

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

Pension Credit



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



67 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



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

IS/Income-related ESA



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



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

Income-based JSA



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



59 per cent of the total amount of JSA (IB) 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 2015/16: Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Income Support/Income-related Employment and Support Allowance and Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.

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 2015, see page 11 of this document for the links).

Content of the report

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

Person 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 multiplied by the total number of people claiming it, 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 that gives a single, or 'point', estimate together with lower and upper bound estimates.

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

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

Percentage point differences stated in this publication have been calculated on rounded percentages.

This report contains data from 2012/13 through to 2015/16. Data for 2009/10 can be found in the supporting tables.

Further information

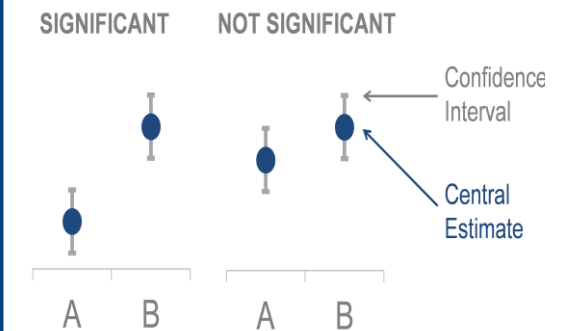
A comprehensive set of reference tables breaking down headline results presented in this publication, along with a quick guide on how to use them, is available online here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-201516>. Data from these reference tables are referenced throughout this report.

A statistical notice advising users of changes to the methodology in this publication is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-statistical-notice/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-statistical-notice>.

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

Producer: Stephanie Isaac

Email: IRB.TAKEUP@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK

Press Office: 020 3267 5144

Comments? Feedback is welcome

Published: 14 September 2017

Next edition: May/June 2018

ISBN: 978-1-78425-937-2

© Crown copyright

Take-up 2015/16: 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 £3.3 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 1.6 million families who were entitled to receive Housing Benefit did not claim the benefit.



Up to £4.8 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.

IS/ESA (IR)



Up to 0.5 million families who were entitled to receive IS/ESA (IR) did not claim the benefit.



Up to £2.7 billion of available IS/ESA (IR) went unclaimed. On average this amounted to around £5,000 per year for each family entitled to receive IS/ESA (IR) who did not claim the benefit.

JSA (IB)



Up to 0.5 million families who were entitled to receive JSA (IB) did not claim the benefit.

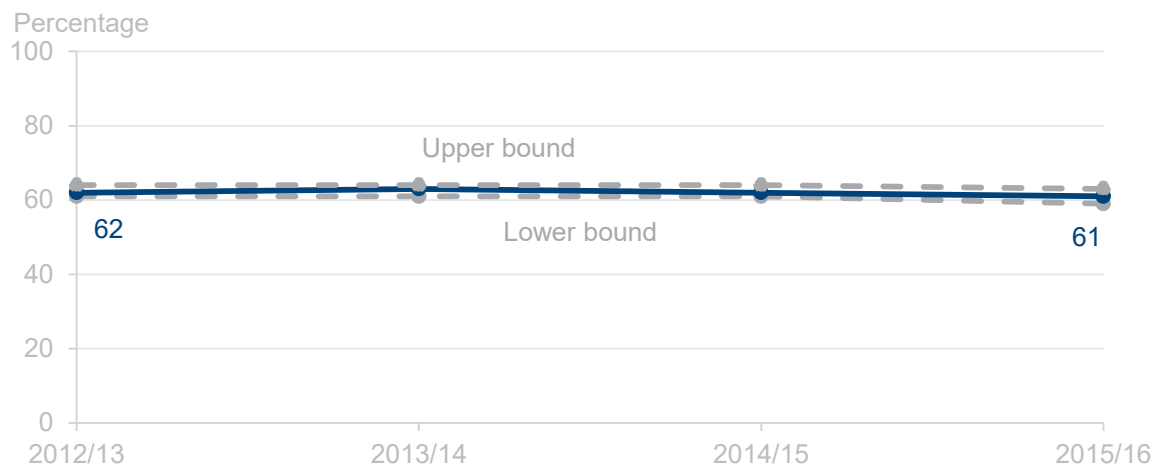


Up to £1.6 billion of available JSA (IB) went unclaimed. On average this amounted to around £3,500 per year for each family entitled to receive JSA (IB) who did not claim the benefit.

Pension Credit

Six out of ten of those entitled to PC received the benefit

Take-up range (caseload) of Pension Credit, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



In 2015/16 an estimated 61 per cent of families who were entitled to Pension Credit received it. The estimated take-up rate has been stable since 2012/13.

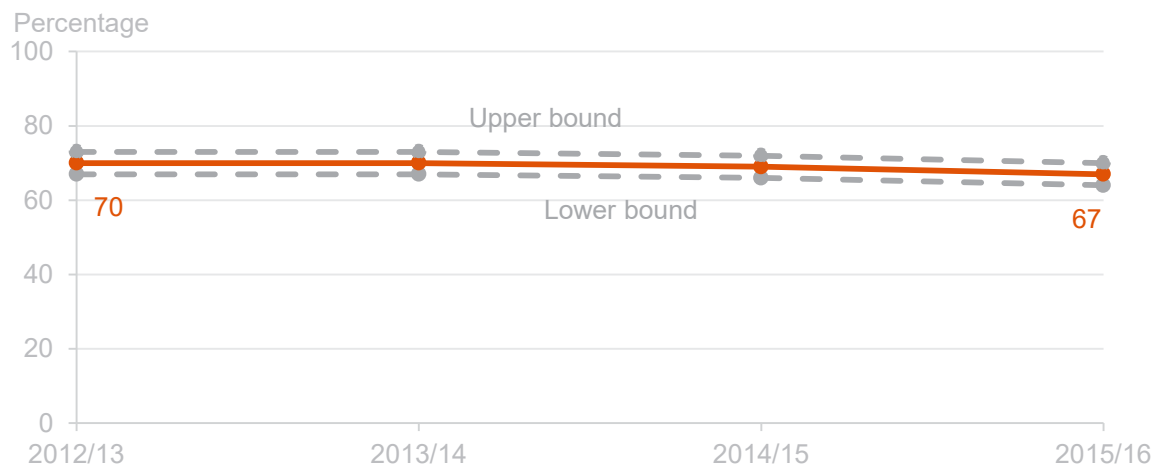
Take-up of Pension Credit by couples (51 per cent) continued to be lower than that of single men (65 per cent) and single women (64 per cent). These differences in the take-up rate of Pension Credit by couples compared to that of single males and females are statistically significant.

Take-up of Pension Credit by those aged under 75 (63 per cent) continued to be higher than those aged 75 or over (59 per cent).

See **Tables PC1, PC3 and PC9** for full data.

Sixty-seven per cent of the total amount of PC that could have been claimed was claimed

Take-up range (expenditure) of Pension Credit, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



In 2015/16 an estimated 67 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 2012/13.

Expenditure take-up of Pension Credit by couples (63 per cent) continued to be lower than that of single men (66 per cent) and single women (70 per cent).

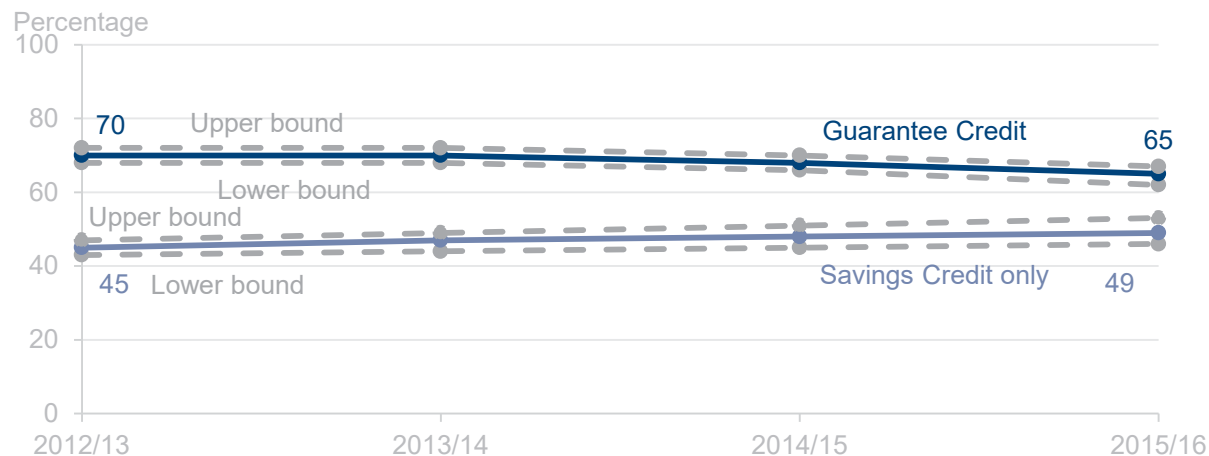
Expenditure take-up of Pension Credit by those aged under 75 (69 per cent) continued to be higher than that of those aged 75 or over (65 per cent). The expenditure take-up by those aged 75 or over has decreased from 2012/13 to 2015/16, falling from 73 per cent to 65 per cent. This difference was statistically significant.

See **Tables PC2, PC4 and PC10** for full data.

Pension Credit

Difference between take-up of Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit only is narrowing

Take-up range (caseload) of Guarantee Credit versus Savings Credit only, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



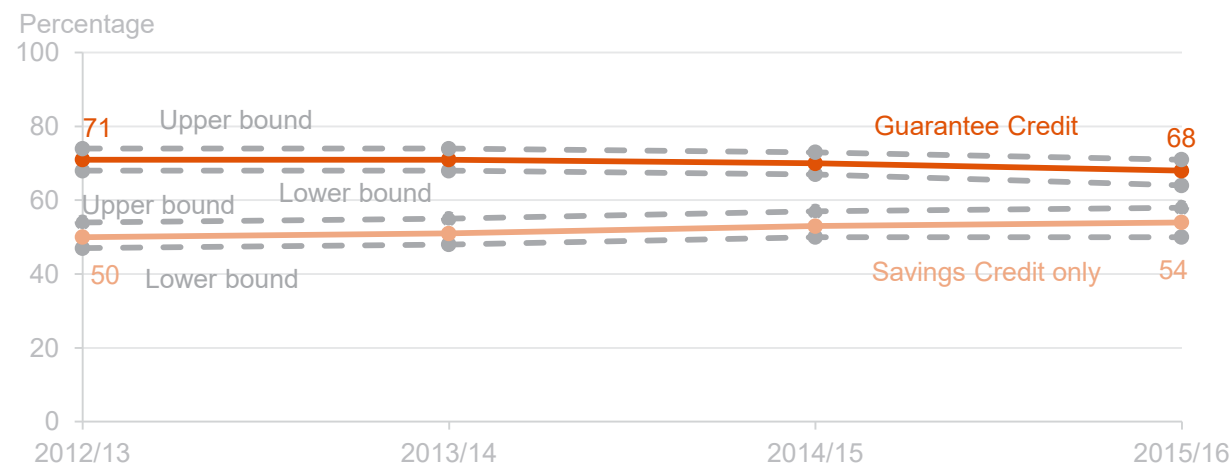
Take-up of Guarantee Credit (65 per cent) continued to be higher than take-up of Savings Credit only (49 per cent). This difference was statistically significant. This could be influenced by the difference in the average weekly amounts people were entitled to. Those entitled to and in receipt of Guarantee Credit received a substantially higher average weekly amount (£68) than those entitled to and in receipt of Savings Credit only (£9).

Take-up of Guarantee Credit has decreased from 70 per cent to 65 per cent from 2012/13 to 2015/16. Take-up of Savings Credit only has increased from 45 per cent to 49 per cent over the same period.

See **Table PC1** for full data.

Expenditure take-up of Guarantee Credit continued to be higher than that of Savings Credit only

Take-up range (expenditure) of Guarantee Credit versus Savings Credit only, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



In 2015/16, expenditure take-up of Guarantee Credit (68 per cent) continued to be higher than expenditure take-up of Savings Credit only (54 per cent). This difference was statistically significant.

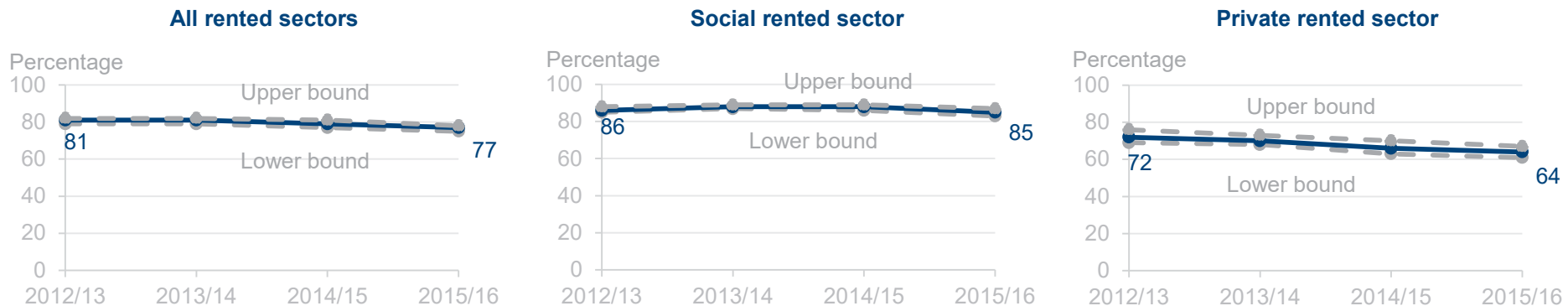
Expenditure take-up of Guarantee Credit decreased from 71 per cent to 68 per cent from 2012/13 to 2015/16 whereas Savings Credit only expenditure take-up increased from 50 per cent to 54 per cent over the same period.

See **Table PC2** for full data.

Housing Benefit

Take-up of HB was highest in the social rented sector: nine out of ten of those entitled received the benefit

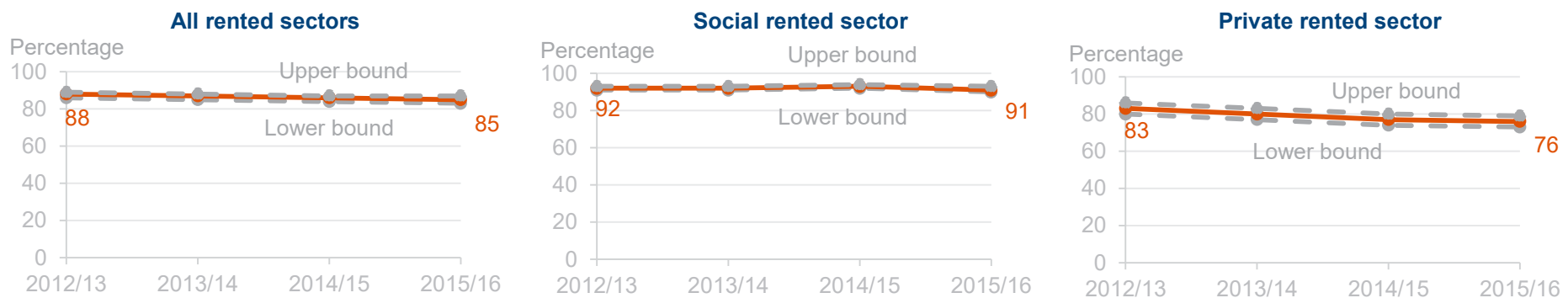
Take-up (caseload) of Housing Benefit by rented sector type, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



An estimated 77 per cent of those entitled to Housing Benefit received it in 2015/16, 4 percentage points lower than in 2012/13. This is a statistically significant decrease. 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 in the social rented sector compared to the private rented sector. The take-up rate in the private rented sector in 2015/16 (64 per cent) is lower than in 2012/13 (72 per cent); this is statistically significant. See **Table HB5** for full data.

Expenditure take-up of HB was higher in the social rented sector than in the private rented sector

Take-up (expenditure) of Housing Benefit by rented sector type, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain

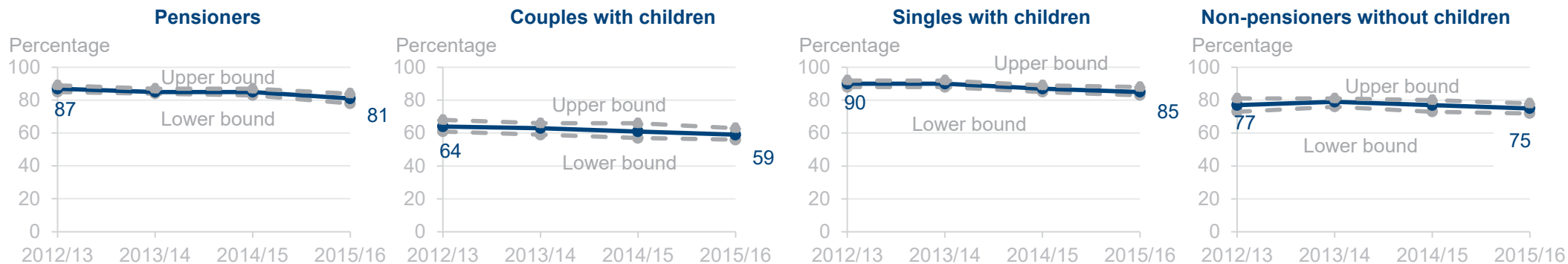


In 2015/16, an estimated 85 per cent of the total amount of Housing Benefit that could have been claimed was claimed, falling by 3 percentage points compared to 2012/13. Expenditure take-up of Housing Benefit varied by rental sector; across all years there was a statistically significant difference in expenditure take-up rates for families in the social rented sector compared to the private rented sector. The expenditure take-up rate in the private rented sector in 2015/16 (76 per cent) is lower than in 2012/13 (83 per cent), this is statistically significant. See **Table HB6** for full data.

Housing Benefit

Take-up of HB was highest amongst singles with children: nine out of ten of those entitled received the benefit

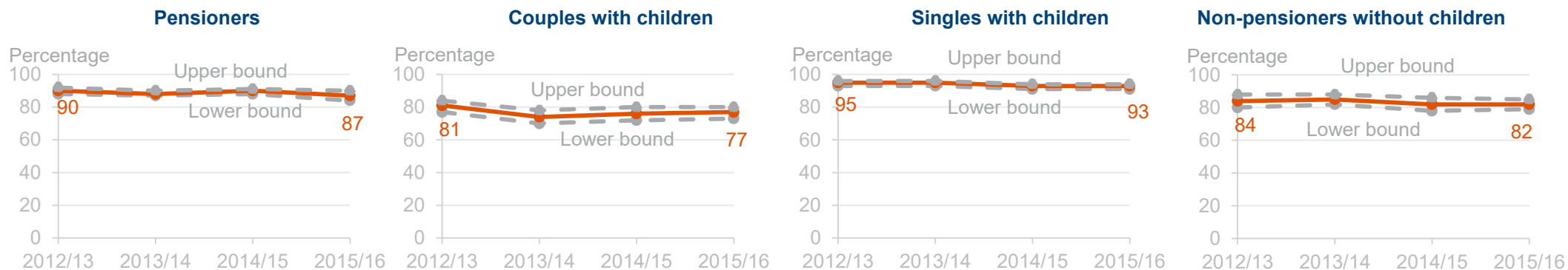
Take-up (caseload) of Housing Benefit by family type, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



Take-up of Housing Benefit also varied by family type; singles with children had a higher take-up rate (85 per cent) than couples with children (59 per cent). Non-pensioners (couples and singles) without children had a higher take-up rate (75 per cent) than couples with children but a lower take-up rate than singles with children. All of these differences are statistically significant across all years. See **Tables HB1 and HB3** for full data.

Expenditure take-up of HB was higher for singles with children than for all other family types

Take-up (expenditure) of Housing Benefit by family type, 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain

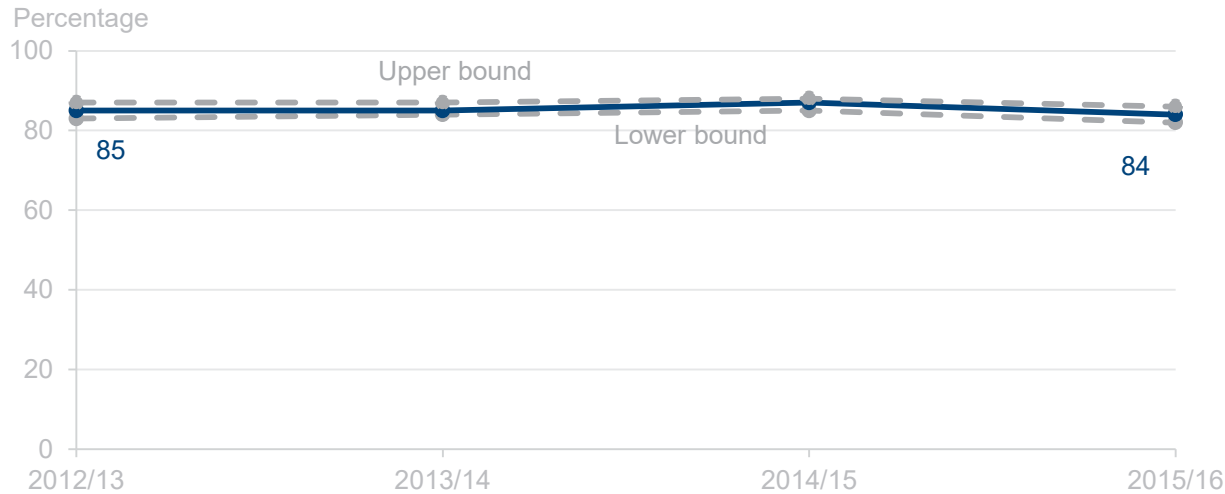


Expenditure take-up of Housing Benefit varied by family type; singles with children had a higher expenditure take-up rate (93 per cent) than both couples with children (77 per cent) and non-pensioners (singles and couples) without children (82 per cent). These differences were statistically significant across all years. See **Tables HB2 and HB4** for full data.

Income Support/Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

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

Take-up range (caseload) of IS/ESA (IR), 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain

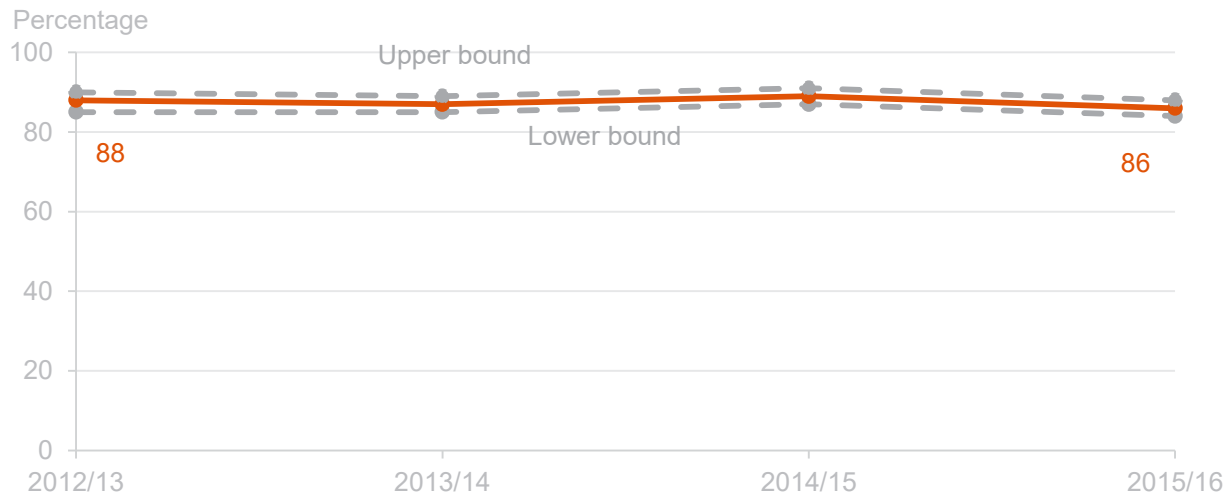


An estimated 84 per cent of families who were entitled to IS/ESA (IR) in 2015/16 received the benefit. This was 1 percentage point lower than in 2012/13 and 3 percentage points lower than in 2014/15.

See **Table ISESA1** for full data.

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

Take-up range (expenditure) of IS/ESA (IR), 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



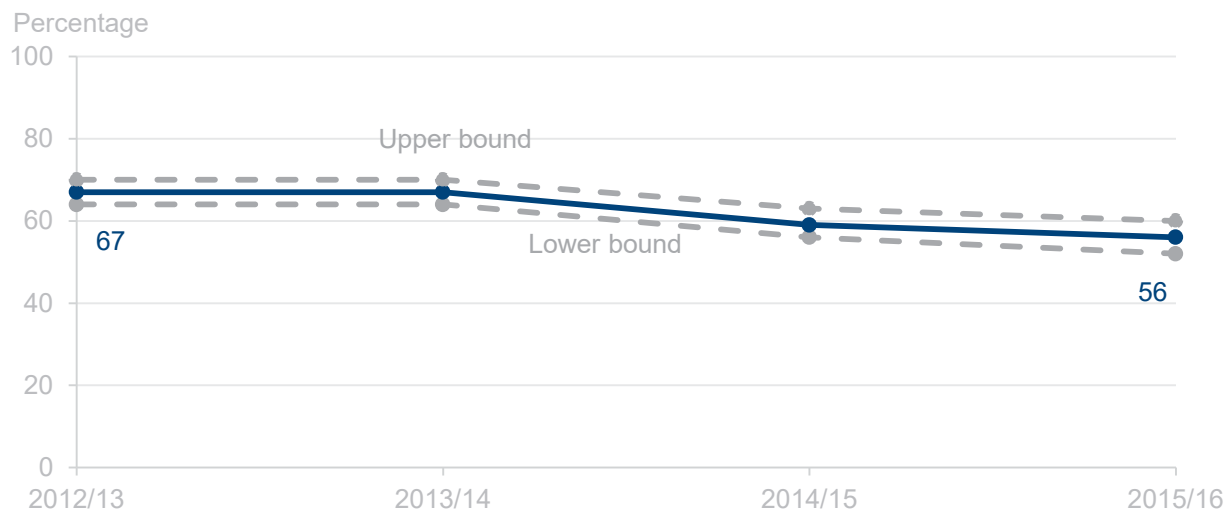
In 2015/16 an estimated 86 per cent of the total amount of IS/ESA (IR) that could have been claimed was claimed. This was 2 percentage points lower than in 2012/13 and 3 percentage points lower than in 2014/15.

See **Table ISESA2** for full data.

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

Six out of ten families entitled to JSA (IB) received the benefit

Take-up (caseload) of JSA (IB), 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



In 2015/16, an estimated 56 per cent of all families entitled to JSA (IB) received the benefit; this was a statistically significant decrease of 11 percentage points since 2012/13.

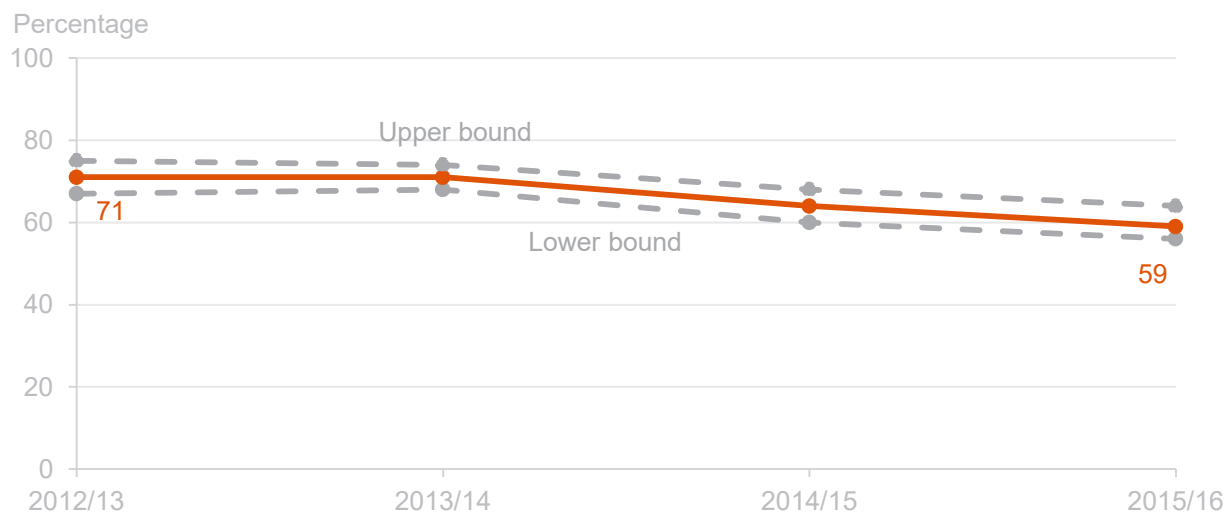
The caseload take-up rate in 2015/16 was 3 percentage points lower than in 2014/15 (59 per cent).

The rollout of Universal Credit means fewer people are eligible for income-based Jobseeker's Allowance. With high employment rates and the conditions attached to JSA receipt, those eligible to claim JSA may be choosing not to go through the process of applying if they think they will find a job quickly. Other factors may also be influencing the results.

See **Table JSA1** for full data.

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

Take-up (expenditure) of JSA (IB), 2012/13 to 2015/16, Great Britain



In 2015/16 an estimated 59 per cent of the total amount of JSA (IB) that could have been claimed was claimed. This was 12 percentage points lower than in 2012/13, a statistically significant change.

The expenditure take-up rate in 2015/16 was 5 percentage points lower than in 2014/15 (64 per cent).

See **Table JSA2** 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 a static microsimulation model known as the Policy Simulation Model (PSM). The PSM is a model of the tax and benefit system of the UK. 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. However, because administrative benefit entitlement datasets do not exist, survey-based estimates of the population and unclaimed amounts of those who are entitled but not receiving (ENRs) 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 for the ENRs 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.

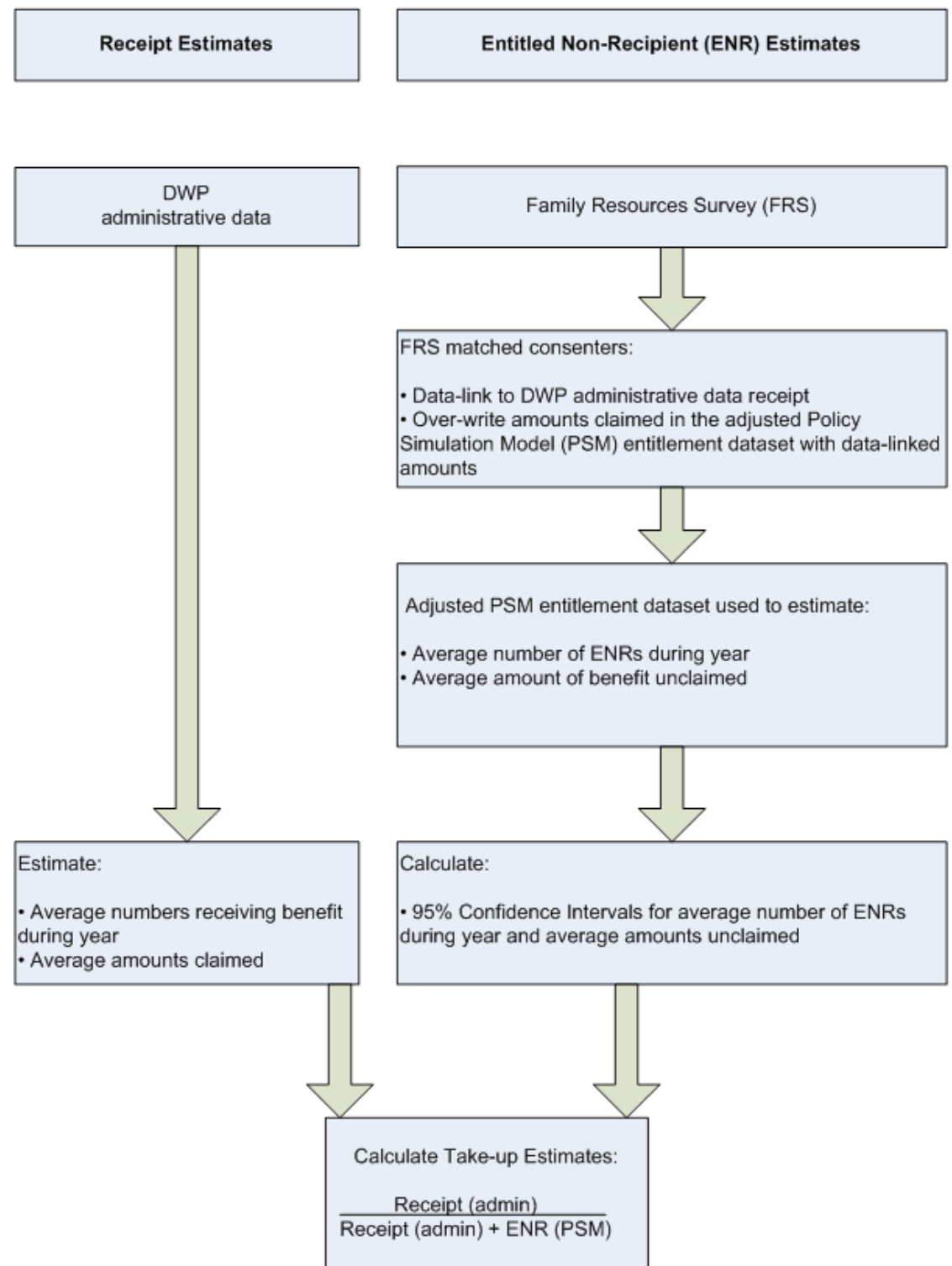
Statistical tests are performed on the point estimates to identify significant differences between the take-up rates between years.

There are limitations to this methodology but it aims to produce the best take-up estimates based on the evidence available. Specifically with regards to calculating ESA entitlement, it is not possible to perfectly model ESA eligibility because there are no data available for the PSM to use on the outcomes of individual Work Capability Assessments or doctors' certificates that people would have if they applied to claim ESA.

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. For more information on the factors which can affect take-up see the links on page 11 of this document.

See the Background information and methodology note for more information, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-201516>.



About these statistics

Official Statistics

As an Official Statistic, Income-Related Benefits: Estimates of Take-up 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/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-201516>

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. Relevant links here:

<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2015/social-policies/access-to-social-benefits-reducing-non-take-up>

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

DWP statistics on benefit receipt and expenditure can be accessed here:

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

and here:

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

Other National and Official Statistics

A schedule of DWP's statistical releases over the next 12 months and a list of the most recent releases are available here:

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

In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, DWP Statistics are also announced here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements>

Using the take-up estimates for analysis

Survey data

This 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 from 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. The confidence intervals are therefore used to represent the range in which we estimate the overall true rate of take-up, averaged over the whole year, lies.