

Freedom of Information request 2012-4985

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Information request

What is the proportion of people claiming benefits in Britain who are not British and how does this break down by nationality? How many British people are claiming benefits in other EU countries?

DWP response

In response to your first question;

The information that you have requested is not readily available from datasets available for analysis. We estimate that the cost of complying with your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600. The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600.

This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the data. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your request further.

Data on nationality is not routinely published as the source systems used to capture and process benefit claims, typically do not include a nationality marker. For contributory benefits, nationality is not a qualifying factor, as eligibility is determined by the National Insurance contributions that the claimant has made.

For other income related benefits where residency conditions apply and the claimant must be lawfully resident in the UK, nationality is a factor. Once residency has been determined, nationality is not required for further processing and is therefore not routinely held on DWP computer systems.

However, the Department does hold some information on National Identity which is recorded on the Family Resource Survey (FRS) and is given in the tables below (please see Definitions section for further information);

Benefit Receipt: Benefit Units by national identity (Percentage of benefit units)

Benefit Receipt	Not in Receipt of Benefits	In Receipt of Benefits	All Benefit Units
British	85	92	89
Non-British	12	4	7
Mixed	3	4	4
<i>Sample size (=100%)</i>	<i>8,923</i>	<i>18,511</i>	<i>27,434</i>

Benefit or Tax Credit Receipt: Benefit Units by national identity (Percentage of benefit units)

Benefit or Tax Credit Receipt	Not in Receipt of Benefits/Tax Credits	In Receipt of Benefits/Tax Credits	All Benefit Units
British	85	92	89
Non-British	12	4	7
Mixed	3	4	4
<i>Sample size (=100%)</i>	<i>8,728</i>	<i>18,706</i>	<i>27,434</i>

Source: Family Resources Survey 2010/11 Great Britain

Notes

1. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest 1%.
2. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100,000.
3. '-' negligible (less than 0.5% or 50,000)
4. The estimates are based on sample counts that have been adjusted for non-response using multi-purpose grossing factors that control for tenure type, Council Tax Band and a number of demographic variables.
5. Estimates are subject to sampling error and remaining non-sampling bias.
6. The National identity question (NATID) allows multiple responses and has the following categories: English; Welsh; Scottish; Irish; British; Other;
7. Relative to administrative records, the FRS is known to under-report benefit receipt. Please see the FRS publication Methodology chapter found at http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/2010_11/chapter9.pdf for more details. However, the FRS is considered to be the best source for looking at benefit and tax credit receipt by characteristics not captured on administrative sources and for looking at total benefit receipt on a benefit unit or household basis. It is often inappropriate to look at benefit receipt on an individual basis because means-tested benefits are paid on behalf of the benefit unit.

Definitions

Benefit Unit

A single adult or a married or cohabiting couple and any dependent children; from January 2006 same-sex partners (civil partners and cohabitees) are included in the same benefit unit.

Benefits

The government pays money to individuals in order to support them financially under various circumstances. Most of these benefits are administered by the Department for Work and Pensions. The exceptions are Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, which are administered by Local Authorities. Tax Credits are not treated as benefits. A benefit unit is treated as in receipt of benefits if one or both adults are in receipt. For further information on benefits, please see the FRS publication Glossary

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/2010_11/glossary.pdf.

Tax Credits

Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit replaced Working Families Tax Credit, Disabled Persons Tax Credit, Children's Tax Credit and the child dependency element for all new claims to the following benefits: Income Support; Jobseekers Allowance (Income-Based); Bereavement Benefit; Incapacity Benefit; Retirement Pension; Severe Disablement Allowance; A benefit unit is treated as in receipt of Tax Credits if one or both adults are in receipt.

British

A single person benefit unit reporting a national identity of English, Welsh, Scottish or British. For a couple benefit unit, where both reported their national identity as English, Welsh, Scottish or British.

Non-British

A single person benefit unit reporting a national identity of Irish or Other. For a couple benefit unit, where both reported their national identity as Irish or Other.

Mixed

A single person benefit unit reporting being both British and Non-British, e.g. Irish and Scottish. For a couple benefit unit, where one or both reported being both British and Non-British or one reported being British and the other reported being Non-British.

You may also be interested to know that the Department published information on the **Percentage of welfare budget given to Non-British nationals** on the 18th September 2012 in response to a Freedom of Information request which can be found via the link below.

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/PQ_FOI/index.php?page=foi

In addition, the Department has published ad hoc statistics on the nationality (at time of registration for a National Insurance number) of DWP working age benefit claimants at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=adhoc_analysis

This report's statistics "provide an estimate of the number of people currently claiming benefit who, when they first registered for a National Insurance Numbers (NINo) (that is, first entered the labour market), were non-UK nationals". The number of non-UK national working age benefit claimants broken down by Client Group at February 2011 can be found at Table 2 (page 8 of the document). Also the top 20 non-UK nationalities possessed by those who registered for a NINo are listed (page 10 of the document).

The report contains a Technical Annex detailing an investigation into a sample of 9,000 claimants (taken from working age DWP claimants as at Feb-11 who were **Non-European Economic Areas (EEA) nationals** at point of NINo registration) who were matched against the UK Border Agency Case Information Database (CID) to determine immigration status

More information was released under the Freedom of Information Act on the 23rd of October 2012 which gives a table showing the number of non-UK nationals at National Insurance Number (NINo) registration who claim DWP working age benefits by Client Group, World Area, Region and Local Authority at February 2011, and can be found on the Department's website via the link below (Reference: 2012-3715):

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/PQ_FOI/index.php?page=foi

Also, the Department regularly publishes a range of National Statistics on National Insurance Number Allocations to Adult Overseas Nationals on the Department's website at:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/niall/index.php?page=nino_allocation.

This publication covers registrations by nationality and various other characteristics. The summary tables include a breakdown which shows NINo registrations to adult overseas nationals entering the UK and claiming an out-of-work benefit within 6 months of registration, by year of registration from 2002/03 up to 2010/11.

Please note that the data is a measure of how many NINo have been registered to adult overseas nationals at the address they were staying at when they made the NINo application; they are not population or residence measures of the number of foreign nationals living in each area.

Lastly, you may also be interested to know that the Department publishes a range of National Statistics on its website at:

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=tabtool> and on NOMIS, the Office for National Statistics official website of labour market statistics at: www.nomisweb.co.uk. Both websites allow you to construct tables to your own requirements. These statistics are published for a range of claimant characteristics including gender, age, and in some instances ethnicity.

In response to your question “**How many British people are claiming benefits in other EU countries?**” we can only provide information on how many British Citizens are claiming UK State benefits whilst living abroad.

Section 21 of the Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you.

The Department publishes a wide range of statistics via the Tabulation Tool at <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=tabtool>. Statistics on British Citizens claiming benefits whilst living in other European Union (EU) countries can be found for most benefits under the geographical breakdown of “Claimants living abroad/ Unknown”, through the above link, which allows you to design your own tables.

However, State Pension can be claimed whilst living in many different countries. Statistics on the number of State Pension claimants by country of residence are published on the Departments Tabulation Tool via the above link.

To produce a table of the number of State Pension claimants by country of residence go to <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=tabtool>.

Scroll down and select **Click here**

For Benefit Caseload National Statistics in the **Benefit Caseloads** section, and then select **State Pension** from the drop down menu and make the following table selections;

1. In the **Analysis** section, select **Caseload (Thousands)**,
2. Next, in the **Row** option, select **Country code for abroad cases**,
3. In the **Column** option, select any of the available options, whichever is most compatible with your request,
4. Next, in the **Subset** option, select **NONE**,
5. Finally, in the **Date** option, select the latest available data which **February 2012**.

Please note that those countries/figures denoted by “*” are "Non-Frozen rate" countries. People living in these countries get their State Pension uprated in the same way as people living in the United Kingdom. Also, the category "Tours" relates to individuals 'on tour' i.e. those on a cruise or holiday that is longer than usual.