



Department
for Work &
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Surveys Branch

Developments and Publications

- Family Resources Survey (Mark Vaughan)
- Households Below Average Income (Natalie Lloyd)
- Developing new experimental statistics: Poverty measurement (Lorraine Pearson)
- Other Surveys Branch Publications using the Family Resources Survey (Aliyah Simjee / John Silverstone)
- Income Dynamics (Helen Smith)



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Family Resources Survey (FRS)

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

team.frs@dwp.gov.uk

Mark Vaughan

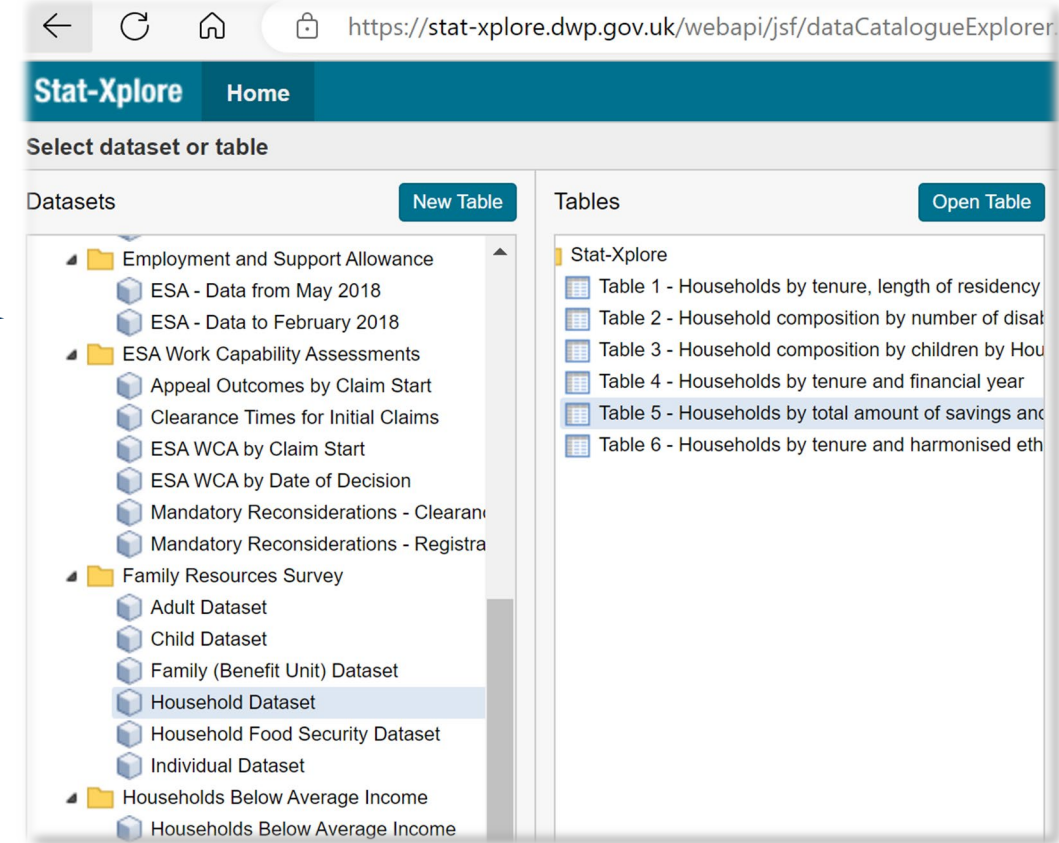
Family Resources Survey update

- Latest edition published in **March**, datasets now available via UK Data Service and the ONS secure research service

- New for 2023: **Create your own tables** of results. This is freely available via DWP's *Stat-Xplore* <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/login.xhtml>

... you can also create your own tables from the HBAI and PI datasets, as in previous years.

- 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
- Subject matter / interview content essentially unchanged, 1-hour interviews on average



The screenshot shows the Stat-Xplore web application interface. The browser address bar displays the URL: <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/dataCatalogueExplorer>. The page title is "Stat-Xplore Home". Below the title, there is a section "Select dataset or table" with two main panels: "Datasets" and "Tables".

The "Datasets" panel has a "New Table" button and lists several categories of data:

- Employment and Support Allowance
 - ESA - Data from May 2018
 - ESA - Data to February 2018
- ESA Work Capability Assessments
 - Appeal Outcomes by Claim Start
 - Clearance Times for Initial Claims
 - ESA WCA by Claim Start
 - ESA WCA by Date of Decision
 - Mandatory Reconsiderations - Clearan
 - Mandatory Reconsiderations - Registra
- Family Resources Survey
 - Adult Dataset
 - Child Dataset
 - Family (Benefit Unit) Dataset
 - Household Dataset
 - Household Food Security Dataset
 - Individual Dataset
- Households Below Average Income
 - Households Below Average Income

The "Tables" panel has an "Open Table" button and lists six pre-defined tables:

- Table 1 - Households by tenure, length of residency
- Table 2 - Household composition by number of disat
- Table 3 - Household composition by children by Hou
- Table 4 - Households by tenure and financial year
- Table 5 - Households by total amount of savings and
- Table 6 - Households by tenure and harmonised eth

Family Resources Survey key developments in 2023

Under the hood

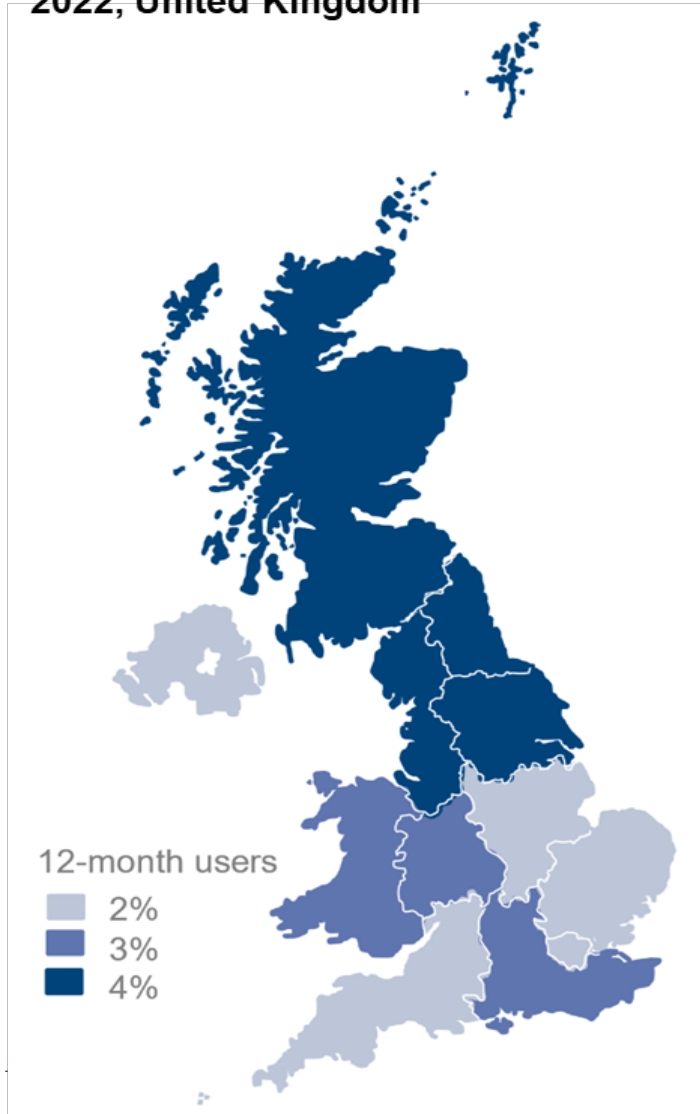
- The new data management solution is now in place
- Several new quality checks, and focus on state benefit changes in Scotland
- Cost of living: Considering treatment of Government support

Visible to everyone

- Explicitly including sandwich carers, on tables in our Care chapter (SANDWICH)
- New variable for those on zero hours contracts (ZEROHOUR)
- Refresh of public sector marker – is now SECTORNP with categories aligning to PS pension schemes
- New variables DOCTOR & DENTIST, given the nature of their earnings ...
- New variable INTERNET ... “can you use the internet at home for online services?”
- New section on food bank usage, building on the FOODBANK and FOODBK12 variables
- ...and finally, see our new **Release Strategy** for our plans in future years

Food Bank Usage

Household food bank usage, 2021 to 2022, United Kingdom



For the first time in 2023, the FRS published figures on **food bank usage**, building on the household food security questions from the previous year

Of all UK households, **3%** used a food bank in the last year, and **1%** in the last 30 days.

Factors related to increased food bank usage include:

- Lower incomes
- Receiving income-related benefits
- Geography >>>> northern regions showed higher rates of food bank usage than southern regions
- Tenure >>>> households in the social renting sector were most likely to use a food bank
- Age >>>> households with a younger head-of-household were more likely to access a food bank

Questions on household food security and food bank usage are asked of the person in the household who knows the most about buying and preparing food



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FRS Transformation

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Don Burke

Rationale for change: bringing admin data into the survey

This is in the wider context of the UK Statistics Authority's Strategy for data linking and the move towards an '*admin data first*' approach to meeting information needs.

- **Improve data quality** – improving coverage/ accuracy on our £ figures (benefits, PAYE and SA)
- **Improve timeliness** – less editing required, and admin is a more timely source
- **Reduce cost** – ultimately, reducing questionnaire length

Changes in the legal basis for consent, combined with improvements in methodology, mean that we can now link more than 95% of FRS respondents to their administrative records...

- The main research strands are:
 - State Benefits, RTI (for employment **and** pensions), HMRC Self-Assessment data (including dividends and property income), and savings data.
 - Grossing: Improving grossing methodology through the use of administrative data control totals.
 - Non-response bias research: Linking the issued FRS sample to DWP's Customer Information System to identify non-respondents and research the differences between respondents and non-respondents using admin records.

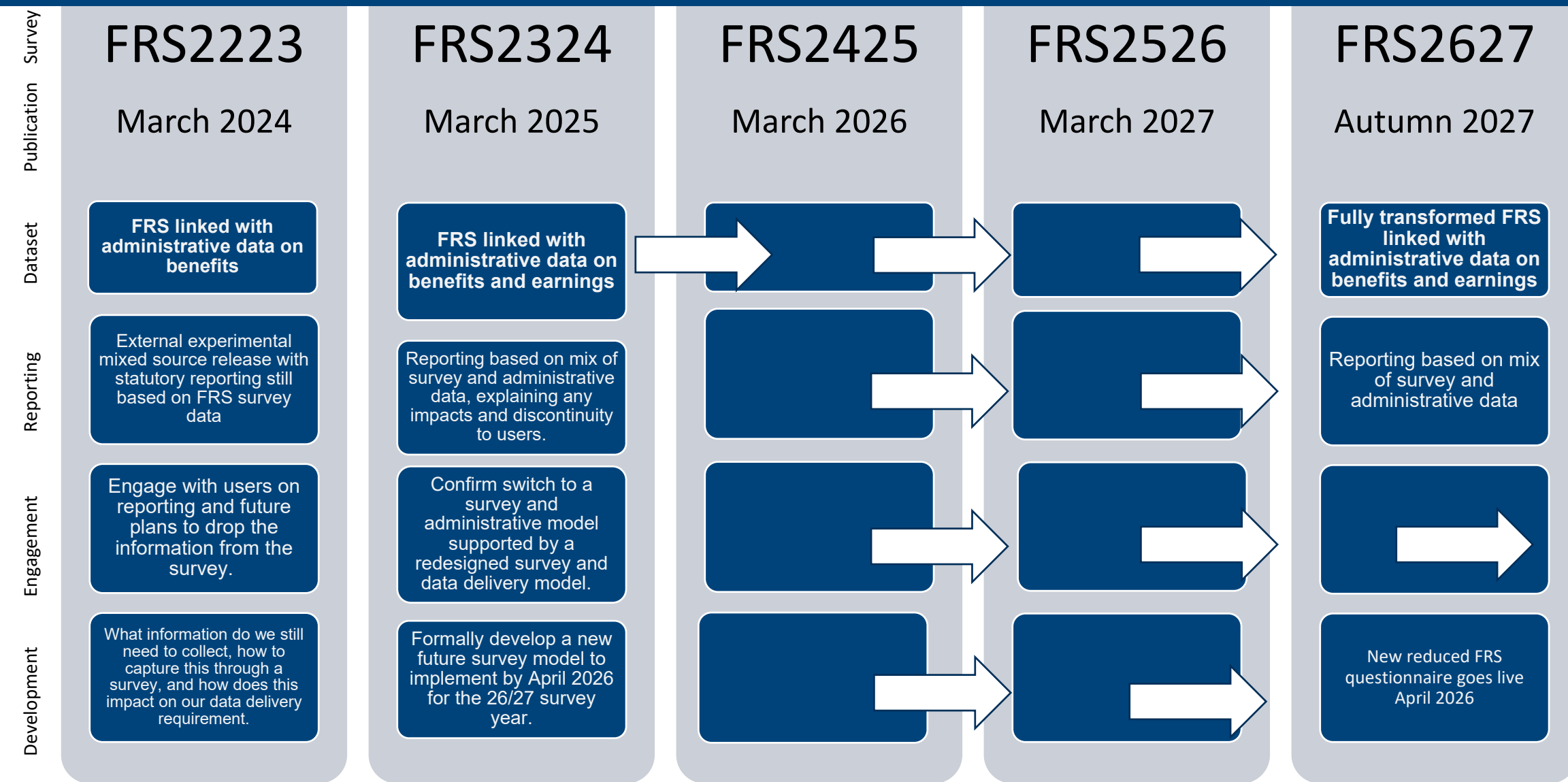
Project deliverables

The FRS Transformation project is researching and developing the means to transform the FRS through the integration of administrative data. The key objectives of the project are to:

- deliver a back series of quality assured FRS datasets which integrate all available administrative data, where these have been demonstrated to be of equivalent or higher quality to the existing survey data;
- assess the effects of integrating admin data on key measures (e.g. household income distribution) over time; and
- develop the business as usual processes needed to produce the transformed admin-data integrated FRS on an on-going basis, with the fundamental variable definitions consistent with existing FRS definitions, and dataset structures to matching existing survey-based structures.

This is a fundamental shift in the FRS and so we need to be confident in the quality (and reliable availability) of the administrative data to replace survey responses, and, given the importance of the FRS to policy making, we need to have our internal users also transitioned over to using the new survey and administrative data; and we need to give due regard to our external users as well.

Illustrative Roadmap to change





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Households Below Average Income (HBAI)

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

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Natalie Lloyd

HBAI What changed in the 2021/22 publication?

- Returned to full range of published statistics, including an update of Stat Xplore
- Publication was again accompanied by an extensive COVID-19 technical report for users. Our assessment was that the change in mode affected the HBAI estimates to a lesser extent than in 2020/21.
- All published estimates usually based on a 3 year rolling average were limited to using 2 data points
- Combined low income and material deprivation statistics for working age adults were incorporated into the publication (previously published as experimental statistics)
- New statistics on food bank usage among individuals in low income households were included

HBAI future plans

- Assurance of 2022/23 FRS data – starting with 6 month dataset (available imminently)
 - First assessment of impact of cost of living pressures on household incomes and low income rates
 - Extensive analysis of the effect of having a mixed mode on the FRS sample and HBAI estimates.
- Quality assurance of admin (benefit) data linked FRS.
 - Assessment of impact on HBAI estimates across full time series of integrated data
 - Development of publication for March 2024.
- March 2025 publication (covering 2023/24) – refresh of material deprivation measure.



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Developing new experimental statistics: Poverty measurement

[Development of a new measure of poverty: statistical notice - GOV.UK](#)
www.gov.uk

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Social Metrics Commission - Background

- In March 2023, DWP announced plans to resume work developing an experimental measure of poverty based on the Social Metrics Commission's (SMC) innovative work.
- The SMC are an independent commission formed with the aim of developing a new approach to poverty measurement that both better reflects the nature and experiences of poverty that different families in the UK have and that can be used to build a consensus around poverty measurement and action in the UK.
- The SMC published their methodological approach in 2018, and have subsequently published methodological updates and further analysis here:
<https://socialmetricscommission.org.uk/category/publications/>

Social Metrics Commission – Poverty measure

The SMC measure of poverty includes consideration of:

- Assets (e.g. positive impacts of access to liquid assets)
- Inescapable costs (e.g. debt, childcare, disability, recurring housing costs)
- Groups previously omitted from poverty statistics (e.g. rough sleeping, housing adequacy)
- Depth of poverty (e.g. distance from the poverty line)
- Persistent poverty (e.g. time spent in poverty)
- Lived experience indicators (e.g. wider characteristics of those with experience of poverty)

Next steps

- The DWP accepts that the SMC's approach to a more expansive view of inescapable costs and alternative income sources will add new insight to the understanding of poverty.
- DWP will take the SMC measure as a starting point and assess how it can be developed to increase the value the public.
- Currently at initial planning stages – looking to develop a series of experimental statistics publications, establishing key stakeholder groups to steer this work.
- We will update further on plans in due course.



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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>

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Aliyah Simjee / John Bilverstone

Pensioners' Incomes (PI) introduction

- Annual National Statistics publication which reports on pensioners' incomes from the 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.

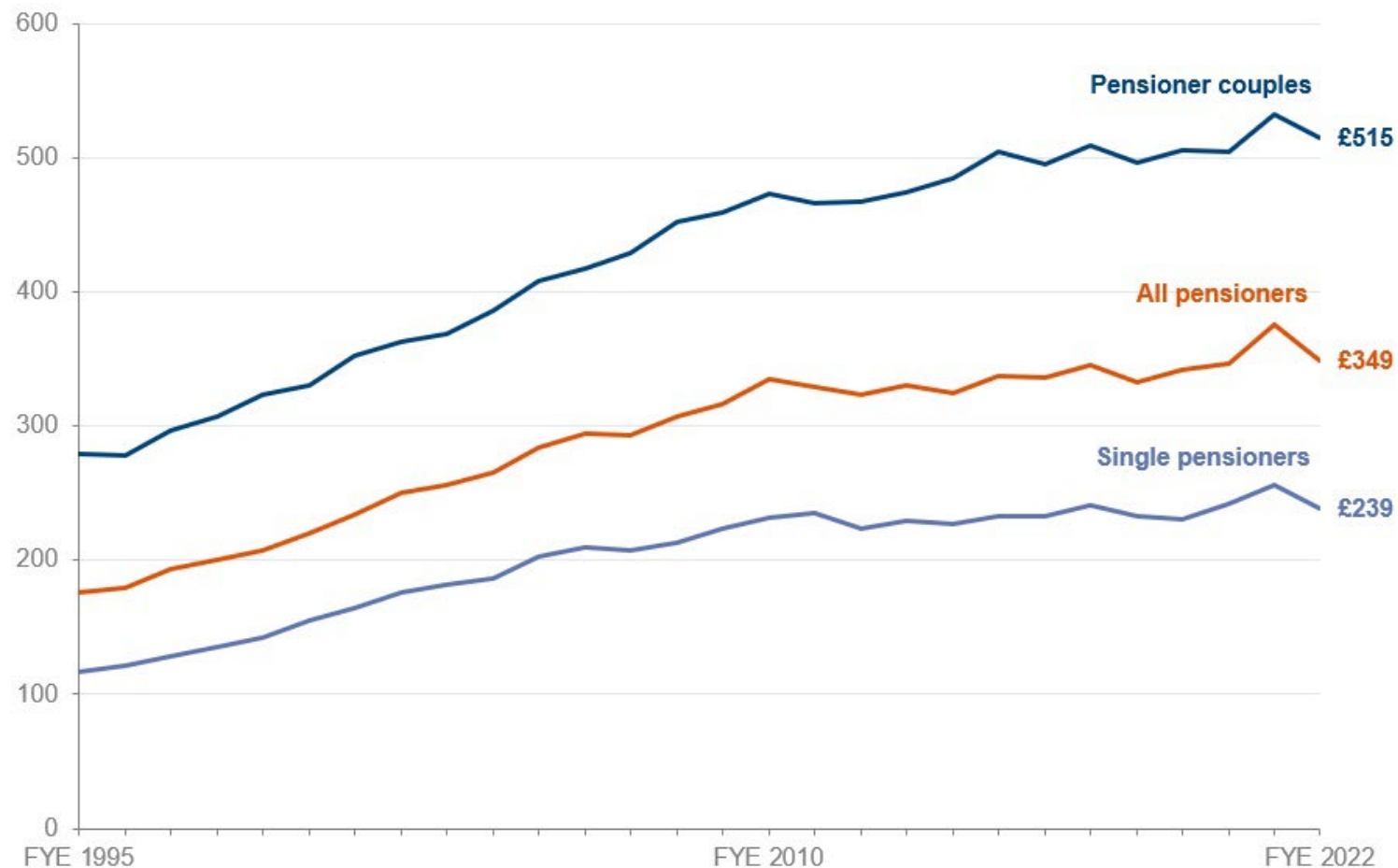
Pensioners' Incomes (PI) latest results

Pensioners' incomes have increased since 1995

Average weekly income of pensioners (after housing costs) in financial year ending (FYE) 2022 prices (£)



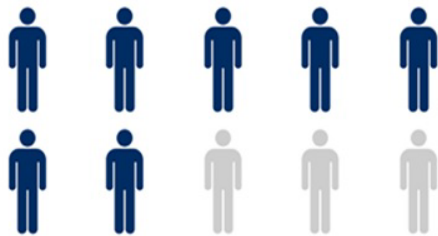
Weekly income, £s



Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up introduction and latest results

- Annual statistical publication which reports on the take-up of benefits from the 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 is matched to administrative records to produce estimates for the main income-related benefits – currently Pension Age only – Pension Credit and Housing Benefit.

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

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

- We were unable to publish our statistics for the financial year 2020 to 2021 due to data issues following the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- We will provide an update on the financial year 2021 to 2022 publication when we have assessed if it will be possible to publish these statistics in line with the UK Statistics Authority [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).
- 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 for 2019 to 2020 focused on take-up for pensioners only.



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Income Dynamics

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Helen Smith

Income Dynamics 2010-2021: development work

Income Dynamics (ID) uses Understanding Society (USoc), managed by the University of Essex, to present findings on persistent low income and movements into and out of low income, and across the wider income distribution. This year we included Wave 12 of USoc, with analysis covering 2010 to 2021.

Key development: inclusion of USoc's Immigrant and Ethnic Minority Boost (IEMB) sample

- IEMB introduced in 2014-2015 to maintain representativeness of USoc sample: panel design unable to reflect impact of immigration; also attrition affecting ethnic minority sample sizes. Comprised approximately 2,900 households.
- Not initially included in ID – insufficient years of data on IEMB sample members for persistent low income estimates.
- All ID code revised and tested on last year's data release, and compared to ID statistics published in March 2022:

	Sample size	Statistics
Cross-sectional 2014-2015	Increase of c. 7,900 IEMB members. Total increase of c.12,700 individuals – some correction of former non-response	Single wave estimates such as means and medians moved slightly; and closer to HBAI estimates.
Persistent low income 2014-2015 to 2017-2018	Increase of c. 4,300 individuals (must be in each of four consecutive waves).	Most (rounded) persistent low income rates remained unchanged. Changes were generally by 1 percentage point.

Benefits: improved representativeness of ID statistics and reduced suppression associated with the small sample sizes of some ethnic minority breakdowns. Builds on our response to recommendations made by the Office for Statistics Regulation's [Review of income-based poverty statistics](#).

Income Dynamics 2010-2021: headline findings

Persistent low income (across 4 waves): varies by type of individual but trend relatively stable. Small changes for children in most recent period.

	2016-17 to 2019-20	2017-18 to 2020-21
Children	11%	10%
	18%	19%
Working-age adults	7%	7%
	11%	11%
Pensioners	10%	11%
	10%	10%

Low income entry and exit rates (2019-20 to 2020-21): while equivalent numbers enter and exit across each period, **exit** rates are higher than **entry** rates, as based on smaller denominator (e.g. 16% of individuals were in low income BHC in 2019-20).

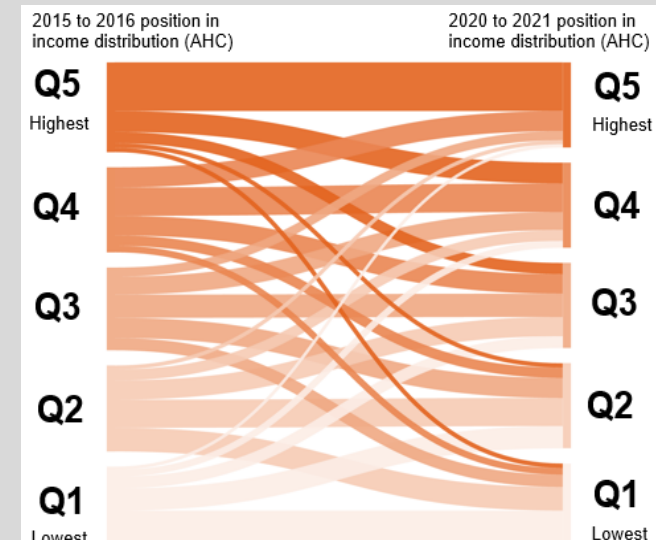
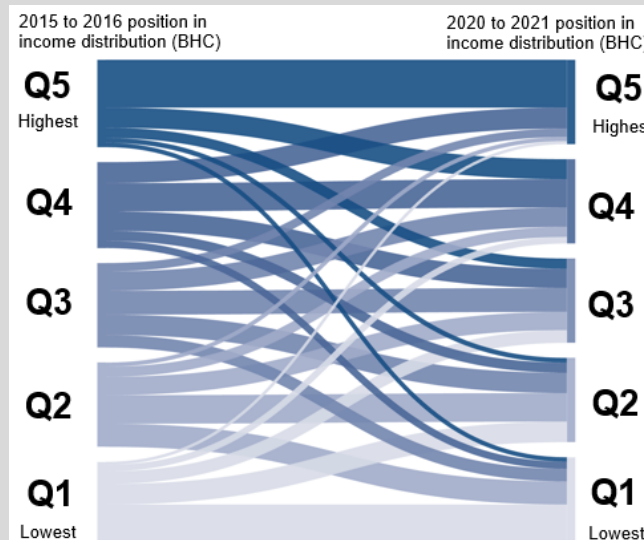
7% of individuals **entered** low income (BHC)
8% of individuals **entered** low income (AHC)

42% of individuals **exited** low income (BHC)
39% of individuals **exited** low income (AHC)

Entry rates generally stable over time. **Exit** rates increased this year – likely in part due to new inclusion of income from Student / Tuition Fee Loans.

Movement across the full income distribution: position measured at two points in time. Revised starting point in order to include IEMB sample members, increasing sample size and improving representativeness.

Most movement towards middle of distribution, less movement at the bottom, and least at the top.



Income Dynamics 2010-2021: new analysis on low income movements and paid work

‘Events’ analysis: how different economic and demographic changes are related to low income entries and exits.

Key development: how are changes in the amount of paid work in a household linked to low income entries and exits?

Low income entries 2019-20 to 2020-21		Low income exits 2019-20 to 2020-21	
<p>Full-time work to part-time work in household</p> <p>4% of those not in low income in 2019-20 experienced this event</p> <p>It increased their risk of entering low income: 21% of them entered low income in 2020-21, compared to 8% of all individuals who weren’t in low income in 2019-20</p> <p>11% of all low income entries experienced this event*</p>	<p>Part-time to full-time work in household</p> <p>6% of those in low income in 2019-20 experienced this event</p> <p>It increased their likelihood of exiting low income: 69% of them exited low income in 2020-21, compared to 39% of all individuals who were in low income in 2019-20.</p> <p>10% of all low income exits experienced this event*</p>		
<p>Paid work in household to no paid work</p> <p>3% of those not in low income in 2019-20 experienced this event</p> <p>It increased their risk of entering low income: 25% of them entered low income in 2020-21</p> <p>9% of all low income entries experienced this event*</p>	<p>No paid work in household to someone in paid work</p> <p>5% of those in low income in 2019-20 experienced this event</p> <p>It increased their likelihood of exiting low income: 60% of them exited low income in 2020-21</p> <p>7% of all low income exits experienced this event*</p>		

All findings are After Housing Costs * individuals entering or exiting low income are able to experience more than one event.

Contact details

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- Take-up: irb.takeup@dwp.gov.uk
- ID: team.incomedynamics@dwp.gov.uk

DWP Statistical Work Programme

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