

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2020**

Question

What was the amount spent on Income Support for those in full-time work over the last 3 years?

Answer

Income support provides benefits to low income households during in work and out of work periods. Whereas claimants are required to work full time (35 hours per week), this requirement is subject to a range of full and partial exemptions based on the caring responsibilities and the health and age of the individual. Many claimants will experience a change of circumstances during the course of their claim. As such, it is not possible to extract accurate data on the cost of Income Support for individuals in full time work without examining each claim individually over the 3-year period.

It should also be noted that the amount of Income Support will vary considerably between different full-time workers depending on the size and nature of the overall household. For two full-time workers with the same take-home pay, one may have no entitlement to Income Support at all and the other may be entitled to a significant weekly sum to support the needs of the whole household.

Information is published on the government's [open data website](#) in respect of Income Support amounts categorised by a range of household types, giving annual statistics since 2012. The website describes how annual data can be estimated against different types of claim as follows:

“The value of Income Support paid to a particular household depends not only on the mix of components that it is entitled to, but also on the other income received by the household. It is therefore not straightforward to report on the value of each component in the total expenditure for Income Support. However, to enable an analysis of the estimated total costs by component, a method of allocating costs within the various components has been developed. This method divides the actual Income Support benefit received by a household in proportion to the gross value of each of the components that the household is eligible for, to allocate a specific net value to each of the components. The mix of Income Support claims changes over time and the values of some components can change during the year. This analysis includes data taken from each month of the year to ensure that trends in the take-up of Income Support and rate changes during the year are represented and provides approximate net values for the cost of each component group.”

Using this monthly analysis method, Income Support amounts as yearly totals (£M) grouped by household type are reported as follows:

Year	65+ (£M)	Adult/s without children (£M)	Adults with Child/ren (£M)	Single adult with child/ren (£M)	Grand Total (£M)
2016	16.1	22.3	13.2	19.0	70.5
2017	15.9	21.4	12.2	17.7	67.2
2018	16.5	21.5	12.4	18.5	68.8

And, taking a snapshot of open claims as at 31 December each year, an analysis of the earned income of the working age groups is provided:

Adult/s without children				Adults with Child/ren			Single adult with child/ren		
Year	No. of Claims at year end	No. with at least 1 adult with earnings	% of total income as earnings	No. of Claims at year end	No. with at least 1 adult with earnings	% of total income as earnings	No. of Claims at year end	No. with at least 1 adult with earnings	% of total income as earnings
2016	2,270	756	27	918	813	59	1,037	639	34
2017	2,176	717	27	859	772	60	1,002	631	36
2018	2,083	725	28	823	743	59	1,018	648	35