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# Surveys Branch Developments and Publications

- Family Resources Survey (Mark Vaughan)
- Households Below Average Income (Natalie Lloyd)
- Other Surveys Branch Publications Using The Family Resources Survey (Joanne Burrage)
- Income Dynamics (Kiran Mirza)



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# Family Resources Survey (FRS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-resources-survey--2>

[team.frs@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:team.frs@dwp.gov.uk)

Mark Vaughan

# Family Resources Survey continuing features

- Latest edition published in **March**, datasets now available via UK Data Service
- Remains one of the country's large-scale household surveys
- Remains focussed on concepts which are core to the DWP policy arena
  - *income*, from both work & earnings, pensions, or state benefit receipt, or other sources such as investments
  - *characteristics* such as demographics, tenure, disability, carers, and also education and child maintenance
  - *other facets* such as material deprivation, household food security, pension participation
- Interview content essentially unchanged despite COVID
- Interview length continues at a mean of one hour
- Continue to research ways of enhancing the survey through admin data linking
- Extensive background information & methodology published at GOV.UK, and a new technical note at the UK Data Service for features specific to 2020-21

# Family Resources Survey key developments in 2022

## Visible to everyone

- Expansion of surveys
- Looking to release via other avenues: ONS Secure Research Service / DWP's *Stat-Xplore*
- Training offer via UK Data Service this autumn
- Using our *Statistical Work Programme* to herald new content: Digital literacy, food bank usage

## Under the hood

- Steady improvement in timeliness
- Reworking of data management technology
- Several additional quality checks, continued handling of Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)/Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) inputs, remembering this is last year's data, plus the benefits arena in Scotland
- Watching brief on Government support to cost of living...



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# Households Below Average Income (HBAI)

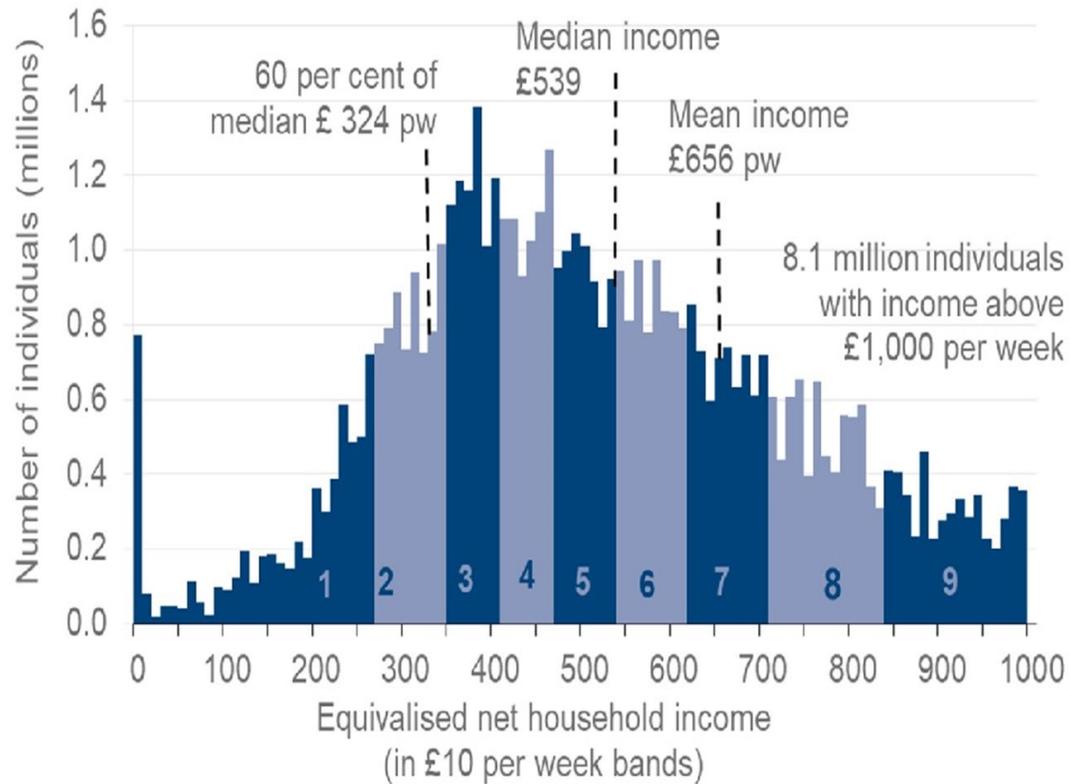
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/households-below-average-income-hbai--2>

[team.hbai@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:team.hbai@dwp.gov.uk)

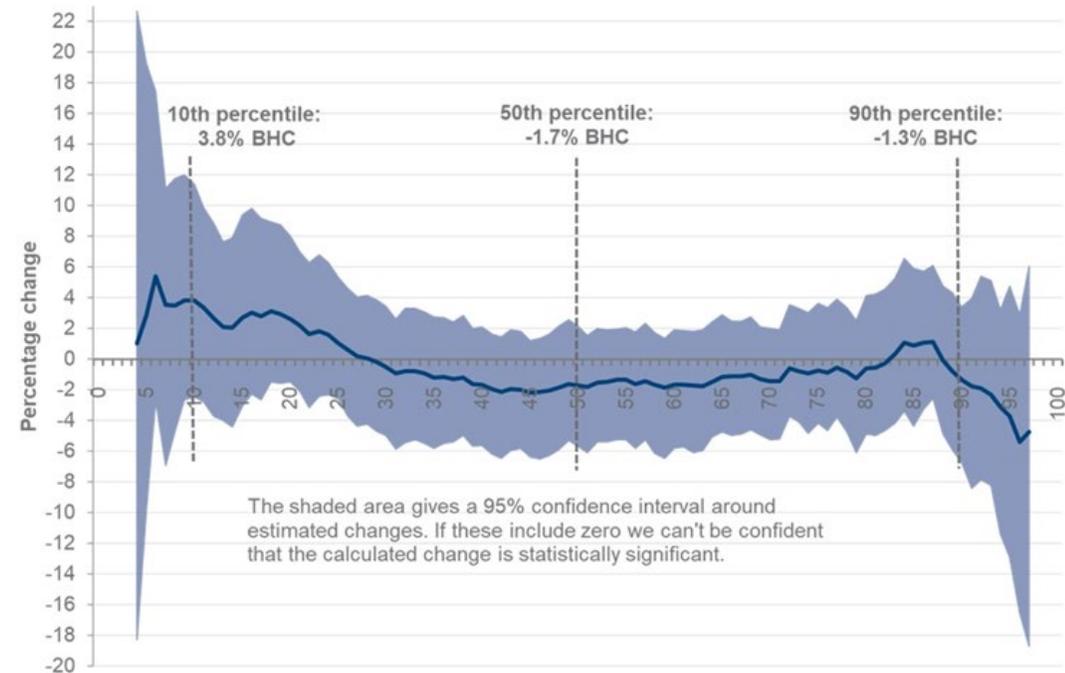
Natalie Lloyd

# HBAI headlines 2020/21

- Median household incomes fell (by 1.7%), but this varied across the income distribution



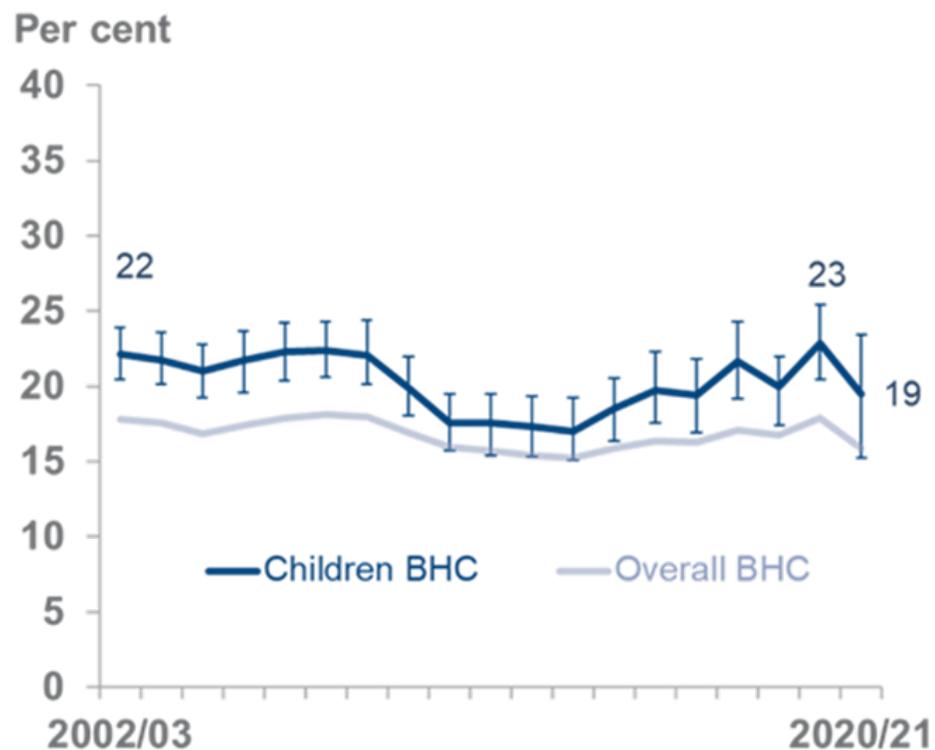
- those in the bottom quarter of the income distribution saw growth in their household incomes



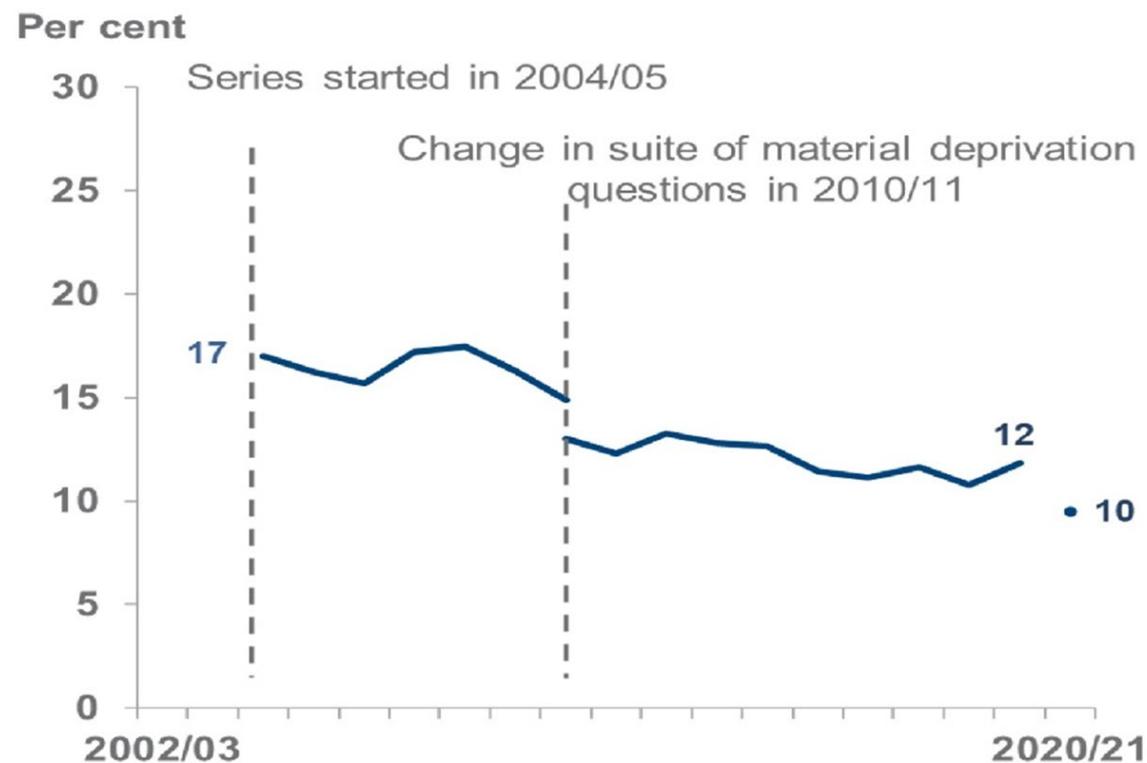
# HBAI headlines 2020/21

- The % of low income households fell for most reported measures

Percentage of children in relative low income (BHC), FYE 2003 to FYE 2021



- Recorded levels of material deprivation were not comparable to previous years.



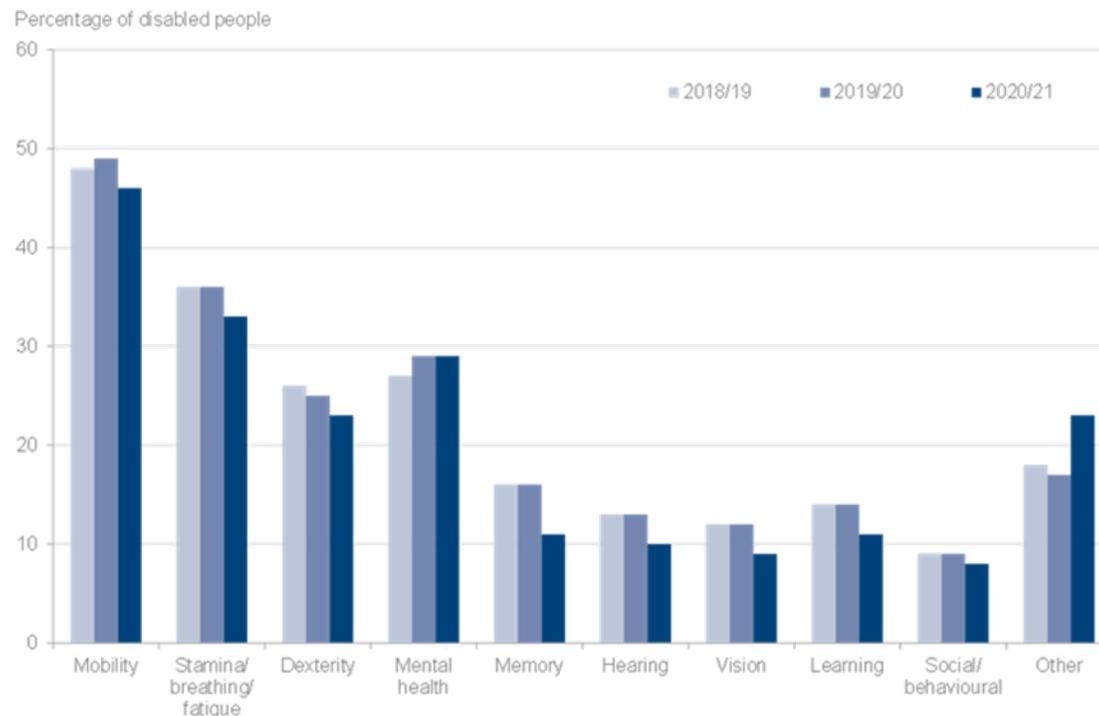
# HBAI What changed in the 2020/21 publication?

- Range of published statistics was more limited
  - Off the peg tables reduced to those of main measures referred to in the statistical commentary
  - Stat Xplore tool was not updated with 2020/21 data
- Greater use of confidence intervals in narrative/charts to emphasise additional uncertainty
- Publication was accompanied by an extensive COVID-19 technical report for users
- New combined low income and material deprivation statistics were made available
- Responded to Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) Review of Poverty Statistics recommendations for improved HBAI strengths and weaknesses and explicit link to poverty measurement.

# HBAI COVID-19 specific challenges

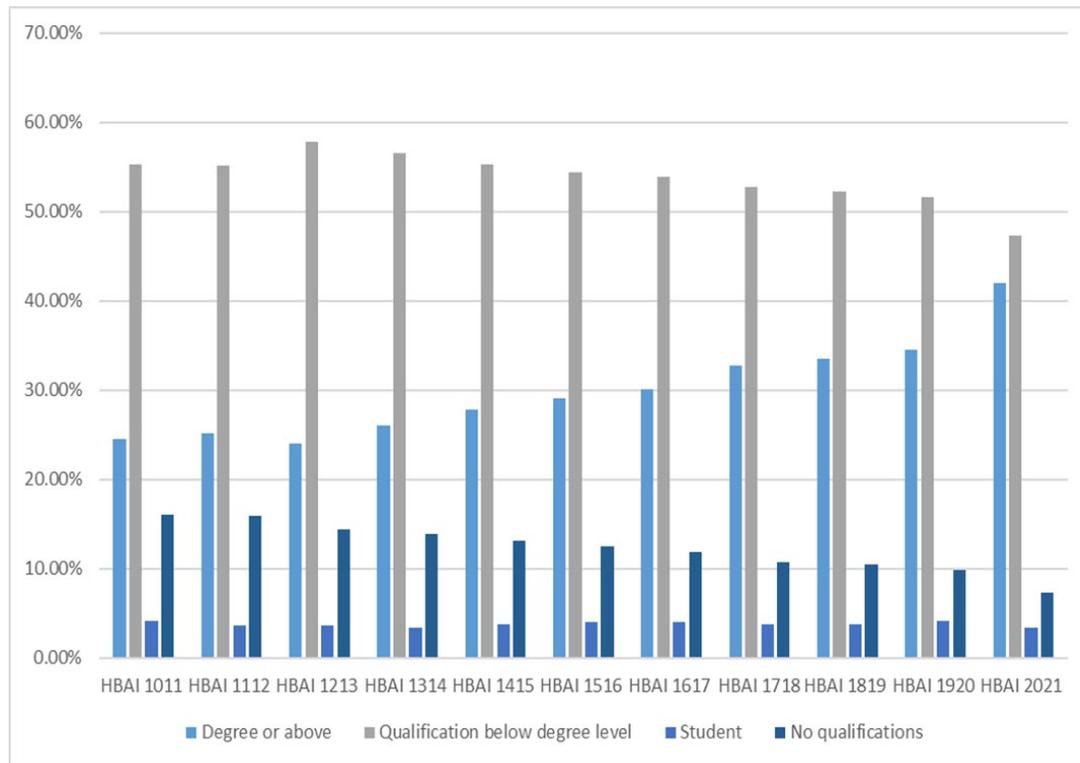
- Changes to FRS fieldwork affected both the size and composition of achieved sample
- Several detailed subgroup estimates showed changes and variation which could not be explained by reduced sample size alone.
- It was especially difficult to disentangle real world change from sample bias in a COVID-19 context

e.g. Disability

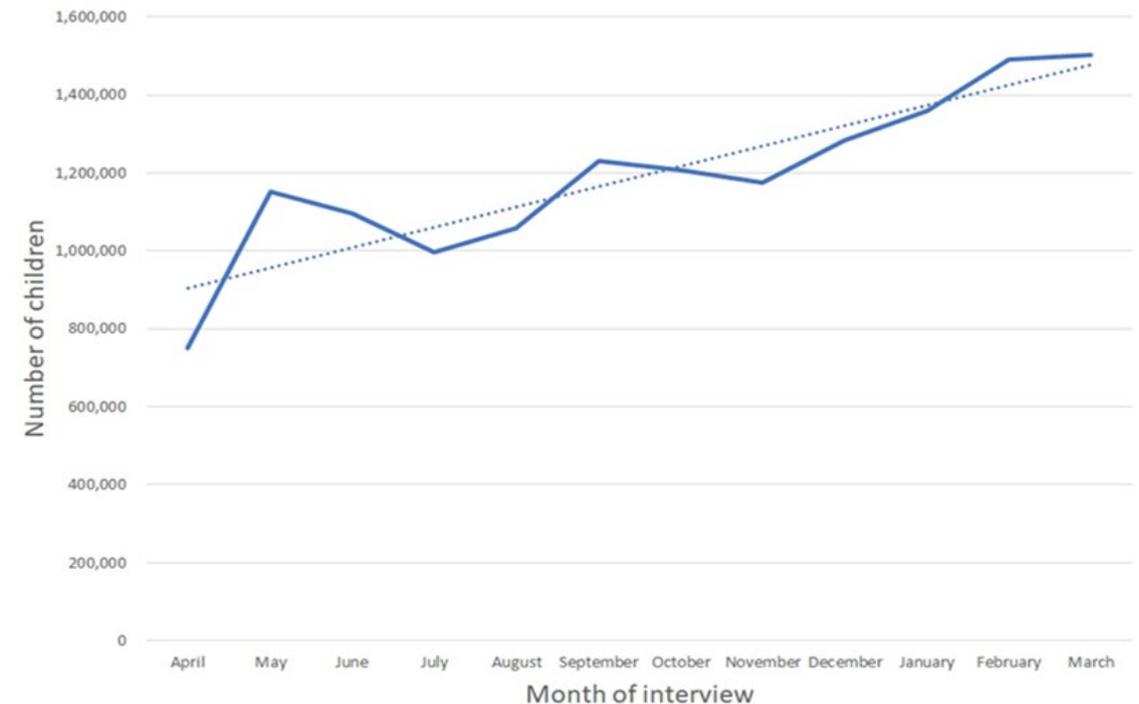


# HBAI Changes in the representativeness of the sample

Initial skew towards older, better educated, and more affluent participants who may have been more likely to provide us with their contact details. We introduced new weighting to adjust for new biases.



Big challenge - the representativeness of the sample varied across the year, even after grossing. This impacted on the poverty rates seen for some groups across the year – and this was completely unprecedented.



# HBAI future plans

- Assurance of 2021/22 FRS data – starting with 6 month dataset
- Looking ahead to 2022/23 – full FRS boost, census data outputs, possible admin data linking
- DWP, in partnership with independent researchers at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), is conducting a review of the HBAI material deprivation measures and the questions in the Family Resources Survey (FRS).
  - Data has been collected (Apr – June) based on a new suite of FRS questions, will need to be evaluated.



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# Other Surveys Branch Publications Using The Family Resources Survey - Pensioners' Incomes and Take-up

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pensioners-incomes-series-statistics--3>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up--2>

[pensioners-incomes@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:pensioners-incomes@dwp.gov.uk)

[irb.takeup@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:irb.takeup@dwp.gov.uk)

Joanne Burrage

# Pensioners' Incomes (PI) introduction

- Annual National Statistics publication which reports on pensioners' incomes from the Family Resources Survey (FRS).
- The statistics examine how much income pensioners get each week and where they get that income from. They look at how their incomes have changed over time and variations in income between different types of pensioners.
- Estimates are normally based on a sample of around 7,000 pensioners in private households in the UK, taken from the FRS.
- The population age distribution has changed a lot since the start of this series (1994/1995) and pensioners now make up a larger proportion of the overall population.
- Changes in the economy and to the benefit system mean that the amount and components of pensioners' average weekly incomes have changed over time. These statistics look at these changes.

# Pensioners' Incomes (PI) challenges

- Despite the smaller achieved sample size in the FRS, due to the national lockdown and restrictions caused by coronavirus (COVID-19) from late-March 2020, the PI sample size wasn't affected as much and only dropped from 7,000 to 4,000. In addition, respondents were more likely to be older, owner-occupiers and better educated compared with previous years. Whilst the FRS and HBAI grossing regimes bring the age, tenure, and education profile in line with the UK population, there remains some unobservable residual bias that cannot be corrected by the grossing regime.
- While the data for 2020/21 has undergone extensive quality assurance prior to publication, we recommend that users exercise additional caution when using the data, particularly when making comparisons with previous years. This is especially recommended when interpreting larger changes observed in 2020/21 and reported in the statistical release.
- The PI publication is currently undergoing a Compliance Check from the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). We are due to hear the results of this very soon. So this may impact how the next publication looks for 2021/22. Do you use PI? If so the OSR would love to hear from you – please get in touch with Will - [William.Richardson@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:William.Richardson@statistics.gov.uk)

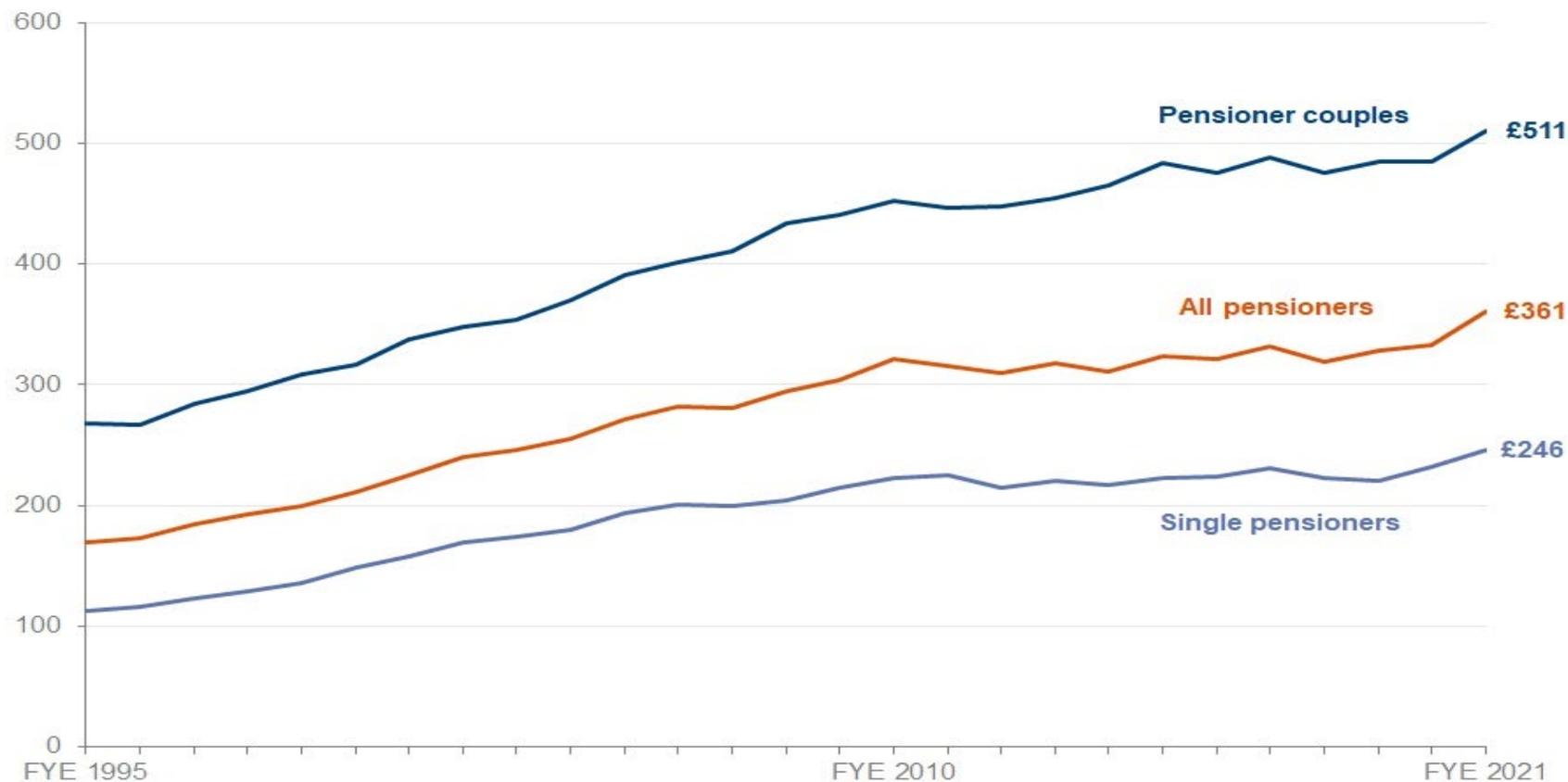
# Pensioners' Incomes (PI) latest results

## Pensioners' incomes have increased

Average weekly income of pensioners (after housing costs) in financial year ending (FYE) 2021 prices (£)



Weekly income, £s



# Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up (Take-up) introduction

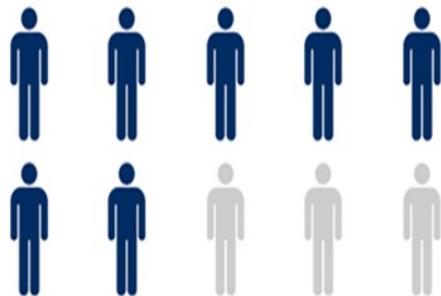
- Annual statistical publication which reports on the take-up of benefits from the Family Resources Survey (FRS).
- Take-up refers to the receipt of benefits someone is entitled to - by caseload (% of eligible people) and expenditure (% of money claimed)
- FRS data matched to administrative records produces estimates for the main income-related benefits – currently Pension Age only – Pension Credit and Housing Benefit.
- The 15<sup>th</sup> of June was the first Pension Credit Day of Action, this was an initiative to try and increase the take-up of Pension Credit and encourage people to claim if they are entitled. Our Take-up stats were used heavily in this campaign as they show 1/3 of those entitled to Pension Credit don't claim it – Check if you are eligible here - [Pension Credit calculator - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator)

# Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up (Take-up) challenges

- We are unable to estimate UC take-up rates at present. We are monitoring the situation and will make changes in the future as needed. From December 2018 there can be no new claims for any of the working-age legacy benefits. Therefore, the most recent publication focused on take-up for pensioners only.

# Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up (Take-up) latest results

## Overall Pension Credit caseload and expenditure figures for financial year ending 2020

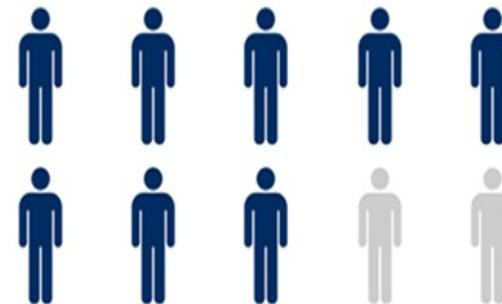


7 out of 10 of those entitled to Pension Credit claimed the benefit



77% of the total amount of Pension Credit that could have been claimed was claimed

## Overall Housing Benefit (for Pensioners) caseload and expenditure figures for financial year ending 2020



8 out of 10 of those entitled to Housing Benefit (for Pensioners) claimed the benefit



88% of the total amount of Housing Benefit (for Pensioners) that could have been claimed was claimed



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# Income Dynamics

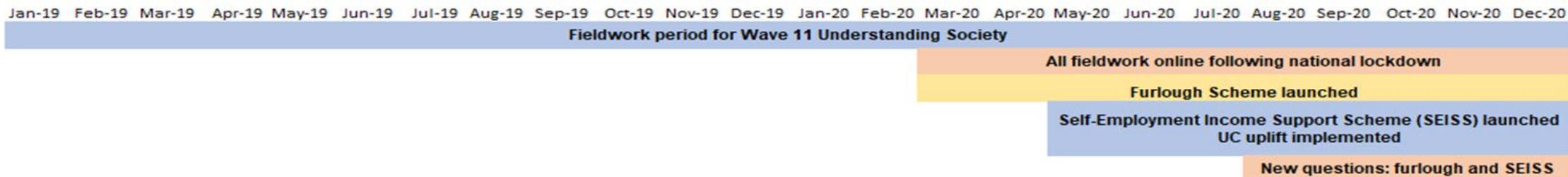
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/income-dynamics-statistics>  
[team.incomedynamics@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:team.incomedynamics@dwp.gov.uk)

Kiran Mirza

# Income Dynamics key findings 2010-2020

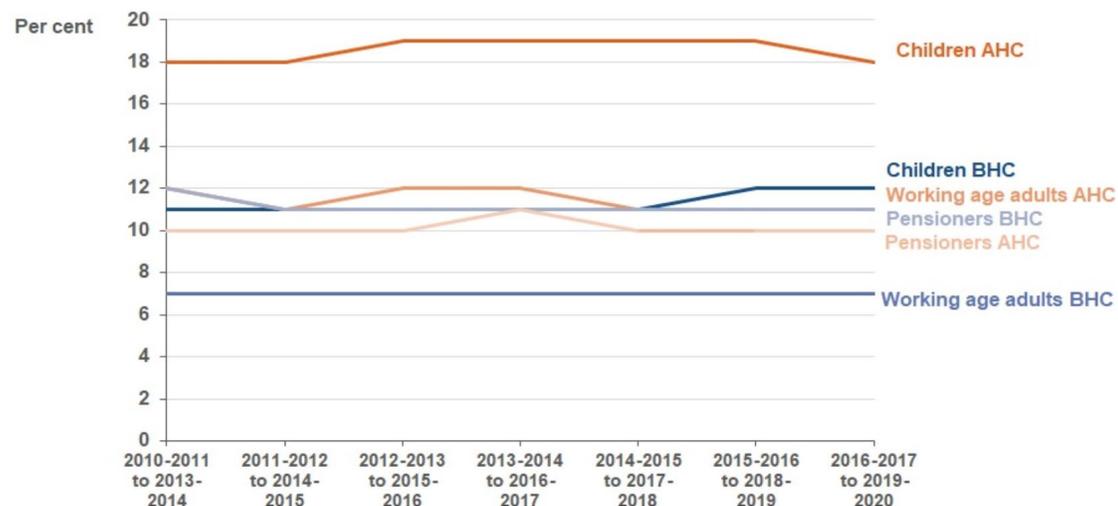
Income Dynamics (ID) uses the longitudinal survey, Understanding Society, managed by the University of Essex, to present findings on persistent low income and movements within the income distribution.

## Timeline for most recent Wave (11) of Understanding Society

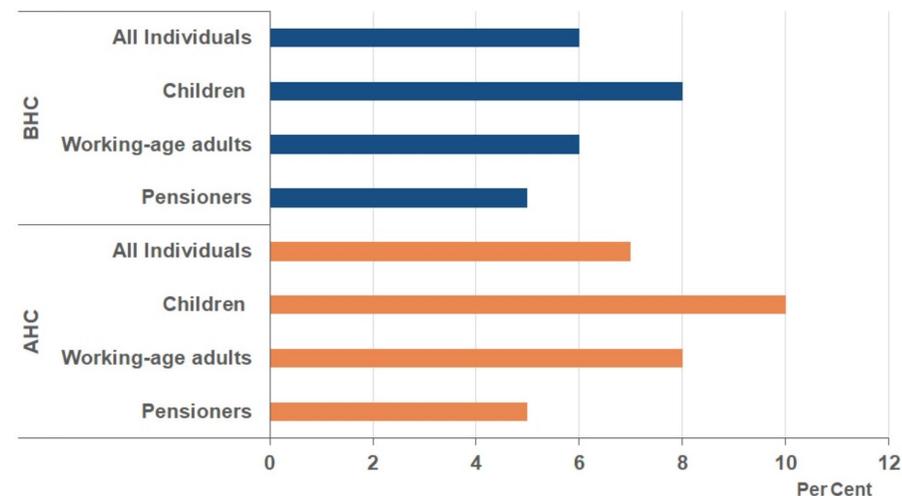


**Response rates held up well:** April-December 2020 response rate was 1.5pp below that of April-December 2019

**Key findings:** **Persistent low income:** relative low income for at least three out of four consecutive annual interviews



**Rate of entry into low income:** entry into relative low income over the period 2018-19 to 2019-20



# Income Dynamics 2010-2020 events associated with low income entry and exit

This analysis looks at the relationship between low income entries and exits, and changes in household income sources, employment status and demographics. Earnings, benefits and employment are most closely linked to low income transitions.

2018-19 to 2019-20	Event	Prevalence (%)	Entry / exit rate (%)	Share of entries/ exits (%)
<b>Low income entry</b>	<b>Fall in earnings</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>Fall in benefit income</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>
	<b>Fall in no. of workers</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Low income exit</b>	<b>Rise in earnings</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>36</b>
	<b>Rise in benefit income</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>41</b>
	<b>Increase no. of workers</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>15</b>

## Low income entries

- Of those who were not in low income in 2018-2019, 12% experienced a fall in earnings, 17% a fall in benefit income, and 10% a fall in the number of household workers.
- 23% of those whose earnings fell subsequently entered low income, as did 17% of those with a fall in the number of workers in their household, and 13% whose benefit income fell.
- These events are closely linked to low income entry: e.g. 37% of all low income entries experienced a reduction in earnings.

## Low income exits

- Increases in earnings and benefit income were experienced by 22% and 29% of individuals who were in low income in the first wave. 12% experienced an increase in the number of workers in their household.
- These events are closely linked to low income exit, e.g. of those who saw an increase in the number of adults in their household who were working, 41% exited low income.

# Income Dynamics responding to the OSR review of income-based poverty statistics

In December 2020, the Office for Statistical Regulation (OSR) announced a review of income-based poverty statistics. The review posed 3 main questions:

- do existing statistics help answer the key questions about income-based poverty in society today?
- do the statistics tell a coherent story about poverty in the UK and provide a comprehensive evidence base to inform decision making on poverty?
- is there sufficient quality guidance to help individuals understand how and when to use the statistics appropriately?

The review was published in May 2021 and included a number of recommendations.

In response to recommendations regarding **accessibility**, we:

- developed a 4-page [‘ID Quick Guide’](#) setting out key information for users on the data used and the statistics we produce
- developed an [‘ID Tables Guide’](#) providing users with a quick way to reference the measures and breakdowns in each table file
- improved guidance and navigation of our table files.

We added more information on the **representativeness of USoc, weighting and bias** to our Background and methodology note.

We improved **signposting to other relevant data sources**.

File title	Table references	Coverage	Employment status of family	White British household	Grain household	Family type	Gender	Low wage ultra low wage / Jubilee	Region / Country	Tenure	High level of deprivation	Up to date with all data	Age	Age of single child	No of children in family
Pensioners in persistent low income (each four-year period from 2010-2011)	5.1c-5.12c	Composition of pensioners in persistent low income: at 60% and 70% of the median, BHC and AHC.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	5.13c-5.15c	Composition of all pensioners upon which analysis of persistent low income is based, i.e. all pensioners for whom there is income and household composition information as well as information required for classification by variables of interest such as ethnicity or region.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	5.16c-5.21c	Sample sizes of pensioners in persistent low income: at 60% and 70% of median income, BHC and AHC.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Movements between quintiles	6.1 to 6.4	Movements in the income distribution (using income quintiles) for all individuals. This compares positions: a) 2019-2020 to 2010-2011; b) 2019-2020 to 2018-2019; c) 2010-2011 to 2019-2020; and d) 2018-2019 to 2019-2020; BHC and AHC. Sample size information.													
Quintile movements over time	7.1	Which income quintiles did all individuals spend most of their time in (relative to 2010-2011) over the period 2010-2011 to 2019-2020, BHC and AHC. Sample size information.													
Low income entry and exit rates	8.1-8.16	Rates of entry into and exit from low income. Analysis is based upon entries and exits over successive survey waves.													
		Tables 8.1 and 8.9: Rates for all individuals, children, working-age adults and pensioners, BHC and AHC, over the period 2018-2019 to 2019-2020. Sample size information.  All other tables: based upon all individuals. To enable further breakdowns as shown opposite, rates are averaged over three two-wave periods due to small sample sizes (i.e. 2016-2017 to 2017-2018, 2017-2018 to 2018-2019, and 2018-2019 to 2019-2020). BHC and AHC. Sample size information.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
Events associated with low income entries and exits	9.1n-9.16n	Association between different events and low income entry All individuals, BHC and AHC. Events include income, employment and household type changes. Three statistics are presented for each event: the prevalence of the event, the rate of low income entry for individuals who experienced it, and the percentage of all those who entered low income who experienced the event.													
		Association between different events and low income exit All individuals, BHC and AHC. Events include income, employment and household type changes. Three statistics are presented for each event: the prevalence of the event, the rate of low income exit for individuals who experienced it, and the percentage of all those who exited low income who experienced the event.													

## Contact details

- FRS: [team.frs@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:team.frs@dwp.gov.uk)
- HBAI: [team.hbai@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:team.hbai@dwp.gov.uk)
- PI: [pensioners-incomes@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:pensioners-incomes@dwp.gov.uk)
- Take-up: [irb.takeup@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:irb.takeup@dwp.gov.uk)
- ID: [team.incomedynamics@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:team.incomedynamics@dwp.gov.uk)

## DWP Statistical Work Programme

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-statistical-work-programme/statistical-work-programme>