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## DWP WINTER FUEL PAYMENT BULLETIN: September 2014

### Introduction

This bulletin summarises key Winter Fuel Payment (WFP) caseload and household statistics. Caseload figures are provided for both residents of GB and other European Economic Area (EEA) countries or Switzerland<sup>1</sup>. Household figures are provided for GB only.

Section 1 of this bulletin looks at the WFP caseload<sup>2</sup>. Some of these people may not actually receive a payment as issues may emerge during processing that result in them not being entitled. For this reason the statistics in section 1 differ from those given in section 3, which are the actual number of payments made via the Winter Fuel Payment System.

Section 2 gives details of the number of households in which there are people on the WFP administrative system.<sup>3</sup>

Section 3 details the number of WFPs made to people living in EEA countries or Switzerland and the amount paid.

Details about the background of WFPs and the methodology used in the production of the statistics can be found in the separate [background](#) and [methodology](#) documents.

This is the first DWP Winter Fuel Payment Bulletin and it will be published annually alongside tables containing more detailed data. In previous years, just the tables were published. The tables for 2013/14 can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/winter-fuel-payment-caseload-and-household-figures-2013-to-2014>.

The Winter Fuel Payment statistics are official statistics;  
[See: <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/types-of-official-statistics>]

These statistics were released on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.

### Key Statistics:

#### [OFFICIAL STATISTICS]:

- The total WFP caseload (including residents within the EEA or Switzerland) has been slowly decreasing since winter 2010/11 and has decreased from 12.68 million in 2012/13 to 12.59 million in 2013/14.
- Since winter 2012/13 there has been an increase in the WFP caseload of those resident in the EEA or Switzerland, increasing from 121 thousand in 2012/13 to 139 thousand in 2013/14.
- The total WFP caseload in 2013/14 was 12.59 million: 12.45 million of these were GB residents and 139 thousand were resident within the EEA or Switzerland.
- The number of households identified as entitled to WFP in GB in 2013/14 was 8.98 million compared with 9.07 million for winter 2012/13.

*If you have any comments or requests regarding this publication, please contact DWP via [stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk), or join the "Welfare and Benefit Statistics" community at [www.statsusernet.org.uk](http://www.statsusernet.org.uk).*

1. See the notes section at the end of the bulletin for details of the countries included in the EEA  
2. The caseload is the number of people on the WFP administrative system  
3. For details on how household is calculated, see the [methodology document](#).

## 1. Winter Fuel Payment Caseload Figures

This section gives details of the number of people actually recorded on the WFP administrative system (caseload) from winter 1999/2000 to winter 2013/14. Some of these cases, however, may not result in a payment: for example, if the person dies or if invalid bank account or address details have been given. Conversely, late payments are sometimes made to people that are not on the system at the time. This means that the actual number of payments made could be slightly different to the caseload.

Table 1.1 : Winter Fuel Payment caseload figures to winter 2013/14

Time Series	All cases	GB residents	GB residents (female)	GB residents (male)	EEA and Switzerland residents
	Caseload (thousands)	Caseload (thousands)	Caseload (thousands)	Caseload (thousands)	Caseload (thousands)
1999/2000	10,084	10,084	6,241	3,843	-
2000/2001	11,106	11,106	6,313	4,793	-
2001/2002	11,202	11,202	6,310	4,892	-
2002/2003	11,356	11,348	6,350	4,998	8
2003/2004	11,486	11,468	6,388	5,080	18
2004/2005	11,430	11,401	6,285	5,116	29
2005/2006	11,555	11,515	6,337	5,218	40
2006/2007	11,750	11,703	6,395	5,308	48
2007/2008	12,123	12,069	6,569	5,500	54
2008/2009	12,421	12,357	6,698	5,659	64
2009/2010	12,681	12,610	6,811	5,799	71
2010/2011	12,783	12,710	6,854	5,855	73
2011/2012	12,686	12,612	6,796	5,814	74
2012/2013	12,683	12,562	6,767	5,795	121
2013/2014	12,585	12,446	6,705	5,741	139

### Notes:

1. Women's State Pension age began to rise in 2011/12.
2. Source data: DWP Information Exploitation and Security, Winter Fuel Payments.

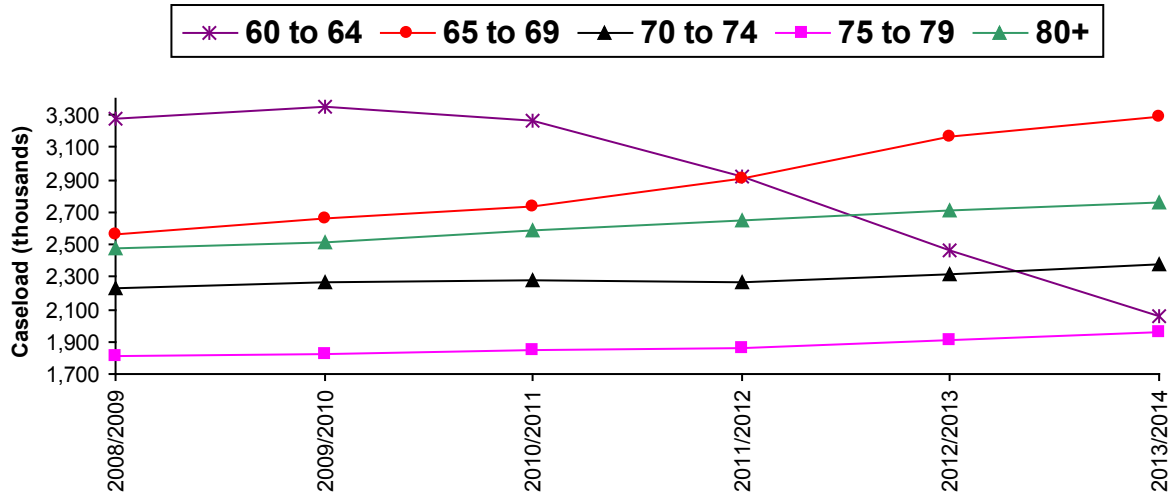
The WFP caseload in winter 2013/14 was **12.585 million** to the nearest thousand. This represents a decrease of 1 per cent since winter 2012/2013. The number who were GB residents was **12.446 million** to the nearest thousand; a decrease of 1 per cent since winter 2012/13.

The total caseload figures and those for GB increased from 1999/2000 to 2010/11; since then they have decreased. This is due to the rise in women's State Pension age. The general increase in the number of pensioners has been off-set by the gradual increase in the women's State Pension age and, therefore, the age of entitlement for WFPs.

The State Pension age for men and women is gradually increasing. Under current legislation, State Pension age for women will equalise with State Pension age for men at 65 in 2018. Both men's and women's State Pension ages will increase from 65 to 66 between December 2018 and October 2020. The Pensions Bill 2013/14 contains provision for a State Pension age of 67 to be reached by 2028 (please see the Welfare Reform section of the notes for further information). The effect of this can be seen in Figure 1.2 which shows that the caseload for the 60 to 64 age group has been decreasing since winter 2010/11.

1. See the notes section at the end of the bulletin for details of the countries included in the EEA
2. The caseload is the number of people on the WFP administrative system
3. For details on how household is calculated, see the [methodology document](#).

**Figure 1.2: Winter Fuel Payment caseload from winter 2007/2008 to winter 2013/2014 split by age group - GB residents only**



**Notes:**

1. Women's State Pension age began to rise in 2011/12.
2. Source data: DWP Information Exploitation and Security, Winter Fuel Payments

WFPs were initially available only to people who were normally resident in the UK. They were extended in July 2002, under certain circumstances, to people ordinarily resident outside the UK but within the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. They were extended again in June 2003 to certain third country nationals (nationals of non-EU countries).

As of winter 2012/13, people who live in the EEA or Switzerland and who have a genuine and sufficient link<sup>4</sup> to the UK are potentially eligible to receive a WFP, regardless of whether they previously had entitlement to it whilst living in the UK. This follows a 2011 European Court of Justice ruling in the “Stewart” Case (see below).

The number of people who are resident in the EEA or Switzerland has been gradually increasing and in 2012/13 there was a sharp rise from 74 thousand to **121 thousand** to the nearest thousand. This represents an increase of 63 per cent since winter 2011/12. From 2012/13 to 2013/14, there was a further increase of 14 per cent to **139 thousand**. These increases follow the ruling in the “Stewart” Case that means, as of winter 2012/13, people who live in another EEA country or Switzerland and have a genuine and sufficient link to the UK are potentially eligible to receive a WFP, regardless of whether they previously had entitlement to it whilst living in the UK.

Prior to 2012/13 only people who had entitlement to WFP before moving to another EEA country or Switzerland were eligible.

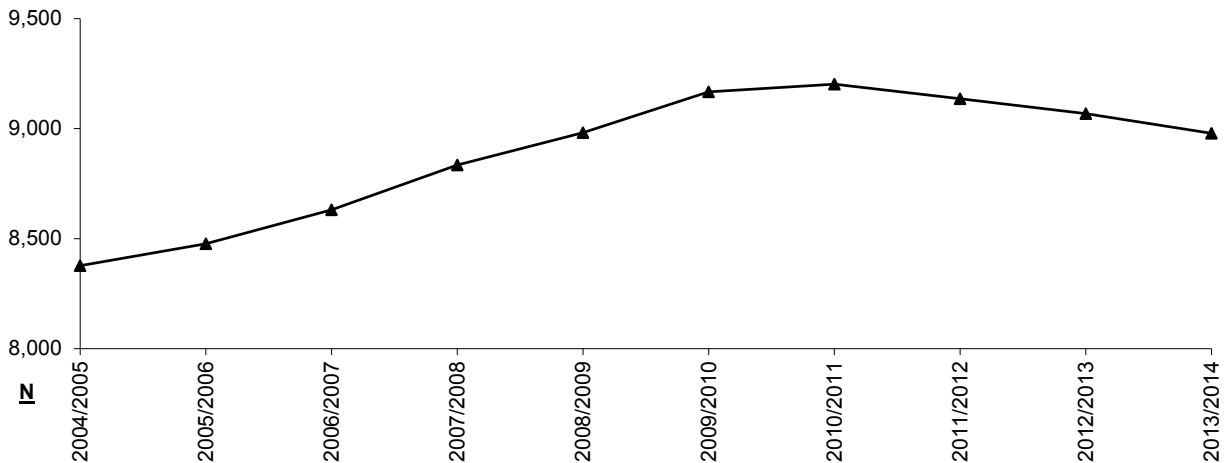
Subject to Parliamentary approval, from winter 2015/16 a change to the WFP entitlement conditions will mean that the WFP is no longer payable to people living in Cyprus, France, Gibraltar, Greece, Malta, Portugal or Spain. This will result in a marked reduction in the numbers of payments made and the expenditure from winter 2015/16.

3. A genuine and sufficient link may be, for example, that the person has lived or worked in the UK for the majority of their working life.

## 2. Winter Fuel Payment Household Figures

This section gives details of the number of households in which there are people on the WFP administrative system. These figures will be lower than the caseload figures as there could be more than one member of the same household entitled to a payment.

Figure 2.1: Number of households in receipt of Winter Fuel Payment from winter 2004/2005 to winter 2013/2014 - GB residents only



### Notes:

1. Household data are only available from 2004/05.
2. Women's State Pension age began to rise in 2011/20.
3. Source data: DWP Information Exploitation and Security, Winter Fuel Payments

The number of households in GB in receipt of a WFP increased from 2004/05 to 2010/11; since then they have decreased. As with the caseload figures, this decrease is due to the rise in women's State Pension age. The general increase in the number of pensioners has been off-set by the gradual increase in the women's State Pension age and, therefore, the age of entitlement for WFPs.

The number of households in GB in receipt of WFP in winter 2013/14 was **8.979 million** to the nearest thousand. This represents a decrease of 1 per cent since winter 2012/13.

### 3. Winter Fuel Payments paid to eligible people living in EEA and Switzerland

Table 3.1 shows the actual number of payments made via the Winter Fuel Payment System. These figures differ from the WFP data given in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 shows the number of payments that are sent to be processed following data matching; some of these cases may not actually receive a payment as issues may emerge during processing that result in clients not being entitled. For this reason the two sets of statistics, although close, do not match.

More detailed tables showing the numbers of WFPs made and expenditure, broken down by country, are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/winter-fuel-payments-by-eea-country>.

Time Series	Total Number of Payments made (thousands)	Expenditure on Payments made (millions)
2002/2003	8	£1.009
2003/2004	17	£2.964
2004/2005	27	£5.548
2005/2006	40	£6.415
2006/2007	48	£7.843
2007/2008	56	£8.982
2008/2009	65	£13.518
2009/2010	71	£15.207
2010/2011	73	£15.593
2011/2012	75	£12.760
2012/2013	120	£21.413
2013/2014	135	£23.716

#### Notes

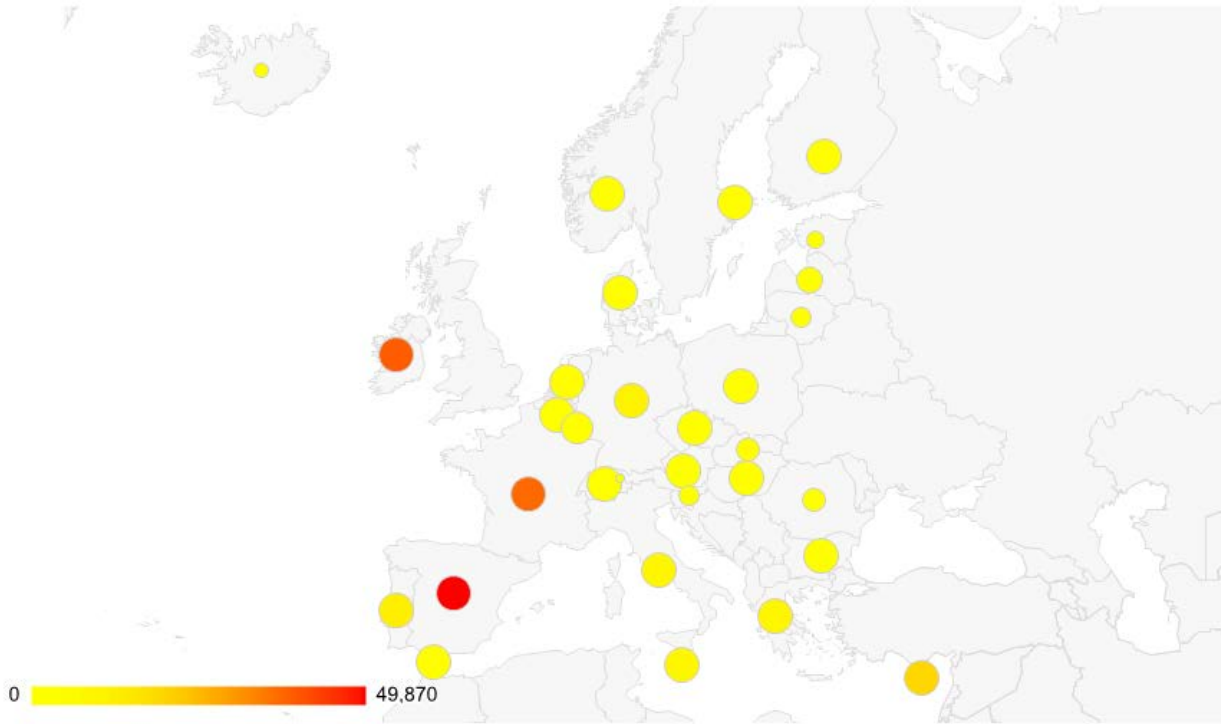
1. Women's State Pension age began to rise in 2011/12.
2. Source data: Winter Fuel Payment System.
3. 2011 European Court of Justice ruling in the "Stewart" case means that, as of winter 2012/13, people who live in the EEA or Switzerland who have a genuine and sufficient link to the UK are potentially eligible to receive a WFP, regardless of whether they previously had entitlement to it whilst living in the UK. Prior to 2012/13 only people who had entitlement to WFP before moving to another EEA country or Switzerland were eligible.
4. The expenditure figure for 2013/14 have been revised to correct a small error, values for individual countries remain unchanged in the underlying tables.

The number of WFPs made to people living in the EEA and Switzerland and the associated expenditure have been increasing since winter 2002/03. There was a 60 per cent increase in the number of payments made from winter 2011/12 to winter 2012/13 and a further increase of 13 per cent to winter 2013/14. These increases follow a 2011 European Court of Justice ruling in the "Stewart" case that means that, as of winter 2012/13, people who live in the EEA or Switzerland who have a genuine and sufficient link to the UK are potentially eligible to receive a WFP, regardless of whether they previously had entitlement to it whilst living in the UK.

Prior to 2012/13 only people who had entitlement to WFP before moving to another EEA country or Switzerland were eligible.

Subject to Parliamentary approval, from winter 2015/16 a change to the entitlement conditions will mean that the WFP is no longer payable to people living in Cyprus, France, Gibraltar, Greece, Malta, Portugal or Spain. This will result in a marked reduction in the numbers of payments made and the expenditure from winter 2015/16.

**Figure 3.1: Number of Winter Fuel Payments made to eligible people living in another EEA country and Switzerland in winter 2013/ 14**



In winter 2013/14, 82 per cent of the WFPs made to EEA countries and Switzerland were made to people living in the Republic of Ireland (24 per cent), France (22 per cent) or Spain (37 per cent).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/winter-fuel-payments-caseload-and-household-figures>

## NOTES

### 1. The Winter Fuel Payment Bulletin

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) publishes a Winter Fuel Payment Bulletin each year. It is used for the release of WFP caseload and household Statistics.

Alongside the Bulletin, there are a number of excel tables which enable the user to delve in to the detail. Tables for 2013/14 are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/winter-fuel-payment-caseload-and-household-figures-2013-to-2014>.

Numbers of WFPs made and expenditure, broken down by country, are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/winter-fuel-payments-by-eea-country>.

### 2. EU, EEA and Switzerland

Prior to May 2004, the European Union (EU) comprised: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Ireland, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

In May 2004, the following 10 countries joined the EU – Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

In January 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU.

The EEA is all the 27 EU countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, who are not members of the EU.

Switzerland is not a member of the EEA, but it signed an agreement with EU countries in June 2002 to apply EU rules on social security. In May 2006, this agreement was extended to include the 10 countries that joined the EU in May 2004. The agreement does not extend to Bulgaria, Romania or the EEA countries of Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway.

### 3. National Statistics Code of Practice

DWP complies with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and supporting Principles. Detailed policy statements and statement of compliance with the pre-release access to official statistics order 2008 are given below: [DWP policy statements](#)

Detailed policy and methodology relating to the Winter Fuel Payment Bulletin can be found at:

- [Methodology](#)
- [Uses and Users](#)
- [Background Information](#)

Further documentation will be published on the quality of the data before the next publication in September 2015.

These statistics are currently classified as Official Statistics and are being assessed by the United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) against National Statistics protocols, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

### 4. Welfare Reform

The qualifying age for WFPs at its introduction in 1997 was 60 for women and 65 for men, reflecting the differing State Pension ages at that time. The qualifying age for WFP was then equalised at 60 from winter 2000/01, but from 2010 it began to increase in line with the State Pension age for women. These changes have resulted in a decrease in the number of WFP recipients. Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reviewing-the-state-pension-age>

### 5. Known Issues, Changes and Revisions to the Bulletin

This is the first release of a Winter Fuel Payments Bulletin.

## 6. Notification of future changes to the Bulletin

The next Bulletin will be in September 2015.

## 7. Northern Ireland Statistics

The statistics in this bulletin cover Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) and the EEA and Switzerland. Comparable benefit statistics for Northern Ireland can be found within the Social Fund Annual Report:

<http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/sf-annual-report-2012-13.pdf>

The Annual Report contains information on the number of recipients of WFP, the number of households that receive a WFP and the total amount spent on WFP.

## 8. Expenditure Statistics

This bulletin does not cover details of benefit expenditure for GB residents. Historic and forecast benefit expenditure and caseload data, that include WFP, are published at:

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

The latest information consistent with Budget 2014 is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2014>

## 9. Other National and Official Statistics issued by the Department for Work and Pensions

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

- A list of DWP statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/statistics> ;
- A schedule of statistical releases over the next 12 months: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/statistics>
- A list of the most recent releases: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&publication\\_filter\\_option=statistics&topics\[\]=all&departments\[\]=department-for-work-pensions&world\\_locations\[\]=all](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&publication_filter_option=statistics&topics[]=all&departments[]=department-for-work-pensions&world_locations[]=all).
- In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, all DWP National Statistics are also announced via the UK Statistics Authority publication hub at: [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/statistics-producers/publications/index.html?newquery=\\*&source-agency=Work+and+Pensions&pagetype=release-landing-page](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/statistics-producers/publications/index.html?newquery=*&source-agency=Work+and+Pensions&pagetype=release-landing-page).
- Ad hoc statistical analyses that have not been included in our standard publications at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ad-hoc-statistical-publications-list>
- Statistical Freedom of Information <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-statistical-foi-releases>

If you use any of our statistics publications, DWP would be interested in hearing what you use them for and how well they meet your requirements. Please email DWP at [stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk).

Users can also join the "Welfare and Benefit Statistics" community at: <http://www.statsusernet.org.uk>.