**Sole Parent Support - December 2013 quarter**

Sole Parent Support (SPS) is for sole parents with dependent children under 14 who can look or prepare for part-time work.

**Key Facts**

At the end of December 2013:

* **77,843** working-age people were receiving Sole Parent Support.
* **2.8 percent** of the working-age population of New Zealand were receiving Sole Parent Support.
* Sole Parent Support recipients are more likely to be aged between 25 and 39, and to be female.
* 81 percent of recipients of Sole Parent Support had been receiving any benefit continuously for more than one year.

Between December 2012 and December 2013:

* The number of recipients of Sole Parent Support decreased by 8,096, or 9 percent.
* There were decreases in benefit receipt across all ethnic groups. Pacific peoples had the largest percentage decrease.
* There were decreases in SPS numbers across all age groups.
* The percentage of the working-age population on Sole Parent Support fell.

**Characteristics of working-age recipients of Sole Parent Support, at the end of December 2008, 2012 and 2013**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Dec-2008 | Dec-2012 | Dec-2013 | Annual change |
| Male | 7,244 | 7,923 |  6,823  | -1,100 | -14% |
| Female | 73,662 | 78,016 |  71,020  | -6,996 | -9% |
| Mäori | 34,602 | 38,426 |  35,662  | -2,764 | -7% |
| Pacific people | 8,195 | 8,565 |  7,536  | -1,029 | -12% |
| NZ European | 30,227 | 30,304 |  26,976  | -3,328 | -11% |
| All other ethnicities\* / unspecified | 7,882 | 8,644 |  7,669  | -975 | -11% |
| 18-24 | 17,241 | 19,221 |  17,346  | -1,875 | -10% |
| 25-39 | 44,246 | 45,610 |  41,712  | -3,898 | -9% |
| 40-54 | 18,484 | 20,033 |  17,729  | -2,304 | -12% |
| 55-64 | 935 | 1,075 |  1,056  | -19 | -2% |
| Continuous duration on any benefit |  |  |  |  |  |
|  One year or less | 19,158 | 15,669 |  14,652  | -1,017 | -6% |
|  More than one year | 61,748 | 70,270 |  63,191  | -7,079 | -10% |
| Caring for a dependent child |  |  |  |  |  |
|  Under 5 years | 42,970 | 47,212 | 43,620 | -3,592 | -8% |
|  5-13 years | 37,290 | 38,586 | 34,122 | -4,464 | -12% |
|  Unspecified child age | 646 | 141 | 101 | -40 | -28% |
| Total number of recipients of SPS | **80,906** | **85,939** | **77,843** | **-8,096** | **-9%** |
| *Percentage of working-age main benefit population receiving SPS* | *28.3%* | *25.3%* | *24.2%* |  |  |
| *Percentage of working-age population receiving SPS* | *3.1%* | *3.1%* | *2.8%* |  |  |

**Five-year trend**

The number of clients receiving Sole Parent Support at the end of December increased between 2008 and 2011, then decreased over the last two years. This pattern reflects changes in economic conditions.

The proportion of the working-age population who were receiving Sole Parent Support at the end of December trended upward between 2008 and 2011, but decreased over the last two years.