

Statistics on Financial Assistance 2021

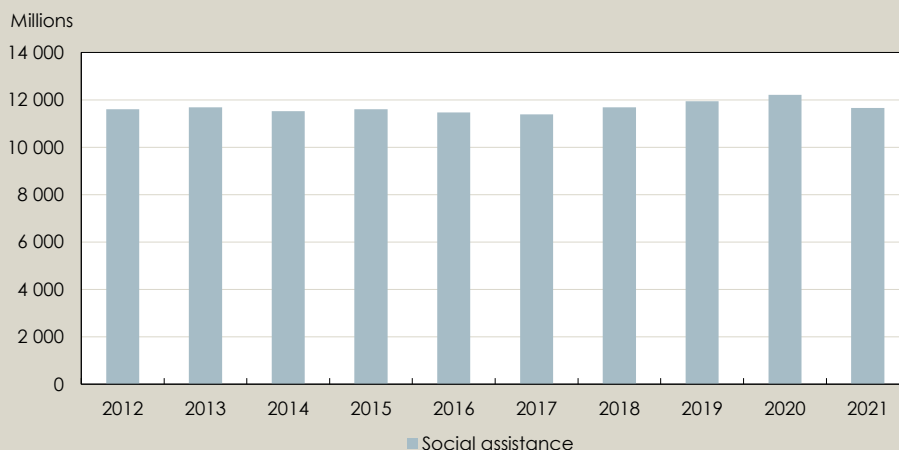
The number of social financial assistance recipients and assistance households decreased in 2021. Around 182.000 households received social assistance in 2021. This corresponds to one in twenty households in Sweden. It was the sixth consecutive year the number of social assistance recipients decreased.

Assistance over time

The number of assistance households decreased from almost 199.000 in 2020 to just over 182.00 in 2021. It was the sixth consecutive year the number of assistance households decreased. The number of assistance recipients also decreased. In 2021, close to 340.000 people received financial assistance. Of these, about 107.000 were women, 116.000 were men, and 117.000 children.

In 2021, the municipalities paid SEK 11.6 billion in financial assistance. The payments decreased by 4.5 percent in fixed prices compared to 2020. Payments have again fallen to levels before year 2018 (Figure 1). The amount of payments per household increased slightly, as well as the average time period for which the assistance was granted.

Figure 1. Assistance 2012-2021, in million SEK (fixed prices) 2021



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

Age and municipality matters

The need for social assistance differs between different age groups. The most common age group in 2021 was 30–39-year-olds. Of all adult recipients in the country, just over a fifth were aged 30–39. Of the assistance recipients in total, 63 percent were foreign-born.

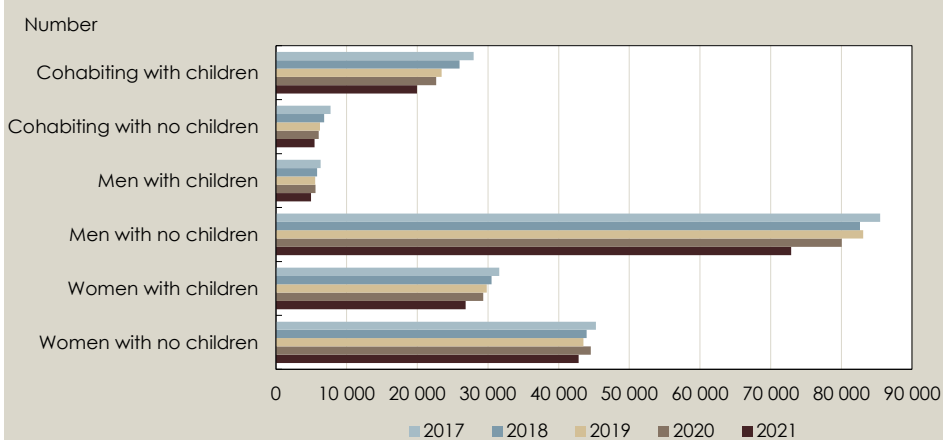
There are many reasons why women and men cannot support themselves and their families, but most often, the need for support was related to unemployment, illness or social barriers of various kinds. About half of all adult beneficiaries were unemployed in 2020 [1].

The proportion of people with assistance varies greatly between different municipalities. For example, the population composition, the local labour market and the education level of the population affect the overall need for social assistance. In Filipstad and Hällefors more than 8 percent of the population received social assistance, whereas the corresponding figure in Lidingö, Olofström, Solna and Vellinge was less than 1 percent. The national average in 2021 was 3.3 percent.

The most common assistance household

The most common assistance households are single men without children (Figure 2). If, on the other hand, one considers the different types of household in total in the population, then social assistance is most common among women with children. Just over 14 percent of all single women with children received financial assistance in 2021.

Figure 2. Number of recipient households, by type of household 2017–2021

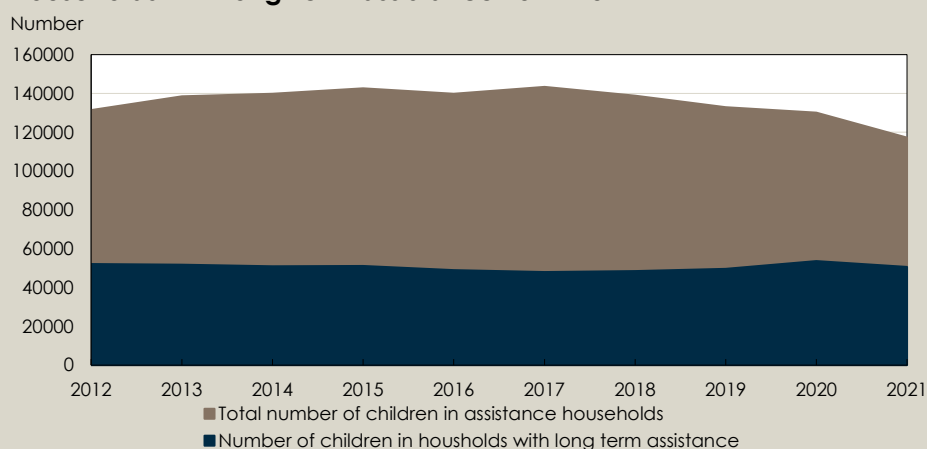


Source: Register of Social Assistance National Board of Health and Welfare

Children in assistance households

In 2021, the number of children in assistance households counted 117.000, which is a decrease by almost 10 percent compared to 2020. The number of children in households with long-term assistance in 2021 decreased by just over 3.000 to just above 50.000 in 2021. The number of children in households with long-term assistance has been relatively constant for a number of years, however there was a decline in 2021 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Number of children in assistance households, in total and in households with long-term assistance 2012–2021

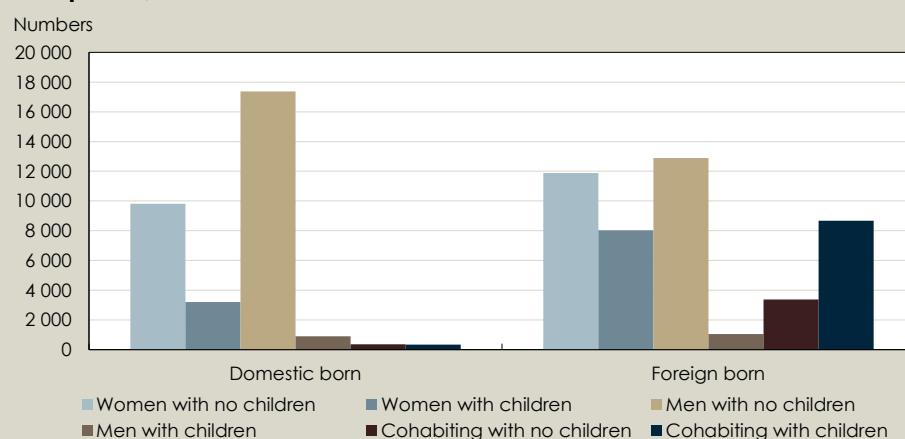


Source: Register of Social Assistance National Board of Health and Welfare

Long-term assistance

In 2021, the number of adult assistance recipients with long-term financial assistance, i.e. assistance for 10 months or more, has decreased compared with the previous year. The largest decrease compared to 2020 can be found among women over 65 years of age, with a decrease of 28 percent. Just over 40 percent of the adult assistance households did receive long-term assistance. Approximately 60 percent of these households consisted of households where one of the applicants or co-applicants were foreign-born.

Figure 4. Households with long-term assistance by household type and birthplace, 2021



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

The most common household with long-term assistance was single men without children, both among domestic and foreign-born. Long-term assistance among

married couples/cohabiting households is, in nine cases out of ten cases, directed to foreign-born recipients (Figure 4).

Social financial assistance

Social financial 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, rent, utility bills (electricity, telephone, gas etc.), travel expenses (for work), home insurance and union membership costs. General assistance covers other necessary expenses for childcare, health related, medicine and dental care.

For more information:

www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik/statistikefteramne/ekonomisktbistand

References

1. National Board of Health and Welfare. Downloaded 2022-06-07 from website: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/statistik/2021-10-7600.pdf>

More information

You can find more tables, graphs and information in Swedish, but with English list of terms (select *Tillhörande dokument och bilagor*):

<https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/en/statistics-and-data/statistics/>

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

<https://sdb.socialstyrelsen.se/iframe/val.aspx>

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