



Department for
Work and Pensions

Website: www.dwp.gov.uk

Mr William Moy

will@fullfact.org

Your Reference:

Our Ref: Fol 2430

Date: 2 July 2012

Dear,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of xxxx. You asked:

Please may I have any information you hold that could throw light on the claim that "thousands of children are growing up in families where their parents and grandparents have never worked." (Which is hardly new, but has recently been made by Dame Carol Black according to the Mail <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-528877/The-terrible-legacy-children-growing-families-havent-worked-generations.html>).

Information on the number of children growing up in families where their parents and grandparents have never worked is not available, as there is no suitable data source which would allow us to produce a robust and representative estimate of this persistent multigenerational worklessness.

The Office for National Statistics reports that in October-December 2011 around 310 thousand children (2.7%) lived in households containing at least one member aged 16-64 where no adult aged 16 or over has ever worked, apart from casual or holiday work.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lmac/working-and-workless-households/4th-quarter-2004-to-2011/table-o.xls>

However, this does not take into account the work status of non-resident parents. Ad-hoc analysis by DWP estimates that in Q2 2010 more than four in five children in never-worked households were living in lone parent households, and some of these children are likely to have had a working non-resident parent.

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc_analysis/2011/ind_hh_never_wkd.pdf

It is not currently possible to identify from this source all the grandparents who might be living in the same household. In any case, this would only give a partial estimate of multigenerational worklessness as many grandparents will be residents of a separate household.

In Dame Black's comments as reported in the Daily Mail article (cited in the FOI request), she was referring to personal observations which were gathered as part of her review into the health of Britain's working age population, and not to published statistical evidence.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely

Charley Bates
Labour Market Analysis and Strategy Division

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central FOI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk