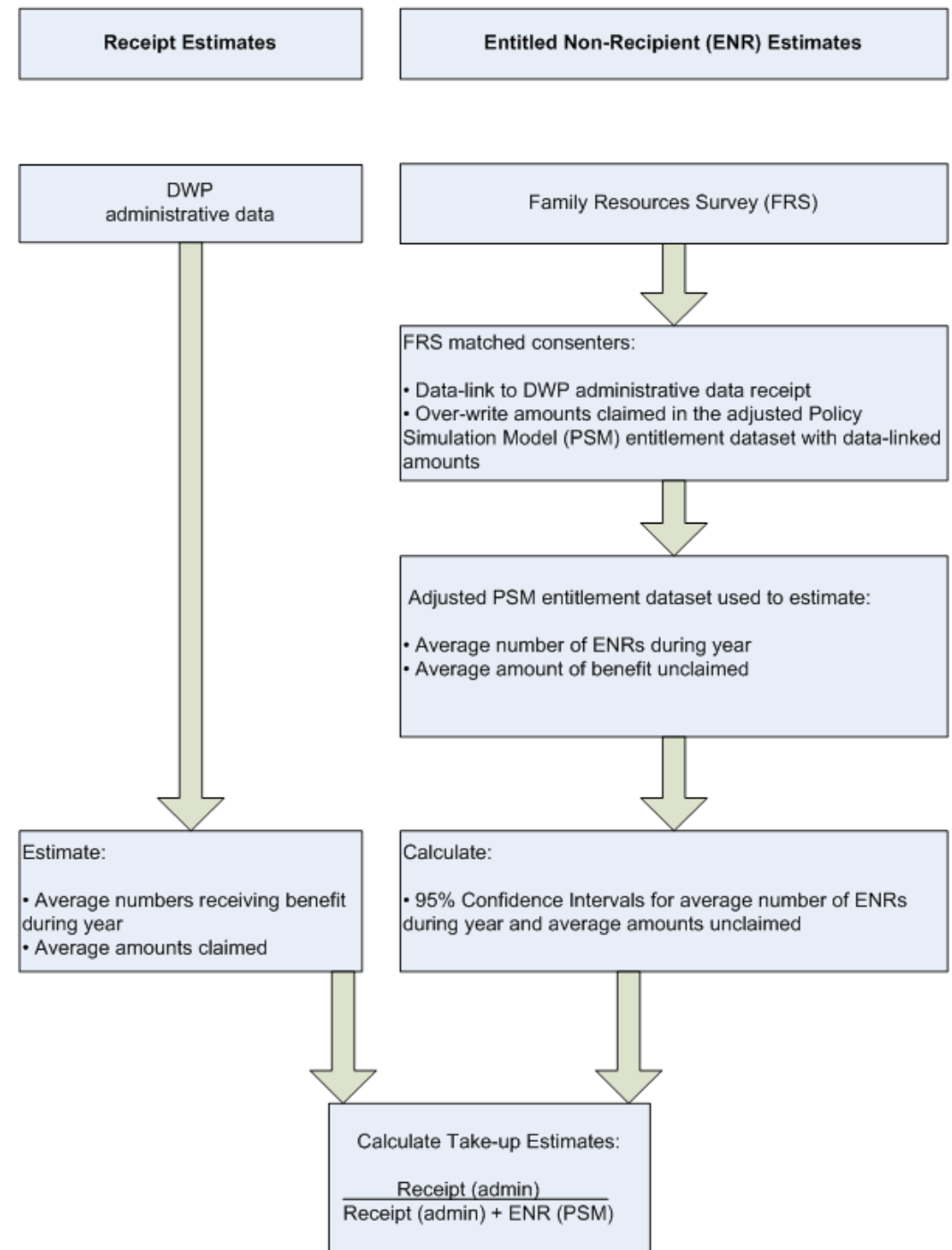
To produce the take-up estimates, information can be taken from DWP administrative data sources to look at the average number of those in receipt of the benefit along with the average amount claimed. But in the absence of an actual benefit entitlement dataset which has information on people who are entitled to a benefit but not receiving it (Entitled Non Recipients), estimates of this group and the unclaimed amounts are required. A combination of an adjusted dataset from the PSM, which includes survey data linked to administrative data, and reported receipt from the FRS are used to produce these estimates.

The estimates of Entitled Non Recipients are calculated with confidence intervals which provide a lower and upper range for the average number of ENRs and the average amount claimed. These estimates, along with the central estimates are incorporated into the take-up formulae. Caseload and expenditure take-up rates are estimated. A point estimate is calculated. The lower and upper bound estimates of those not in receipt are used to estimate lower and upper take-up bounds.

Statistical tests are performed on the point estimates to identify significant differences between the take-up rates between years.

There are limitations to this methodology but it aims to produce the best take-up estimates based on the evidence available.

See the Background information and methodology note for more information <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-201415>.



About these statistics

Official Statistics

Income-related Benefits: Estimates of Take-up is now classified as an Official Statistic rather than an experimental statistic. As an Official Statistic it is fully compliant with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Where to find out more

Further outputs and reference tables from Take-up analysis, alongside our Background information and methodology note which provides further detail on methodology and recent policy changes which may affect benefit take-up can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up--2>

The Background information and methodology note also includes information on issues relating to the take-up of benefits which were reviewed in a paper by Eurofound. This was a working paper which reviewed the literature on issues relating to take-up of benefits.

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/access-to-benefits-in-times-of-crisis>

DWP statistics on benefit receipt and expenditure can be accessed through

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-statistics-tabulation-tool>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/benefit-expenditure-tables>

Other National and Official Statistics

Details of other National and Official Statistics produced by the Department for Work and Pensions can be found on the DWP website at the following links:

A schedule of statistical releases over the next 12 months and a list of the most recent releases:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/statistics>

In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, all DWP National Statistics are also announced via the UK Statistics Authority publication hub:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements>

Using the take-up estimates for analysis

Survey data

The publication is based on modelled survey data, it is therefore subject to sampling variation and other forms of error associated with a sample survey. The FRS survey data used in the production of take-up statistics is not designed specifically to measure entitlement criteria to the same extent as an application for a specific benefit; it is a multi-purpose household survey.

Sample

Due to the restrictions in modelling and available data, certain populations are excluded for our analysis. The figures presented in this publication and accompanying reference tables only include those living in private households in Great Britain. As a result of the exclusions noted, recipient totals and expenditure estimates in this report may differ from those in other published sources.

Sampling Error

Results from surveys are estimates and not precise figures – in general terms the smaller the sample size, the larger the uncertainty.

Interpretation

Care should be taken when interpreting take-up statistics. For instance, if the upper limit of a caseload take-up range is 90 per cent, this does not mean that at least 10 per cent of the entitled population never take-up their entitlement. This is because some of the shortfall in take-up may represent a delay in claiming or processing benefit that is eventually received.