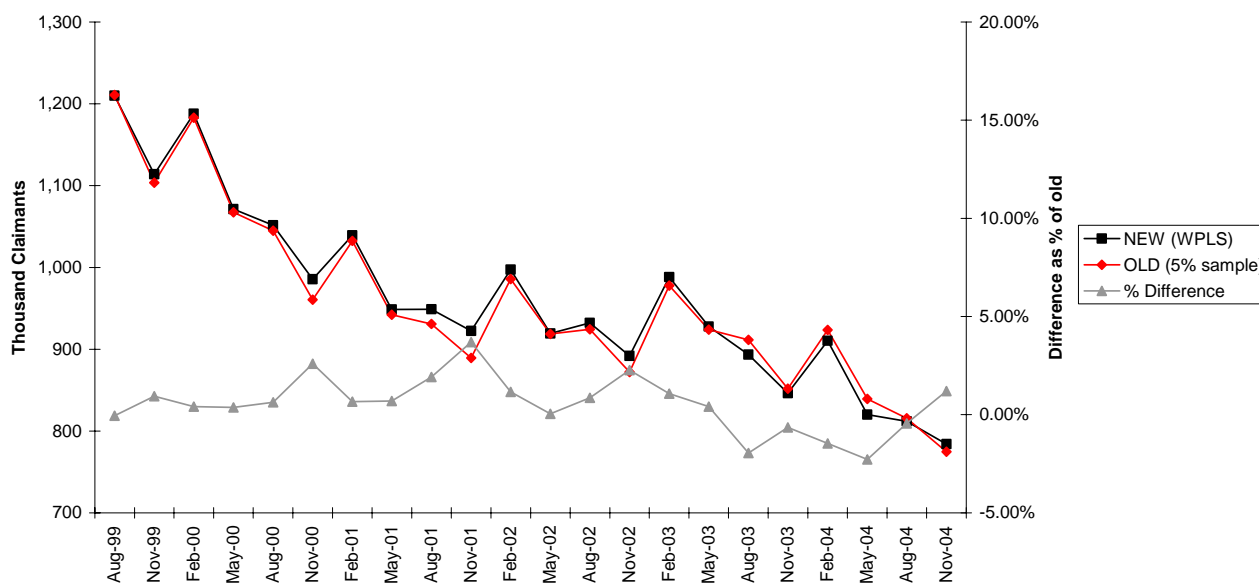


Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)

Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) data compared to currently published 5% sample data.

**Jobseeker's Allowance: Comparison of caseloads,
5% sample and WPLS data**



The graph above shows that WPLS data matches very closely with the published 5% sample data.

Although the totals are close there are some differences in the actual cases captured by each data source. These are broadly down to:

1. **Timing difference** – there is approximately 2 weeks difference between the date that the 5% and the WPLS data scans are taken. As JSA has so many short term claims this will mean a significant number of claims will only appear on the 5% data or only appear on the WPLS data.
2. **Retrospection** – The 5% sample data includes 2 weeks retrospection in the data, where as the WPLS data has 3 months retrospection. (Further information on 'retrospection' can be found in the Glossary below)
3. **Late Terminations** – There can also be delays between a claim terminating and its removal from the computer system. More of these cases are removed sooner from the WPLS data than the 5% sample data.
4. **5% QSE rated to the Claimant Count** – The 5% sample data is rated up to match the Claimant Count data for consistency. Therefore there may be around 40,000 less cases on the actual 5% dataset than the published figures.
5. **Sampling Error** – The 5% sample data is subject to sampling error of approximately +/- 8,000

As JSA has many short-term claims and is affected by seasonality in the time-series the actual numbers in each of the above categories will vary.

The data source in the WPLS used for JSA will be reviewed in early 2006, following receipt of and detailed analysis against individual-level claimant count data.

Glossary

Retrospection arises from the delays which occur in practice between some new claims becoming eligible and their entry onto the computer system. If a case has not been added to the computer system by the time the 5% sample data is extracted (the reference date), it will not be counted (although benefit will be paid). The WPLS, however, incorporates information added to the computer system after the reference date.

The addition of such 'late' information is an important source of difference between the caseloads obtained from 5% sample and WPLS data, and generally results in the WPLS including more cases than the 5% sample data.

Late terminations

Delays can exist between a claim terminating and its removal from the computer system. Such cases will be included in the caseload obtained from the 5% sample data. When information is subsequently received that the claim has ended through claimant death, these cases are removed from the 100% data with respect to a point in time. However, any other form of late termination is not accounted for in the WPLS.

Sampling error

By definition, WPLS data yields the true population value. By contrast statistics published from 5% sample data (obtained by rating up by a factor of 20) are subject to sampling error and are actually estimates of the true population value. By chance, an estimate of the population value, obtained from the 5% sample data, may be slightly lower or slightly higher than the true population value.