

Social assistance beneficiaries in 2019

29.10.2020

↓ 4.6%
Share of social assistance beneficiaries in the total population

In 2019, the number of social assistance beneficiaries amounted to 1 775.8 thousand people and was by 195 thousand lower than in 2018. The range of beneficiaries from social assistance, i.e. the share of beneficiaries in the total population, decreased by 0.5 pp and was 4.6%.

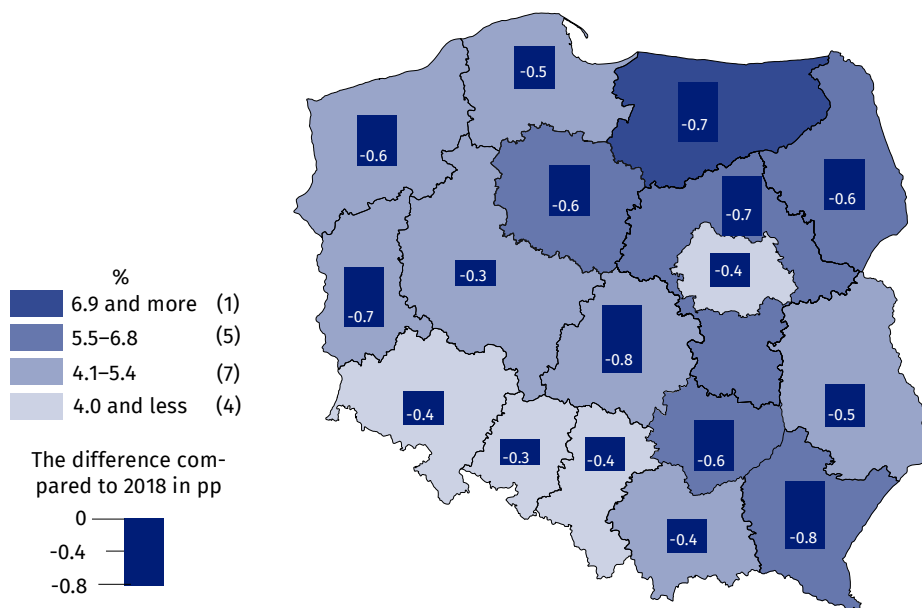
The number of people in households with per capita income below the income threshold¹ amounted to 1 015.4 thousand persons, which constituted 2.6% of the total population, less by 0.2 pp compared to 2018.

In 2019, the rural population prevailed among the beneficiaries of social assistance. Its number was 904.8 thousand persons, which constituted 51.4% of the total beneficiaries group. The share of beneficiaries in the number of inhabitants amounted to 5.9% in rural areas, and in urban areas it was lower by 2.1 pp. It is worth noting, however, that a constant trend that has been observed for 10 years is the decline in the share of rural residents among the beneficiaries of social assistance and the faster decline in the share of beneficiaries in the number of rural residents than in urban areas. Compared to the previous year, this indicator for rural areas decreased by 0.7 pp, and in urban areas by 0.3 pp.

In the analysed period continued the process of reducing the number of people who applied for support to social welfare centres mainly for financial reasons (income poverty)

Rural residents more frequently than urban residents benefited from social assistance

Map 1. Share of social assistance beneficiaries in the total population by regions in 2019



Source: data of the Central Collection of the National Social Assistance Monitoring System of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

The diversification of the range of benefiting from social assistance between regions was large. The highest value of the indicator – 8.0% was recorded in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie region, and a high share of beneficiaries in the number of inhabitants, over 6%, was also recorded in Kujawsko-Pomorskie (6.8%), Świętokrzyskie (6.3%), Podkarpackie (6.2%) and Podlaskie (6.1%). The smallest range of social assistance beneficiaries was recorded in the Warsaw capital region, where it amounted to 2.4%. Moreover, the share of beneficiaries of social

The largest share of beneficiaries in the population was recorded in northern and eastern regions

¹ In 2019, the amount of this criterion for a person in a family was PLN 528, and for single-handedly managing persons it was PLN 701. The study uses terms "poor households" to denote households with an income lower than the above-mentioned thresholds, and "poor beneficiaries" – to denote members of these households.

assistance at the level below 4% was noted in the following regions: Śląskie (3.0%), Dolnośląskie (3.3%) and Opolskie (4.0%).

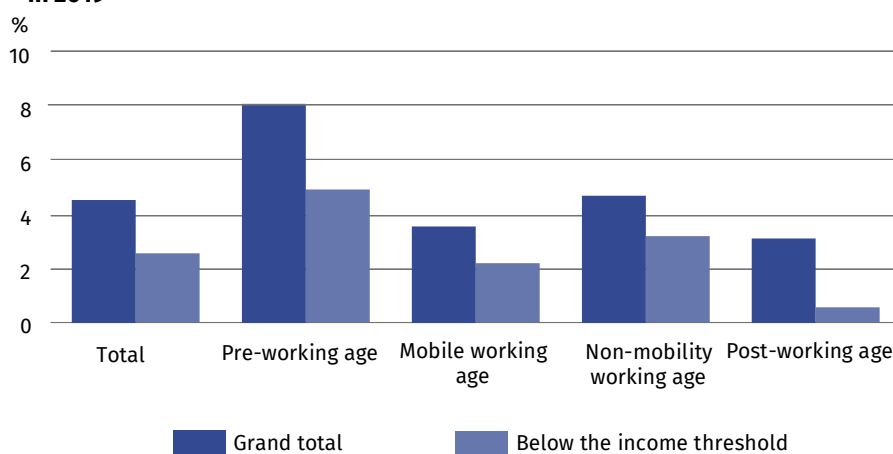
The decrease of the indicator in 2019 compared to the previous year was recorded in all voivodships, but the largest – by 0.8 pp occurred in voivodships: Łódzkie and Podkarpackie.

Among the beneficiaries of social assistance, 562.8 thousand people, i.e. 32.2%, are persons at pre-working age. The range of benefiting from social assistance in this age group was relatively high – it amounted to 8.1%, and the share of children and youth under 18 from poor households in the total number of children and youth in the same age group was 4.6%.

On the other hand, the percentage of persons at post-working age benefiting from social assistance in the total number of people at this age was 3.1%, and the percentage of poor beneficiaries at post-working age – 0.6%. It is worth adding that in the group of beneficiaries at retirement age, over 80% are members of households with per capita income above the income threshold. These are persons who, due to their health condition and family situation (over 70% manage single-handedly), use care services.

Among the beneficiaries of social assistance, 562.8 thousand people, that is 32.2%, are persons at pre-working age, mostly dependent children

Chart 1. Share of social assistance beneficiaries in the total population by economic age groups in 2019

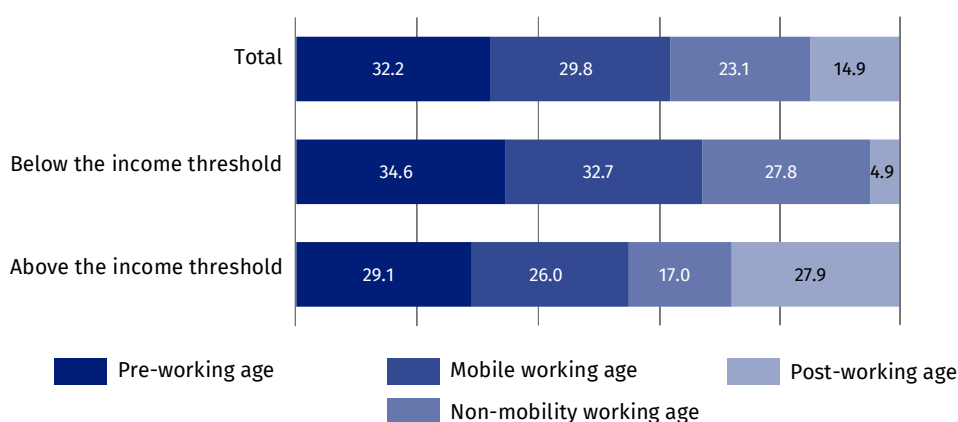


Source: data of the Central Collection of the National Social Assistance Monitoring System of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy and the Statistics Poland.

In the structure of the population of beneficiaries by economic age groups, persons at pre-working age (32.2%) and at mobile working age (29.8%) prevailed. The share of people at retirement age did not exceed 15%. Among the poor beneficiaries, the percentage of this age group was 4.9%, while it was much higher (27.9%) in the group of beneficiaries with per capita income above the income threshold.

Pre-working and mobile working age people predominated in the group of social assistance beneficiaries

Chart 2. Structure of social assistance beneficiaries by economic age groups in 2019



Source: data of the Central Collection of the National Social Assistance Monitoring System of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy and the Statistics Poland.

Among 1 747.2 thousand social assistance beneficiaries in households², 460.2 thousand (26.3%) are people constituting single-person households, and 1 287.0 thousand (73.7%) are members of multi-person households. A characteristic feature of the discussed group is the significant share of single-handedly managing persons amid beneficiaries living in urban areas. In 2019, it amounted to 35.0% and was almost twice as high as in the rural areas (18.2%).

In the analysed year, the group of poor beneficiaries amounted to 990.4 thousand, i.e. 56.7% of all household members, where the per capita income did not exceed the income criterion entitling them to apply for cash benefits from social assistance (poor households).

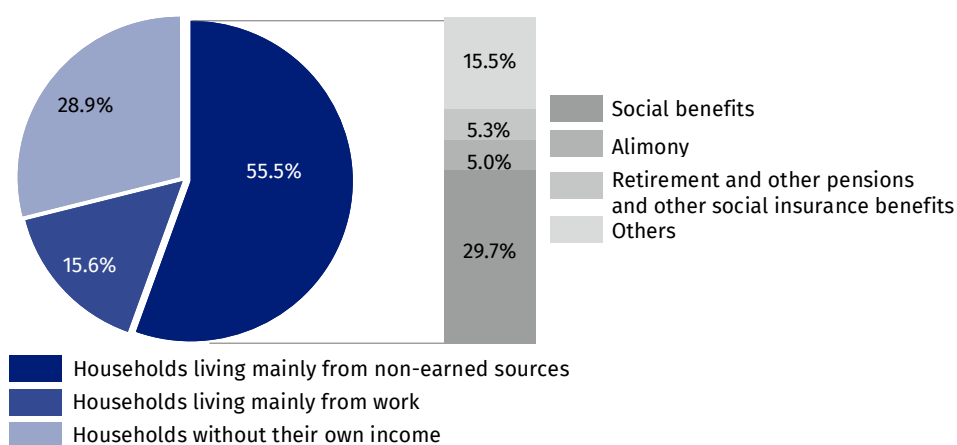
A low financial status of this group of people results mainly from their lower economic activity. In 2019, among 599.1 thousand people at working age from poor households, only 14.3% were employed, 43.7% were unemployed, and 42.0% were economically inactive. Among the economically inactive, over 60% are persons in education, disabled or chronically ill.

Among 458.6 thousand poor households, every third household – 28.9% did not have their own sources of income. However, more than half – 55.5% lived from unearned sources, most of them were social benefits. Social insurance and retirement and other pension benefits were rare in this group of households. They constituted the main source of income for 5.3% of households. Work was the main source of income for only 15.6% of poor households.

990.4 thousand, i.e. 56.7%, are members of households where the per capita income did not exceed the income criterion entitling to apply for cash benefits from social assistance

Among 458.6 thousand poor households, every third household did not have their own sources of income, while more than half lived from non-profit sources

Chart 3. Structure of poor households by main source of income in 2019



Source: data of the Central Collection of the National Social Assistance Monitoring System of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy and the Statistics Poland.

In 2019, the most common reasons for benefiting from social assistance by poor beneficiaries (apart from the low material status) were problems related to poor health or disability (they occurred in over 58% of households) and unemployment (54.5% of households). First of the above-mentioned problems dominated among single-person households, it occurred in over 71% of single-person households. Unemployment concerned mainly multi-person households – it was reported by 65.0% of this type of households as one of reasons for benefiting from social assistance. Family problems also played an important role, in particular, helplessness in care and education and managing a household, including those related to single parenthood as well as multi-children parenthood. Family problems occurred in over half (50.1%) of multi-person households.

In the case of quoting data from the Statistics Poland, please provide information: "Statistics Poland data source", and in the case of publishing calculations made on data published by the Statistics Poland, please provide information: "Own study based on Statistics Poland data".

² I.e. excluding 28.6 thousand homeless people to whom social welfare centres admitted benefits in 2019.

Prepared by:
Statistical Office in Kraków
Director Agnieszka Szlubowska
Office: tel. (+48 12) 420 40 50

Issued by:
**The Spokesperson for the President
of the Statistics Poland**
Karolina Banaszek
Mobile: tel. (+48) 695 255 011

Press Office

Office: tel. (+48 22) 608 34 91; 608 38 04

e-mail: obslugaprasowa@stat.gov.pl



www.stat.gov.pl/en/



[@StatPoland](https://twitter.com/StatPoland)



[@GlownyUrzadStatystyczny](https://www.facebook.com/GlownyUrzadStatystyczny)

Related information

[Social assistance beneficiaries in 2018](#)

Availability in databases

[Database Local Data Bank – Health care – Social care and family benefits – Social assistance beneficiaries](#)

Terms used in official statistics

[Social assistance beneficiaries](#)

[Households of social assistance beneficiaries](#)

[Social assistance](#)