

# Freedom of Information request 2013-2365

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## Information request

I have been tasked with finding the following information which I appreciate is extremely ancient. Could you let me know when you are able to supply such data?

Unemployment + sickness + disability benefit as a percentage of working population 1900-2010 one number per decade

We would like individual numbers plus the total so 48 data points

## DWP response

In response to your question the information we have readily available is given below. This represents all the information we have been able to locate and retrieve within the appropriate cost limit.

The Department publishes National Statistics on Working Age claimants as a percentage of the population through its Tabulation Tool, which allows you to design your own tables.

For example, to produce a table on Working Age claimants as a percentage of the population in Great Britain in each quarter from August 1999 to February 2010, go to the <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/series/dwp-statistics-tabulation-tool> website and follow the instructions below.

1. From the **Benefit Caseloads** section, select **Benefit Caseload National Statistics (WPLS) data**.
2. From the **Benefit/Scheme** option, select **Client Group Analysis of the Working Age – % of population**.
3. From the **Analysis** option, select **Percentage of population**.
4. From the **Row** option, select **Time Series**.
5. From the **Column** option, select **Statistical Group**.
6. From the **Subset** option, select **NONE**.
7. Now select **Get Table**.

To produce a table, from 5% sample data, from May 1995 to May 1999 follow the instructions above but select **5% sample data** at step 1.

Throughout the next decade, and in line with the extension of the female State Pension age, the working-age and pension-age population definitions will change. Although population estimates will be available via the Office for National Statistics (ONS), robust estimates of the gradually shifting population below and above State Pension age will not be available. As a result, there will be several limitations on how we can produce and use percentage of population tables. **Therefore information after February 2010 is not available on the Tabulation Tool.**

More information can be found in the attached document [espa.pdf](#)

The Department also publishes National Statistics on the number of Working Age claimants through its Tabulation Tool. For example, to produce a table from August 1999 to November 2012, which is the latest data available, follow the instructions above but select **Client Group Analysis of the Working Age** at step 2.

Again to produce a table, from 5% sample data, from May 1995 to May 1999 follow the instructions above but select **5% sample data** at step 1 and **Client Group Analysis of the Working Age** at step 2.

Population estimates are available from the ONS and the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) and can be found at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Population>

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/population/index.html>

You may also find the following table useful which shows Supplementary Benefit/Income Support claimants by Client Group for the years 1969 to February 1995. Income Support replaced Supplementary Benefit in April 1988.

**Supplementary Benefit/Income Support claimants by Client Group: 1969 - 1995**

| Date | Total            | Client Group |          |              |            |        |
|------|------------------|--------------|----------|--------------|------------|--------|
|      |                  | Pensioners   | Disabled | Lone Parents | Unemployed | Others |
| 1969 | <b>2,687,700</b> | 1,874,800    | 325,600  | 177,200      | 228,300    | 81,800 |
| 1970 | <b>2,737,800</b> | 1,901,600    | 322,700  | 191,400      | 240,200    | 81,900 |
| 1971 | <b>2,908,900</b> | 1,918,900    | 304,800  | 212,800      | 387,100    | 85,300 |
| 1972 | <b>2,928,900</b> | 1,909,100    | 298,400  | 226,800      | 410,300    | 84,300 |
| 1973 | <b>2,675,500</b> | 1,844,000    | 279,200  | 228,400      | 248,600    | 75,200 |
| 1974 | <b>2,679,800</b> | 1,807,400    | 260,200  | 245,100      | 301,600    | 65,500 |
| 1975 | <b>2,792,600</b> | 1,679,400    | 241,900  | 275,500      | 541,200    | 54,700 |

|       |                  |           |         |           |           |         |
|-------|------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 1976  | <b>2,313,300</b> | 1,686,900 | 242,600 | 303,000   | ..        | 53,100  |
| 1977  | <b>2,991,500</b> | 1,738,100 | 229,200 | 309,100   | 671,400   | 43,700  |
| 1978  | <b>2,932,400</b> | 1,737,700 | 223,300 | 321,900   | 597,600   | 51,900  |
| 1979  | <b>2,854,700</b> | 1,723,000 | 207,500 | 306,200   | 566,300   | 51,600  |
| 1980  | <b>3,117,800</b> | 1,694,300 | 204,800 | 316,400   | 853,700   | 48,600  |
| 1981  | <b>3,722,600</b> | 1,737,700 | 221,400 | 368,700   | 1,317,900 | 76,800  |
| 1982  | <b>4,266,500</b> | 1,780,600 | 239,500 | 415,200   | 1,721,800 | 109,400 |
| 1983  | <b>4,349,200</b> | 1,650,900 | 241,000 | 448,500   | 1,826,400 | 182,500 |
| 1984  | <b>4,609,300</b> | 1,683,100 | 273,000 | 492,500   | 1,952,900 | 207,900 |
| 1985  | ..               | ..        | ..      | ..        | ..        | ..      |
| 1986  | <b>4,937,700</b> | 1,716,700 | 300,700 | 575,400   | 2,120,800 | 224,200 |
| 1987  | <b>4,895,500</b> | 1,727,000 | 351,800 | 629,200   | 1,956,800 | 230,800 |
| 1988  | <b>4,351,500</b> | 1,719,300 | 247,200 | 694,200   | 1,510,600 | 180,200 |
| 1989  | <b>4,160,800</b> | 1,606,500 | 290,100 | 755,900   | 1,215,600 | 292,600 |
| 1990  | <b>4,179,900</b> | 1,674,700 | 330,100 | 793,100   | 1,063,100 | 319,000 |
| 1991  | <b>4,486,700</b> | 1,574,900 | 374,700 | 871,300   | 1,334,600 | 331,200 |
| 1992  | <b>5,087,700</b> | 1,643,100 | 424,500 | 956,700   | 1,662,100 | 401,300 |
| 1993  | <b>5,642,500</b> | 1,736,200 | 527,300 | 1,012,800 | 1,919,700 | 446,500 |
| Feb94 | <b>5,791,200</b> | 1,745,400 | 589,100 | 1,034,600 | 1,954,800 | 467,300 |
| May94 | <b>5,674,600</b> | 1,764,600 | 617,900 | 1,038,800 | 1,828,000 | 425,300 |
| Aug94 | <b>5,752,900</b> | 1,776,300 | 647,100 | 1,047,800 | 1,877,800 | 403,900 |
| Nov94 | <b>5,699,800</b> | 1,789,300 | 686,900 | 1,041,500 | 1,759,200 | 422,800 |
| Feb95 | <b>5,751,100</b> | 1,783,900 | 722,400 | 1,049,000 | 1,774,300 | 421,500 |

#### Sources:

DWP 1% Annual Statistical Enquiries, 1969 to 1993.

DWP 5% Quarterly Statistical Enquiries, February 1994 to February 1995

#### Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding. '..' denotes not available.
2. Numbers of unemployed Supplementary Benefit claimants are not available for 1976 due to Industrial Action, therefore the total number of claimants also excludes unemployed who are included in the rest of this series.
3. Numbers are not available for 1985 due to industrial action
4. Income Support replaced Supplementary Benefit in April 1988.
5. Up to and including 1987, pensioners are defined as claimants of pensionable age. From 1988 pensioners are defined as benefit units where either the claimant and/or partner are aged 60 or over.
6. From 1988 Lone parents are defined as single people with dependants, not in receipt of a pensioner or disability premium. Prior to this lone parent estimates shown are on a comparable basis, and are lone parents not falling within any of the other statistical groups.

7. Disabled are defined as benefits units with a disability premium from 1988. Prior to this the figures include Supplementary Benefit claimants who are under pensionable age and are incapable of work.
8. Unemployed claimants are included in the figures up to and including August 1996. Income Support for the unemployed was replaced by Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance in October 1996.
9. Other claimants are those claimants not falling within any of the other statistical groups, and up to August 1996 include "Training cases". Following the introduction of Jobseeker's Allowance in October 1996, training cases have been removed from the estimates.
10. Numbers are based on sample data and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling error. Sample sizes are as follows:
  - 1969-76: 1 in 160 (Supplementary pension cases), 1 in 40 (Supplementary Allowances)
  - 1977-81 1 in 200 (Supplementary pension cases), 1 in 50 (Supplementary Allowances)
  - 1982-87 1 in 200 (Supplementary pension cases), 1 in 100 (E cases), 1 in 50 (Supplementary Allowances)
  - 1988-93 1 in 100 Feb 94 to date 1 in 20
11. All estimates relate to a point in time. For 1969 to 1974, & 1977 to 1979 the month of the enquiry was November, for 1975, 1976, 1980 to 1984 the month was December, for 1986 the month was February, 1987 to 1993 was May. Quarterly estimates are shown thereafter.

You may also find the attached document (timeseriesIBSDA.xls) useful which gives Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance (all entitled cases) from 1979 to 2005. Please note some of these cases do not receive a payment.

<http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/tabtools/timeseriesIBSDA.xls>

To access information on benefit expenditure select the link below and click on **Medium-term forecast for all DWP benefits**. Information for some benefits is available from 1948.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2013>

The ONS publish information on unemployment which may also be of use to you. Please note there are two main measures of unemployment;

- (i) Unemployment, which is the headline figure, measures all people who meet the internationally agreed definition of unemployment, namely those who are without a job, want a job, are seeking a job,

and are available to start work. This is measured by the Labour Force Survey (LFS), and is not dependent on being in receipt of benefit.

- (ii) The claimant count measures the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). This is sourced from administrative records of people being paid the benefit.

Statistics on unemployment based on the LFS and the claimant count are published on the NOMIS website [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk), the ONS official website of labour market statistics, which allows you to construct your own tables.

For example, to produce a table on the number of people who are unemployed from the claimant count, which has been adjusted to take into account the way in which claimants have been counted over time, from **1971**, go to <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> and make your table selection as follows;

1. Select **Advanced Query** in the **Detailed Statistics** section.
2. Then select **Claimant Count**
3. Select the dataset **claimant count – seasonally adjusted**
4. Then select the geography you require by clicking the **geography** tab and selecting from the available options.
5. Select the date tab and enter the date(s) you require. Please note that the latest available information for claimant count data is **May 2013**.
6. Finally, click the **review selections** tab, check to see if the correct variables are included.
7. Once you are happy with the table selection, click **download data**. This will output your table into an Excel file.

Estimates of the residents/workforce which can be used to calculate claimant count rates are also available by selecting **claimant count denominators - current residents / workforce series** at step 3.

You may also be interested to know that the majority of historic benefits statistics can be found in the Department for Social Security (DSS) statistics bulletins published by Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO). You should be able to locate these in most large reference libraries.

I can confirm that the Department does hold some information falling within the description specified in your request other than that listed above. However, as mentioned above, due to length of time needed to locate and retrieve this information we estimate that the cost of complying with your request fully 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 information. 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.