

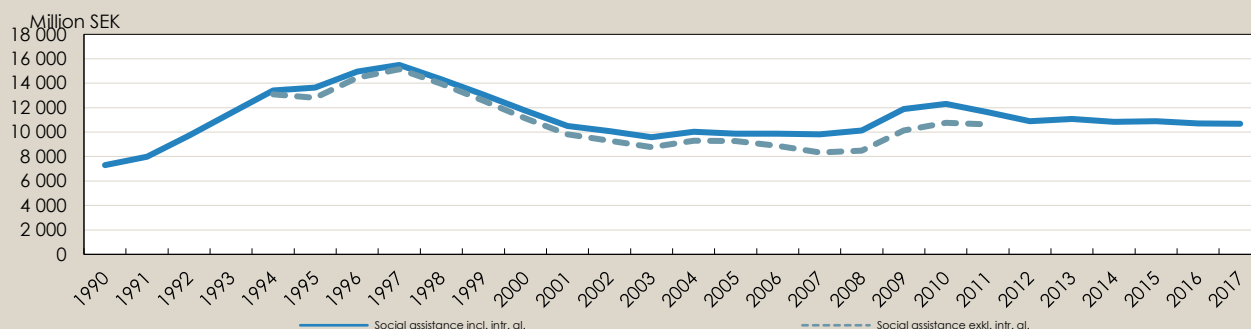
Statistics on Social Assistance 2017

Roughly 215,000 households received social assistance for at least one month in 2017. This corresponds to approximately one of twenty households in Sweden. The total expenditure in the municipalities in 2017 was SEK 10.7 billion. That is about the same amount as in 2016. The number of children in households with social assistance remained more or less the same during the last two years. Even in households with long-term assistance, the number of children was relatively stable.

Assistance over time

The number of households with social assistance peaked during the '90s and has since decreased until 2008-2010 when the number of household with social assistance began to increase again. After the year 2010 the number of households in need of assistance started to decline. Compared with 2016 the number of households year in 2017 decreased by two percent. The decline in number of household with assistance 2017 was greater than the average for the last five years. Total expenditure on social assistance has had a similar development with the difference that a small increase can be seen for the years 2008-2010, after which it levels out (Figure1).

Figure 1. Assistance (Including and excluding introductory allowance) 1990-2016, in



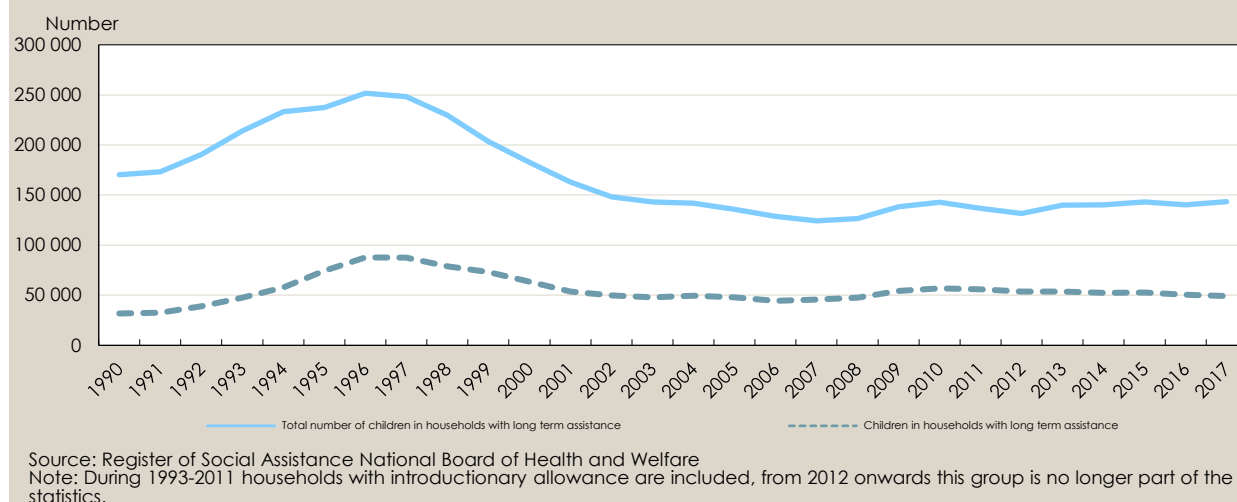
Source: Register of Assistance National Board of Health and Welfare

Note: During 1993-2011 households with introductory allowance are included, from 2012 onwards this group is no longer part of the statistics.

Children in recipient household

The number of children in recipient households was roughly the same as in the last three previous years, and the number of children in recipient households with long-term assistance has remained relatively constant during the last eight years (Figure 2). The proportion of children in households with long-term assistance, relative to children in the population, has fallen by almost one percent from just under seven to six per cent.

Figure 2. Number of children in recipient households in total and in long-term assistance households 1990-2017



Age and type of municipality matters

The need for social assistance differs between different age groups. Since '90s the most common recipients of assistance were young adults aged between 18-24 years related to the population. In 2017, more than 22 percent of all beneficiaries were aged 18 to 24 years. Of the adult beneficiaries, around 63 percent were foreign born.

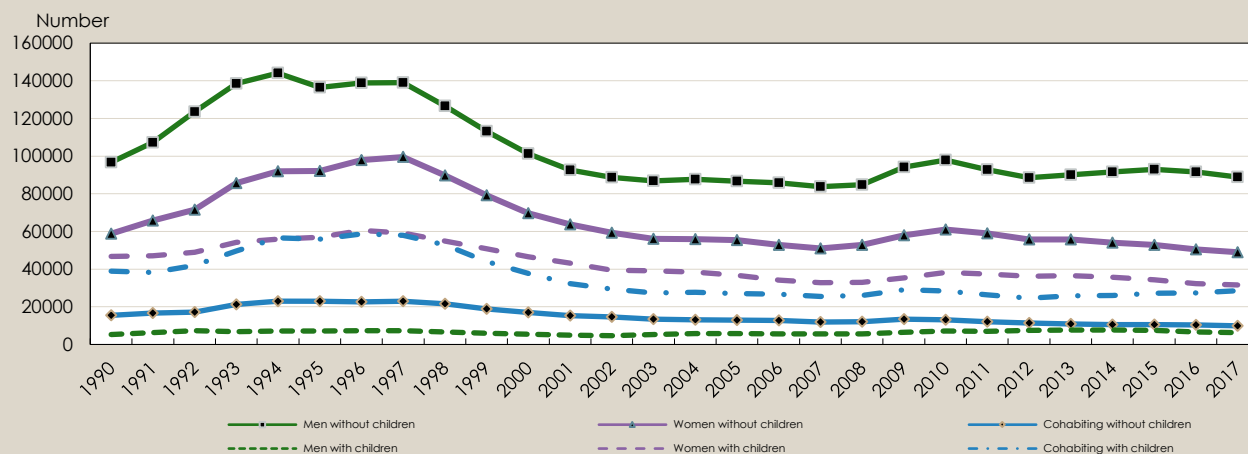
Many factors affect why women and men cannot support themselves and their family, but usually it is in connection with unemployment, illness or social barriers. About half of all adult recipients were unemployed during 2017.

The proportion of residents with social assistance varies widely between different types of municipalities. Factors that affect the aggregate demand are for example the composition of the population, the labour market and the educational level.

In some municipalities, as Malmö and Filipstad, about one tenth of the population received social assistance, and in others, like Lidingö, Danderyd, Solna and Krokholm the proportion was about one hundredth of the population. In Stockholm and Gothenburg, where statistics are available at district level, you can also see big differences between different neighbourhoods.

The most common assistance household

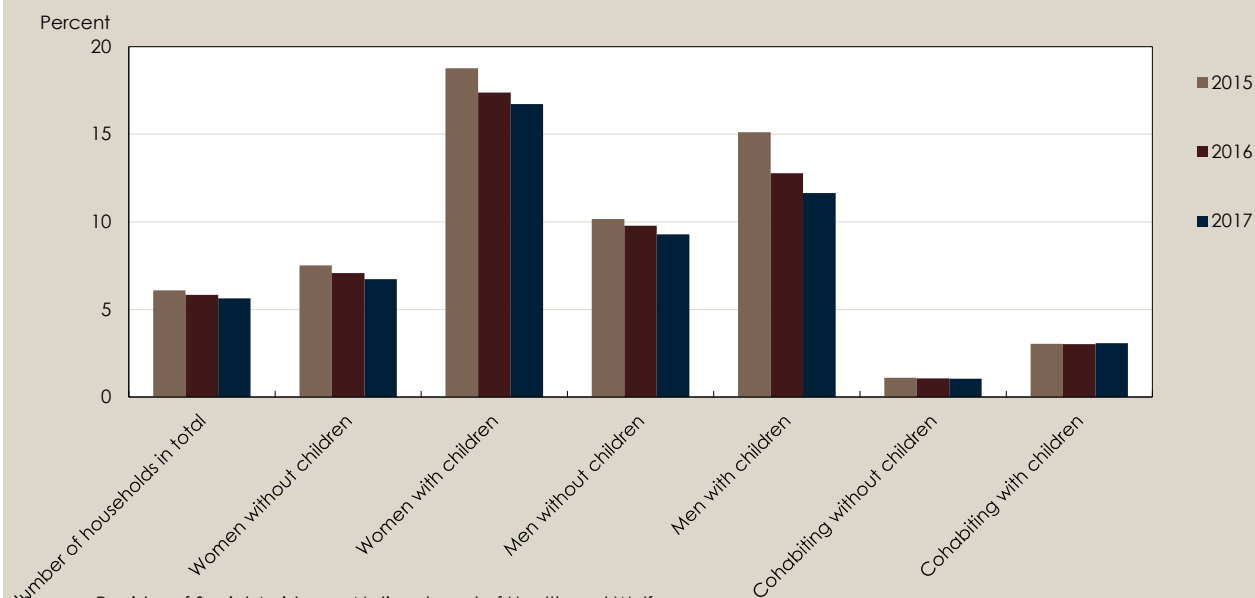
The most common assistance household is a single man without children (Figure 3). However, if one takes into account the distribution of different types of households, the proportion of recipients is clearly highest among single women with children (Figure 4).

Figure 3. Number of recipient households, by type of household 1990-2017

Source: Register of Social Assistance National Board of Health and Welfare

Note: During 1993-2011 households with introductory allowance are included, from 2012 onwards group is no longer part of the statistics.

The proportion of households with social assistance in relation to households in the population has decreased during 2017 for all types of households with the exception of cohabitants with or without children (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Proportion of recipient households in comparison to households in the population 2015-2017

Source: Register of Social Assistance National Board of Health and Welfare

A decrease in long-term assistance

The number of recipients with long-term social assistance decreased in 2017 compared with 2016. During 2017 almost 36 percent of the adult recipients received social assistance for 10 months or more. Compared with 2016, it was a decline by two percentage points. How long a household is in need of assistance varies over time. On average households received assistance for 6.4 months during 2017.

Social assistance

Social assistance is composed of two parts: direct assistance and general assistance. Direct assistance is supposed to help cover daily living expenses such as groceries, clothing, and rent payments, utility bills (electricity, telephone, Radio/TV license, gas etc.), travel expenses (for work), home insurance and union costs. General assistance covers other necessary expenses such as child-care costs, health related costs, medicine and costs for dental care.

For more information see

<http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/ekonomisktbistand>

More information

You can find more tables, graphs and information in the following Excel file (in Swedish, but with English list of terms):

www.socialstyrelsen.se/publikationer2018/2018-11-13

If you want to use our statistical database (in Swedish):

www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik/statistikdatabas/ekonomisktbistand

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