**All main benefits - December 2013 quarter**

**Key Facts**

At the end of December 2013:

* 321,869 working-age\* people were receiving a main benefit.
* 11.6 percent of the working-age population of New Zealand were receiving a main benefit.\*\*\*\*
* Over half (58%) of main benefit recipients were female, and 42 percent were male.
* 40 percent of main benefit recipients were receiving Jobseeker Support (JS), 29 percent were receiving Supported Living Payment and 24 percent were receiving Sole Parent Support.
* Just over two thirds (69%) of recipients of main benefits had been receiving their current benefit continuously for more than one year.

Between December 2012 and December 2013:

* The number of recipients of main benefits decreased by 17,226, or 5 percent. This decrease was largely driven by decreases in Sole Parent Support and Jobseeker Support numbers.
* Supported Living Payment (SLP) numbers remained stable.
* JS numbers decreased in all Work and Income regions except Waikato and Bay of Plenty, which remained stable. SPS numbers decreased in all regions, and SLP numbers increased slightly in all regions except Canterbury and Southern regions.
* The percentage of the working-age population in New Zealand receiving a main benefit fell.

**Summary of working-age\* clients receiving main benefits, end of December 2008, 2012 and 2013**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Benefit | Dec-2008 | Dec-2012 | Dec-2013 | Annual Change | |
| Jobseeker Support (JS) | 102,809 | 137,370 | 130,225 | -7,145 | -5% |
| Sole Parent Support (SPS) | 80,906 | 85,939 | 77,843 | -8,096 | -9% |
| Supported Living Payment (SLP) | 89,168 | 91,514 | 92,661 | 1,147 | 1% |
| Youth Payment/Young Parent Payment (YP/YPP)\*\* | 1,438 | 1,080 | 1,091 | 11 | 1% |
| Other\*\*\* | 11,855 | 23,192 | 20,049 | -3,143 | -14% |
| Total working-age recipients | **286,176** | **339,095** | **321,869** | **-17,226** | -5% |
| *Percentage of working-age population on main benefits* | *10.8%* | *12.3%* | *11.6%* |  |  |

\*Working-age clients are aged 18-64. This definition reflects the minimum age of eligibility for most main benefits and the age of qualification for New Zealand Superannuation.

\*\*Youth Payment/Young Parent Payment recipients who are 18+ years. There were 1,840 YP/YPP recipients aged 16-17 years at the end of December 2013. YP/YPP was introduced in August 2012; figures prior to this are estimates.

\*\*\*Other includes Emergency Maintenance Allowance (EMA), Emergency Benefit (EB), Jobseeker Student Hardship (JSSH) and Widow’s Benefit Overseas (WBO).

\*\*\*\*Based on Statistics NZ National Population Estimates as at 30 June 2013.

**Five-year trend**

Main benefit numbers increased substantially between December 2008 and December 2012, though they have fallen from their peak in 2010. The main driver for this pattern has been changes in economic conditions.

The proportion of the working-age population who were receiving a main benefit at the end of December increased between 2008 and 2010, but has decreased over the last three years. The main driver for this pattern has been changes in economic conditions.