

Social assistance beneficiaries in 2023

17.10.2024

↓ **2.1%**

Decrease of the number of social assistance beneficiaries y/y

The number of social assistance beneficiaries amounted to 1 274.9 thousand persons and was lower by 27.4 thousand (2.1%) than in 2022. The range of benefiting from social assistance, i.e. the share of beneficiaries in the total population remained unchanged and amounted to 3.4%.

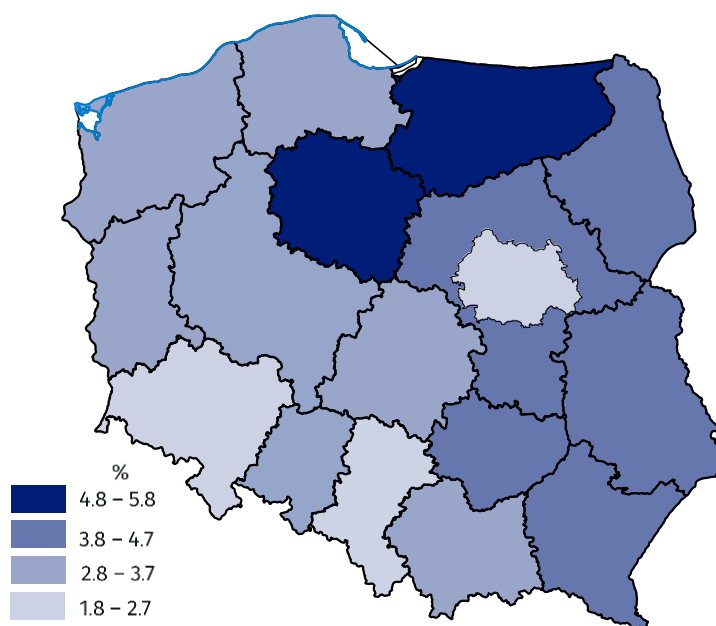
The number of beneficiaries in households and of homeless people with per capita income below the income threshold¹ amounted to 760.9 thousand, which accounted for 2.0% of the total population, i.e. less by 0.2 pp compared to 2022.

In 2023, city residents accounted for 52.9% of all social assistance beneficiaries, and their number amounted to 674.9 thousand persons. In rural areas, the share of beneficiaries in the total number of inhabitants was 3.9%, and in urban areas 3.0%. Compared to the previous year, this indicator decreased by 0.2 pp in rural areas, and in urban areas it remained unchanged.

In 2023, there was a further decline in the number of persons benefiting from social assistance benefits

City residents constituted 52.9% of the beneficiaries of social assistance

Map 1. Range of benefiting from social assistance by regions in 2023



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

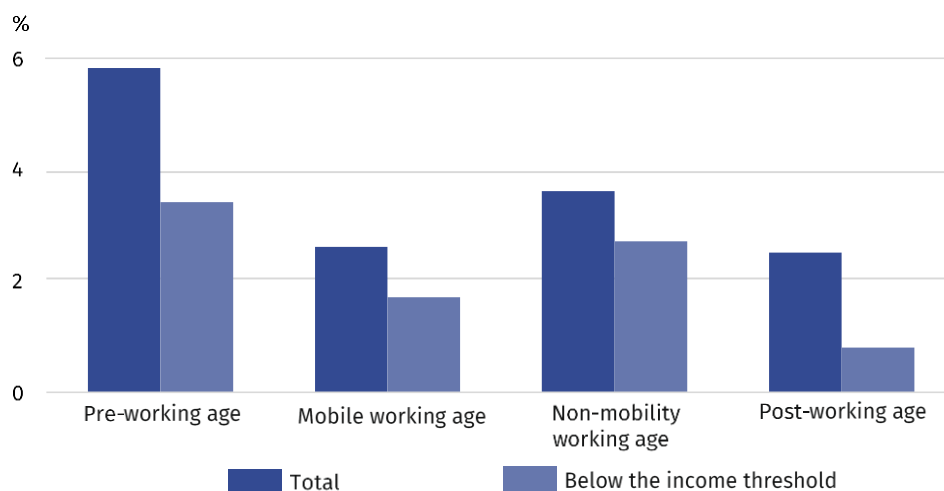
¹ In 2023, the amount of this criterion for a person in a family was PLN 600, and it was PLN 776 for a single-handedly managing person. These amounts apply since 1 January 2022. The study uses the terms "poor households" to denote households with income lower than the thresholds given above (homeless people do not form households) and "poor beneficiaries" – members of these households and homeless people with income below the income threshold.

The highest share of beneficiaries of social assistance in the total number of inhabitants was recorded in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie region (5.8%), and the lowest one in the Warsaw capital region (1.8%). A low (less than 3%) percentage of beneficiaries of social assistance occurred in the Śląskie region (2.3%) and the Dolnośląskie region (2.5%).

In 2023, the year-on-year increase of the indicator was recorded only in the Zachodniopomorskie region (by 0.1 pp). A decrease occurred in eight regions, including the largest in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie region (0.3 pp).

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

Chart 1. Range of benefiting from social assistance by economic age groups in 2023



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

The range of benefiting from social assistance in the pre-working age group was relatively high – it amounted to 5.8%, and the share of children and youth under the age of 18 from poor households in the total number of children and youth in the same age group amounted to 3.4%.

Nearly 6% of inhabitants under the age of 18 are members of families benefiting from social assistance

In turn, the percentage of persons at post-working age benefiting from social assistance in the total number of people at this age was 2.5%, and the percentage of poor beneficiaries at post-working age – 0.8%. The group of beneficiaries with income per person above the income threshold accounted for 69.3%. These were people who, due to their health condition and family situation (75.3% of them managed single-handedly) benefited from care services.

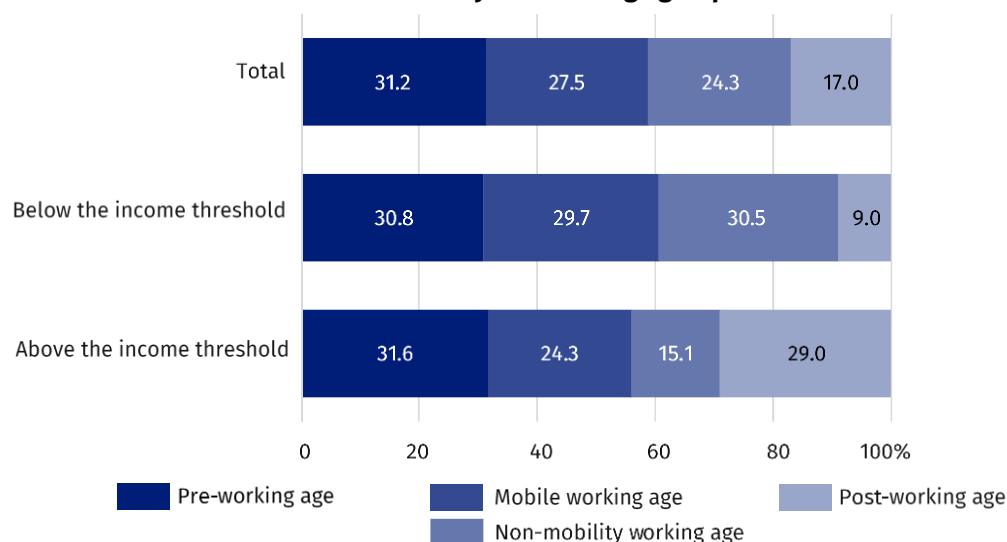
The share of retirees and pensioners benefiting from social assistance in the total number of retirees and pensioners was 1.8%. In turn, the percentage of people at post-working age who are not retirees or pensioners but are beneficiaries of social assistance in the total number of post-working age population not benefiting from retirement and other pension benefits amounted to 11.3%.

In 2023, the range of benefiting from social assistance among disabled persons was 7.1%.

In the population of beneficiaries according to economic age groups, the majority were persons at pre-working age (31.2%) and at mobile working age (27.5%). The share of persons at post-working age was 17.0%, whereas among poor beneficiaries it was 9.0%, and in the group of beneficiaries with per capita income above the income threshold – 29.0%.

Persons at post-working age had the smallest share in the group of social assistance beneficiaries

Chart 2. Social assistance beneficiaries by economic age groups in 2023

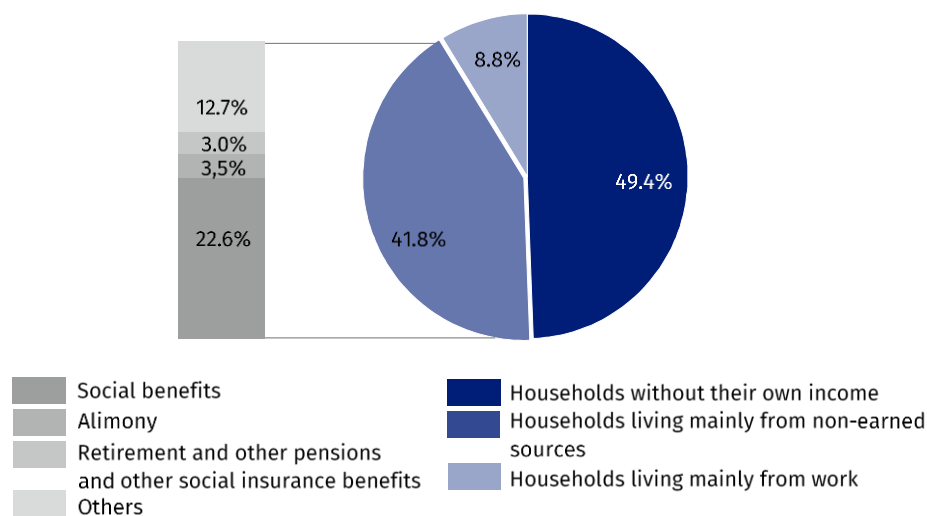


Source: data of the Central Collection of the National Social Assistance Monitoring System of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy and Statistics Poland.

Among 1 246.4 thousand social assistance beneficiaries in households², 401.5 thousand (32.2%), are people constituting single-person households, and 844.9 thousand (67.8%) are members of multi-person households. In urban areas the share of single-handedly managing persons amounted to 40.1%, and in rural areas – 23.5%. Among social assistance beneficiaries in households 736.0 thousand (59.0%) are poor beneficiaries.

59.0% of the beneficiaries are members of poor households

Chart 3. Poor households by main source of income in 2023



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

² I.e. excluding 28.5 thousand homeless people to whom social assistance centres provided benefits in 2023. Among these beneficiaries, 24.9 thousand are homeless people whose income did not exceed the income criterion.

In 2023, the number of people of working age in poor households was 435.9 thousand. Among them 11.9% were employed, 42.6% were looking for a job, and 45.5% were economically inactive. The majority of the economically inactive working population (63.9%) consisted of persons studying, disabled or chronically ill.

Among 392.9 thousand poor households, nearly half – 49.4% did not have their own sources of income. From non-earned sources, dominated by social benefits, lived 41.8% such households. Social insurance and retirement and other pension benefits constituted the main source of income for 3.0% of poor households, and work was the main source of income for only 8.8% of such households.

Due to problems related to poor health or disability, 63.8% of poor households received social assistance benefits, and due to unemployment 46.9% of such households. Among single-person households, the reasons for granting the benefit were mainly health problems (poor health, disability). They occurred in 75.8% of single-handedly managing persons. Among multi-person households, the most (60.7%) received benefits due to unemployment. Family problems also played an important role, especially helplessness in matters of care and education in multi-children and single-parent families, which occurred in more than half (53.8%) of poor multi-person households.

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Nearly half of poor households did not have their own sources of income, while over 40% lived from non-earned sources

Most poor households received benefits due to problems related to poor health or disability and unemployment

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Data available in databases

[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](#)