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### **Joint claims for JSA: quantitative survey stage 1: potential claimants**

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Policy Studies Institute

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**Joint Claims for JSA –  
quantitative survey stage 1 –  
potential claimants**

**August 2001**

Commissioned by the Employment Service

**Dorothe Bonjour  
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**Policy Studies Institute**

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Employment Service or the Department for Work and Pensions.

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## **Executive Summary**

Joint Claims for JSA was introduced on 19 March 2001 and affects those couples without dependent children where at least one partner is aged 18 or over and born after 19 March 1976. Under the new rules, the distinction between claimant and non-claimant partner is removed and both partners in such couples are now required to seek and be available for work. Effectively, the legislation has the intended effect of bringing a group of individuals closer to the labour market with the intention of increasing their chances of employment and consequently encouraging couples to move away from dependency on JSA.

The extent to which this objective is met is the subject of evaluation. This evaluation takes the form of a comparison of movements into employment both before and after the introduction of Joint Claims for JSA. The surveys that this requires also provide a detailed picture of the target population for this legislation. This report presents the results of the first survey and answers the important question of ‘who are the couples eligible for Joint Claims?’ The impact of the changes will be addressed in a future report (Stage 2).

### **Personal and household characteristics (Chapter 2)**

It was more common for men to be older than their partners and for the woman’s age to qualify the couple for Joint Claims. The average age of men was 25 years compared to 21 years for women. Many of the partnerships were relatively recent; fewer than half had existed for more than a year at the time of sampling and a quarter had been living together for less than three months. Only a quarter of couples were married. In most cases, the couple interviewed were the only two people in the household. Thirteen per cent were from a minority ethnic group, Pakistanis accounting for more than a third of all those from minority ethnic groups.

Sixteen per cent of couples had children at the time of interview. This shows the short-lived nature of eligibility since couples with children are exempt from Joint Claims. All couples should have had no dependent children at the time of sampling. It appears that a fifth of couples seemingly meeting the childlessness criterion of Joint Claims were in fact exempt by the time of interview because they had children. Together with the evidence on the proportion of fairly recent partnerships, this paints a picture of a relatively volatile group, with many people moving in and out of eligibility over a short time.

Most couples rented their accommodation and in two-thirds of these cases this was some form of social accommodation. Seven per cent either owned their property outright or were in the process of buying the property through a mortgage. For half the couples, partners shared responsibility for paying the housing costs but in 37 per cent of cases, one partner (usually the man) had sole responsibility. Eligible couples were over-represented in the North East,

Yorkshire & Humberside and the West Midlands and were under-represented in the East Midlands/Anglia.

The proportion who had been engaged in full-time education beyond the age of 16 years was 45 per cent for men and 49 per cent for women. Only 21 per cent of men and 28 per cent of women finished full-time study before the age of 16 years. About a third of men and a quarter of women had no qualifications. A quarter of the men and a fifth of the women had either a literacy or numeracy problem and about one in 20 had both literacy and numeracy problems.

Only a small proportion of men and women reported poor health. Approximately a quarter reported health problems or disabilities which they expected to last more than a year and these generally affected the kind or amount of work that could be undertaken. A small proportion performed caring duties.

### **Current activity and history of employment (Chapter 3)**

By the time of interview (some 15 to 22 weeks after the sample date), 19 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women had paid employment of some description. For a quarter of the couples, at least one partner had work and in eight per cent of cases, both partners were in work. This relatively high level of joint working is indicative of a tendency for employment to be concentrated within couples. Considering those in employment, it is clear that working 30 or more hours per week was more common than working shorter hours, especially for men.

About three-quarters of the couples were still claiming JSA when interviewed and approximately a quarter had at least one partner participating in the New Deal, typically the man.

Overall, 22 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women had had employment of 16 hours or more per week at some point since the time of sampling. However, about two-fifths and three-fifths of men and women respectively who had worked since the sample date appear to have been already working at this level when sampled. The explanation for this is not clear (individuals should not have been working at this level when sampled) although recall error possibly accounts for some of the apparent contradiction.

For the three years before the sample, most men and slightly fewer women were actively seeking work in those months when they were not in paid employment. Job search tended to be intense for both men and women. In 2000, pregnancy emerged as the main reason for reduced job search among women. This implies that a sizeable minority of couples will only be required to make a Joint Claim for a short period of time.

For most individuals, non-employment was a relatively recent event. However, six per cent of men and 23 per cent of women had no experience of employment.

## **Characteristics of most recent employment (Chapter 4)**

The average rate of take-home pay for those who had worked since the time of sampling was £4.25 per hour for men and £3.94 per hour for women. Men worked longer hours than women, 36 hours per week on average compared with 27 hours per week for women. Eleven per cent of men and 27 per cent of women worked fewer than 16 hours per week (the threshold for JSA eligibility). A significant share of work took place in non-permanent positions. Only 62 per cent of men and 70 per cent of women held permanent posts. For men, a tenth of jobs had been part of a New Deal placement. For women, almost none had been part of New Deal placements.

## **Job search (Chapter 5)**

Only half the workless women were actively looking for work and this was due (in more than half the cases) to being pregnant or having recently had a baby. It was mainly child-related issues that determined when job search would resume.

Most of those involved in job search claimed to devote the majority of their time to it and applied for several jobs. For two-thirds of men and three-fifths of women at least one interview had resulted. However, the majority (three-quarters) had received no offers of employment.

Men were looking for an hourly rate of £5.20 on average, compared to £4.71 for women. The lowest acceptable pay was £4.29 for men and £3.94 for women, on average. With respect to hours, men wanted to work 41 hours on average compared with 37 hours for women.

Nearly half of men and women would have taken a job despite the fact that it may not have improved their financial standing. The main concerns in taking such a low-paying job centred around losing housing-related benefits and the financial strain associated with leaving benefits.

Men were more flexible than women in their job search with regard to commuting, relocation and working longer hours. Women were more willing to consider a temporary job.

## **Summary and conclusion (Chapter 6)**

Joint Claims will generally have a greater effect on the female partner. Barriers to job entry specific to women include lack of work experience and a reluctance to abandon domestic roles. These factors can result in reduced confidence and reduced job search flexibility. Policy will need to be sensitive to these considerations.

The presence of dependent children in couples, the apparent high levels of pregnancy and the tendency for many partnerships to have formed quite recently combine to suggest that the size of the Joint Claims population may

be smaller than anticipated and that the requirement to make a Joint Claim may often be short-lived.

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1.1 An overview of Joint Claims for JSA

Under legislation that came into effect on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2001, the rules governing Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) changed for certain couples. Previously, couples claiming (income-based) JSA received payment at an increased rate yet only one partner (the claimant) was obliged to satisfy the labour market requirement of searching and being available for work. The new legislation removed this distinction between claimant and dependent partner and required both members in a couple without dependent children to meet JSA requirements. Hence, both partners in such couples are now required to seek and be available for work.

Only certain couples are required to make a Joint Claim, however. Specifically, the legislation affects childless couples with at least one partner aged 18 or over and born after 19 March 1976. At the time of introduction, this age criterion translated into those couples with at least one partner aged between 18 and 24 years.

Joint Claims for JSA (hereafter, 'Joint Claims') was introduced with the aim of addressing the problem of workless households. Giving equal status to both partners means that the job search assistance provided to JSA claimants is now extended to both partners in a Joint Claim couple. Effectively, this brings a group of individuals closer to the labour market with the intention of increasing their chances of employment and consequently encouraging couples to move away from dependency on JSA.

## 1.2 The evaluation of Joint Claims

The extent to which this objective is met is the subject of evaluation. This is being undertaken by comparing movements into employment among couples in the new JSA environment with movements under the old regime. To abstract from the potentially misleading influence of a change in movements among the population more generally, a similar comparison is carried out for a 'control' group of couples. This control group comprises couples without dependent children who are claiming JSA at the increased rate for a dependent partner and where neither partner is aged between 18 and 24 years, but at least one partner is aged between 27 and 35 years. The change that remains among Joint Claims couples after allowing for the change among the control group provides a measure of the effect of the legislation.

For such an approach to be credible, sufficiently rich information must be available. Administrative records were not designed for the purpose of evaluation and consequently contain insufficient detail on the characteristics of couples claiming JSA. To overcome this, specifically tailored surveys were required. The evaluation will be based on information collected on couples both before and after the introduction of the legislation. As well as being essential for achieving the aims of the evaluation, these surveys are also

informative in that they permit a detailed understanding of the characteristics of the individuals in those couples required to make a Joint Claim. This report presents the results of carrying out the first survey. Clearly, at this stage the data do not exist to answer the key evaluation question as to the effect of Joint Claims. This will be the subject of the Stage 2 report, post introduction of Joint Claims. Rather, the analysis presented in this report answers the important question of 'who are the couples eligible for Joint Claims?'

It is worth noting that the evaluation of Joint Claims differs from many other evaluations in one significant respect. Namely, there is explicit recognition of the impact of the legislation at both the level of the individual and the level of the couple. This extra dimension introduces some considerable complexity into the analysis and also offers a wider range of outcomes of interest. For example, in addition to considering whether individuals are more likely to enter employment as a result of Joint Claims, the question of whether couples are more likely to leave worklessness is also of interest. In view of this, in some sections of this report attention is given to couple-level as well as individual-level results. Furthermore, outcomes at the individual level are likely to be inter-related. It is a well-established empirical finding that the employment status of men has an important influence on that of their partners. Additionally, partners within a couple tend to be similar in terms of their work-related characteristics.<sup>1</sup> These points are all important to bear in mind when carrying out the evaluation and when interpreting findings, albeit to a lesser extent in the descriptive account contained in this report.

### **1.3 Survey method and analysis approach**

The details of the survey design and implementation are contained in the accompanying technical report (BMRB International, 2001). The requirement to interview both partners in a couple necessitated a complex survey design involving the use of proxy questions in those situations where only one partner was available for interview and a further interview was needed for the outstanding partner. In some cases, interviewers proved unable to contact the missing partner with the result that only proxy information was available for that partner. Clearly, there is a risk that this information is inaccurate. To investigate this possibility, an examination of the reliability of the proxy information was carried out. This is important since the proxy couples will be included when considering the evaluation of the Joint Claims effect, in a later report. However, for the purposes of this report, only those couples where both partners provide information about themselves are considered. This is with a view to painting the most accurate picture possible of the target population. Overall, in 84 per cent of cases both partners in a couple satisfying the age criteria of Joint Claims provided their own information.

Having decided on using just the non-proxy responses, it was important to ensure that those interviewed were representative of the population from which they were drawn. Using information from the full sample frame, weights were derived which were used to restore the profile of those interviewed to

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<sup>1</sup> See Dorsett (2001) for recent evidence to this effect.

that of the sample for three key characteristics: age, region and duration of unemployment. Details of the approach to deriving the weights are provided in Appendix 2.

All results in this report are presented separately for men and for women. The alternative to this format was to present the results separately for claimant and non-claimant partners. The distinction between claimant and non-claimant no longer exists now Joint Claims has been introduced and the second stage of the evaluation will be along gender lines. While presenting the analysis separately for the claimant and non-claimant partners was an option that was considered, proceeding along gender lines was preferred since it preserved consistency with the intentions at stage 2, and because the influences on employment typically differ between men and women. However, it should be noted that the differences between the two approaches are not likely to be great since in nearly 80 per cent of cases the claimant partner in the sample was male.

### **1.4 Structure of the report**

The format of the report is as follows. In Chapter 2, the characteristics of the partners within the couple and of the household are presented. In Chapter 3, current activity and employment status is examined, while the characteristics of the most recent employment provide the focus of Chapter 4. Chapter 5 considers job search. There are three appendices. In Appendix 1, some of the characteristics discussed in Chapter 2 are compared with corresponding characteristics for unemployed couples in the Labour Force Survey and individuals who participated in the New Deal for Young People. These are not exact comparisons but may nevertheless be useful in providing context to the results given. In Appendix 2, the approach to weighting is set out. Appendix 3 considers the reliability of the proxy responses.

Finally, some additional tables, not discussed in the text, are included in the Annex. These tables summarise responses to the questions regarding attitudes and mental health.



## Chapter 2 Personal and household characteristics

This chapter describes the characteristics of the sample of couples who, in October 2000, would have met the Joint Claims criteria had it been in place at that time. The analysis is useful in helping understand the client group at which the legislation is aimed. Since the definition of the client group is very specific, relatively little is known about their composition. In household surveys, for example, it is not possible to identify them accurately and, even if it were, the numbers would be too small for useful analysis. However, it is possible to compare the demographic profile of those meeting the Joint Claims criteria with that of the samples used in other studies that were in some way similar. This forms the content of Appendix 1. The commentary that follows simply sets out the key characteristics of the Joint Claims eligible population, as at October 2000. Administrative records suggest that there were approximately 9,000 such couples at that time.

### 2.1 Personal characteristics and household composition

Table 2.1 shows the age distribution of couples meeting the Joint Claims criteria. It can be seen that men tended to be older with an average age of 25 years, while for women the average age was 21 years. From inspection of the age distributions, it is clear that it was more commonly the woman's age that rendered the couple eligible for Joint Claims. In fact, two-fifths of the men were older than 25 years. The modal age for women, on the other hand, was 18 years. A tenth of women were younger than 18 years.

**Table 2.1 Age**

Age	Male	Female
Average	24.5	20.6
Under 18	0.4	10.1
18	7.4	17.7
19	8.3	13.8
20	7.4	12.3
21	10.9	12.8
22	9.2	11.4
23	9.0	6.8
24	8.5	9.2
25-30	25.9	4.1
Over 30	13.1	1.7
Unweighted base	590	590
Weighted column per cent		

This disparity of ages is examined more closely in Table 2.2. This shows that, although two-fifths of couples comprised partners whose ages differed by no more than two years, it was more common for men to be older than their partners. While 20 per cent of men were some three to four years older than their partner, in 35 per cent of cases the difference was five or more years.

**Table 2.2 Age difference within couples**

Age difference	Couple
Female 5+ years older	2.8
Female 3-4 years older	1.9
Age difference of 2 years or less	40.3
Male 3-4 years older	19.5
Male 5+ years older	35.4
Unweighted base	590

Weighted column per cent

Couples with children are not required to make a Joint Claim and, as already noted, couples selected for interview should have had no dependent children at the time of sampling. However, it is possible that children may have been born to the couple in the period between sample and interview. Table 2.3 shows 16 per cent of couples had children at the time of interview. In almost all cases, this was a single child.

This has important implications for the size of the population meeting the criteria for Joint Claims. As described in the accompanying technical report (BMRB, 2001) the sample was drawn from administrative records, and those recorded as having dependent children were excluded. As a screening question prior to interview, couples were asked if they had children born prior to October 2000. Four per cent stated that this was the case and were consequently not interviewed. Thus, overall, it appears that 20 per cent of couples seemingly meeting the childlessness criterion of Joint Claims would not in fact have been required to make a Joint Claim by the time of interview because they had children.

**Table 2.3 Children**

Number of children living in household	Male	Female
0	84.0	84.2
1	15.7	15.5
2	0.1	0.0
3	0.1	0.3
Unweighted base	590	590

Weighted column per cent. Note that the responses for men and women should, in theory, be identical. The fact that they are not indicates a small degree of reporting error.

Table 2.4 shows that, for couples with children, the youngest child was aged six months or less in all cases. Taken alongside the results shown in Table 2.3, this is consistent with most couples with children having had their first child since the time of sampling.

**Table 2.4 Age of youngest child in the household (months)**

Age of youngest child (months)	Male	Female
0	41.0	41.0
1	16.3	16.5
2	21.5	21.0
3	10.9	12.1
4	6.8	7.1
5	2.3	1.2
6	1.2	1.1
<b>Unweighted base</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>96</b>

Weighted column per cent. Note that the responses for men and women should, in theory, be identical. The fact that they are not indicates a small degree of reporting error.

Table 2.5 shows that only a quarter of couples were married. Many of the partnerships were relatively recent; less than half had existed for more than a year at the time of sampling. A quarter had been living together for less than three months. This is not too surprising given the young age of at least one partner in the couple.

**Table 2.5 Type and duration of partnership**

Type and duration of partnership	Male	Female
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	23.1	23.1
Not married, but cohabiting/living as a couple	76.9	76.9
<b>How long living together at sample date (months)</b>		
Up to 3 months	26.6	26.2
4 – 6 months	10.8	12.9
7 – 12 months	19.4	16.5
13 – 24 months	22.4	23.9
Over 2 years	20.6	20.3
<b>Unweighted base</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>589</b>

Weighted column per cent. Note that the responses for men and women should, in theory, be identical. The fact that they are not indicates a small degree of reporting error.

In most cases, the couple interviewed were the only two people in the household. Table 2.6 shows that this was true in more than 70 per cent of cases. As noted previously, sixteen per cent of couples had children, which would account for some of those living with more people in their household. In fact, excluding children, the proportion of couples with no other people in the household rises to 86 per cent. In 70 per cent of cases, nobody in the household was in paid employment.

**Table 2.6 People in household**

People in the household	Male	Female
Number of people in household		
2	71.3	71.8
3	17.8	17.5
4+	10.7	10.3
Unweighted base	589	588
Number of people in household in paid employment		
0	70.2	69.4
1	16.2	16.7
2	11.8	11.6
3+	1.6	1.9
Unweighted base	589	588

Weighted column per cent

Table 2.7 considers ethnic group. For both men and women, 13 per cent were from a minority ethnic group. Those of Pakistani origin were the most common, accounting for five per cent of all couples and more than a third of all minority ethnic groups. The distribution for men and women was very similar, suggesting a tendency for partners to be from a similar ethnic group.

**Table 2.7 Ethnicity**

Ethnic group	Male	Female
White	86.8	87.3
Black – Caribbean	1.2	0.4
Black – African	1.1	2.0
Black – Other (specify)	0.8	0.5
Indian	1.5	1.4
Pakistani	4.6	4.8
Bangladeshi	1.3	1.3
Other	2.7	2.3
Unweighted base	589	589

Weighted column per cent

The religious beliefs of respondents are considered in Table 2.8. Just over a third of men and women held religious convictions, with the majority of these being Christian. The only other religion that was well-represented among the couples was Islam, cited by 28 per cent of the men and women who stated that they had a religion. This reflects the high representation noted above of those of Pakistani origin. However, respondents generally felt that religion was largely irrelevant to the way they lived their everyday lives. Overall, more than three-quarters of men and women felt that religion was either not at all or not very important to the way they lived their life, with this being stated by 78 per cent of men and 77 per cent of women.

**Table 2.8 Religion**

Religion	Male	Female
Whether individual has a religion or church	34.6	35.8
Unweighted base	588	588
Which religion is that?		
Hindu	1.2	1.2
Sikh	1.2	0.8
Muslim	28.2	27.7
Christian	63.8	67.2
Buddhist	0.8	1.1
Jewish	0.3	0.0
Other	4.4	2.0
Unweighted base	198	203
Importance of religion to everyday life		
Not at all important	53.4	49.3
Not very important	23.9	27.7
Fairly important	9.0	10.6
Very important	13.7	12.4
Unweighted base	589	590

Weighted column per cent

## 2.2 Household characteristics

Almost all couples were living in private accommodation. Most were renting (91 per cent) but seven per cent either owned their property outright or were in the process of buying the property through a mortgage. The type of housing is shown in Table 2.9. Only about a third of those renting were renting privately, the remainder having as landlord either a council, a new town or a housing association. Overall, more than half of those couples interviewed were living in social accommodation.

**Table 2.9 Type of accommodation**

Type of accommodation	Couple
Accommodation owned outright	3.0
Being bought on a mortgage or a bank loan	4.2
Rented from a council, a new town or a housing association	53.9
Rented privately	37.3
Rent free or squatting	0.4
Live with parents/family	1.0
Unweighted base	588

Weighted column per cent

As shown in Table 2.10, half the couples interviewed shared responsibility for paying the mortgage or rent. In a further 37 per cent of couples, one partner had sole responsibility for paying the housing costs. This was most

commonly the man. For a quarter of couples, the man was solely responsible while the woman was responsible in about one tenth of couples.

**Table 2.10 Housing payment responsibility**

Person responsible for paying the mortgage or rent	Male	Female
Respondent	27.0	12.0
Respondent's partner	10.4	25.6
Respondent and partner	49.8	49.9
Respondent and/or partner and parents	2.9	3.0
Respondent and/or partner and someone else	0.5	0.9
Respondent's parents/relatives	3.1	2.7
Paid directly (council, housing association, etc)	6.0	5.5
Insurance	0.3	0.3
Unweighted base	556	551

Weighted column per cent

Table 2.11 shows region of residence. The greatest share of those meeting the criteria for Joint Claims were in living in London /South East England (22 per cent). The geographical distribution can be compared with results from the Labour Force Survey giving the population distribution for those aged 16 years or over within Britain. This is presented in the second column in Table 2.11 and is included in order to assess the extent to which the Joint Claims population appears to be concentrated within particular areas. The third column in the table divides the proportion in the Joint Claims sample by the LFS proportion to derive a location quotient suggesting over-representation within particular regions. A value of one indicates that the proportion in the Joint Claims sample in that region is the same as would be expected from an inspection of the working age population as a whole. A high entry in the third column suggests a degree of concentration within a region while a low entry suggests a lower than expected occurrence of Joint Claims couples. From this, it is clear that the North East, Yorkshire & Humberside and the West Midlands were the regions with substantially more Joint Claims couples than expected, while the East Midlands/Anglia was the region with substantially fewer Joint Claims couples than expected.

**Table 2.11 Region of residence**

Region	Couple	LFS	Ratio
Scotland	8.8	8.9	1.0
North east	6.9	4.5	1.5
North west	12.7	11.8	1.1
Yorkshire & Humberside	12.0	8.7	1.4
Wales	5.5	5.1	1.1
West midlands	12.0	9.2	1.3
East midlands/Anglia	11.9	16.7	0.7
South west	7.8	8.6	0.9
London/south east	22.4	26.5	0.8
Unweighted base	590		

Weighted column per cent

## 2.3 Human capital

The age of leaving education is considered in Table 2.12. Most (nearly half) men and women left school at the age of 16. A substantial minority (one quarter) left school before this time. However, roughly a third of men and women subsequently returned to full-time higher or further education. Taking this into account, the proportion engaged in full-time education beyond the age of 16 years was 45 per cent for men and 49 per cent for women. Similarly, on this basis, only 21 per cent of men and 28 per cent of women finished full-time study before the age of 16 years.

**Table 2.12 Length of time in education**

Length of time in education	Male	Female
age left school/sixth form college		
under 16	24.7	23.5
16	47.7	45.7
17-18	21.6	23.5
over 18	6.0	7.3
Return to full-time further or higher education	31.6	35.5
Age left full-time education		
under 16	21.1	17.7
16	34.0	32.9
17-18	27.0	30.7
over 18	17.9	18.7
Unweighted base	590	590
Weighted column per cent		

The extent to which individuals were successful in gaining qualifications is shown in Table 2.13. This shows the highest level of qualification held, with academic and vocational qualifications converted to their equivalent NVQ level. Most held a qualification of some description but 32 per cent of men and 27 per cent of women reported having no qualifications. The most common type of qualification held was one equivalent to NVQ level 2, followed by NVQ level 1. This was true for both men and women. The highest category of qualification, equivalent to NVQ level 4 or above, was held by eight per cent of men, and ten per cent of women.

**Table 2.13 Highest level of qualification (NVQ equivalent)**

Highest level of qualification (NVQ equivalent)	Male	Female
NVQ4 or higher	7.7	10.2
NVQ3	12.6	10.8
NVQ2	28.7	34.9
NVQ1	16.7	14.7
Other qualifications	2.2	2.3
No qualifications	31.9	27.0
Unweighted base	589	590
Weighted column per cent		

Other aspects of human capital are also important and these are presented in Table 2.14. In terms of literacy, most did not feel they had problems with reading or writing English. Overall, 79 per cent of men and 84 per cent of women reported no such problems. However, 13 per cent of men had problems with reading and 12 per cent with writing English, often explained by the fact that English was not their first language. Amongst women, the corresponding proportions were ten per cent and nine per cent respectively. In fact, it appears that a relatively small proportion of those for whom English was not the first language gave this as a reason for their problems of literacy since English was not the first language for 13 per cent of both men and women.

While men were slightly more likely than women to report literacy problems, they were slightly less likely to report numeracy problems. Overall, a quarter of the men and a fifth of the women had either a literacy or numeracy problem. About one in 20 had both literacy and numeracy problems.

Finally, Table 2.14 shows the proportion of the sample who could drive and who had access to a vehicle. This is significant since having a driver's license is often found to be correlated with improved employment prospects. More men than women held a driver's licence (35 per cent compared with 14 per cent of women). Of those who could drive, approximately two-thirds had access to a motor vehicle of some description.

**Table 2.14 Other human capital**

<b>Other human capital</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Literacy problems</b>		
Yes, reading English	12.9	10.1
Yes, writing English	12.3	8.8
Yes, because English is not my first language	6.8	6.3
No	78.5	84.0
 Numeracy problems	 7.5	 9.7
 Literacy or numeracy problems	 24.5	 20.0
 Literacy and numeracy problems	 4.5	 5.6
 Current full driving licence	 34.8	 13.7
- If yes, whether has access to motor vehicle	63.7	68.3
 Unweighted	 590	 590

Weighted column per cent

## **2.4 Social exclusion and living standards**

Table 2.15 presents measures of social interaction, which can provide an insight to social exclusion. It is also relevant from the employment viewpoint since social networks are often an important means of hearing about job



opportunities. There was some indication of social isolation, with 11 per cent of men and 15 per cent of women reporting that they meet with friends less often than every few months.

**Table 2.15 Social interactions**

<b>Social interactions</b>	Male	Female
How often respondent meets socially with friends		
several times a week	43.5	34.1
about weekly	22.2	23.4
about fortnightly	9.9	11.8
about monthly	7.4	8.4
every few months	6.0	6.6
once a year	0.2	1.0
Less often	4.0	6.6
Never	7.0	8.1
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

The employment status of those people with whom the respondents socialised is examined in Table 2.16. For 18 per cent of men and women, all or most of the people they met socially were looking for work. However, in two-thirds of cases, few or no social contacts were looking for work. In fact, 54 per cent of couples were characterised by both partners having few or no social contacts who were looking for work. It is worth remembering in interpreting this finding that this could be explained either by those social contacts already being in paid employment or by them being economically inactive. This distinction is considered a little more explicitly by examining the proportion of social contacts who were in paid employment. This shows that for three-fifths of the men and half the women, all or most of their social contacts were in paid employment. Eight per cent only had any social interaction with people who were not in paid employment. Considering the partners jointly, in 14 per cent of cases few or none of the social contacts of either partner were in paid employment.

**Table 2.16 Social Networks**

<b>Employment status of social contacts</b>	Male	Female
Proportion of social contacts who are seeking work		
All	4.8	3.3
Most	13.3	14.6
About half	14.1	14.4
Few	37.5	36.0
None	30.4	31.8
<i>Unweighted base</i>	553	551
Proportion of social contacts in paid employment		
All	23.1	21.2
Most	36.3	30.3
About half	16.4	19.6
Few	16.3	20.5
None	7.9	8.4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	560	551

Weighted column per cent

Table 2.17 presents the proportion of the sample which had at some time experienced difficult living circumstances, some of which can place the individual at risk of social exclusion. Only 44 per cent of men and 51 per cent of women had not experienced any of these living situations. Most common was to have lived with just one parent. It is well-established that lone parent households are more at risk of poverty than two-adult households. About a third of men and women had experienced living with just one parent. Sleeping rough was relatively common for men (17 per cent) but less so for women (7 per cent). Similarly common for both men and women was living in a centre for homeless people. Finally, the other fairly common experience for men was living in a young offenders institution, detention centre or prison. Some 13 per cent of men had experience of this compared with only one per cent of women.

**Table 2.17 Previous experience of difficult living conditions**

<b>Previous experience of difficult living conditions</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Living with a foster family	7.2	6.4
Living with an adopted family	2.6	2.0
Living with just one parent	32.1	36.6
Living in a residential children's home	7.9	5.2
Living in a young offenders' institution, detention centre or prison	12.5	0.9
Living in a hostel/foyer for homeless people	14.4	11.2
Sleeping rough (eg living on the streets)	16.7	6.5
Living in Armed Forces accommodation	7.0	2.2
None of these	44.0	50.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>

Weighted column per cent. Columns do not sum to 100 since individuals may have experienced more than one of the conditions listed.

## 2.5 Benefits

Respondents were asked to list the benefits they received personally, rather than as a couple. This was asked for both benefits related to sickness and benefits that were not related to sickness. Less than four per cent of men and women claimed any kind of sickness-related benefit, so these results are not presented. Table 2.18 presents the results for those benefits not related to sickness. Men had a higher receipt of these benefits, which would be mostly due to their role as the main recipient of JSA. At the time of interview, 66 per cent of men and 45 per cent of women said they were claiming JSA. Of these, the majority were claiming income-based JSA, although 15 per cent of men and 20 per cent of women did not know whether their JSA was income-based or contributions-based. The other major benefits were housing-related. Housing benefit/rent rebates were claimed by 63 per cent of men, and 48 per cent of women, and Council Tax rebates were claimed by 54 per cent of men and 40 per cent of women. Child benefit was claimed by four per cent of men and 11 per cent of women, at the time of interview. Only 21 per cent of men

and 31 per cent of women stated that they were not claiming any general benefits. In 14 per cent of cases both partners reported claiming no benefits.

**Table 2.18 Non-sickness-related benefits receipt**

Non-sickness-related benefits receipt	Male	Female
Housing Benefit (Rent Rebate)	63.0	47.5
Council Tax Rebates	53.7	40.0
Income Support	5.9	8.1
Jobseeker's Allowance, of which	66.1	44.9
- Contributions based JSA	19.5	18.0
- Income based JSA	65.2	62.3
- Don't know whether contributions- or income-based JSA	15.2	19.7
Child Benefit	3.9	11.2
New Deal Allowance	4.5	1.5
None of these	21.4	31.0
<i>Unweighted</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

## 2.6 Health and caring responsibilities

The health of those surveyed is shown in Table 2.19. The majority rated their health somewhere between good and excellent. Only a small proportion of men and women stated that their health was poor. This is to be expected given the youth of the sample. However, 20 per cent of men and 23 per cent of women felt their health to be either fair or poor.

Approximately a quarter of men and women reported having health problems or disabilities which they expected to last more than a year. Where these long-term health problems existed, they generally affected the kind or amount of work that could be undertaken. This was true for three-quarters of men and women. Aside from these current health problems, 14 per cent of men and 16 per cent of women had had a long-term health problem at some point in the past.

**Table 2.19 Health**

Health	Male	Female
General level of self-reported health		
Excellent	26.6	21.2
Very good	30.2	27.1
Good	24.7	28.6
Fair	14.0	15.9
Poor	4.5	7.3
Long-term health problem or disability	25.7	23.9
- if yes, whether it affects type or amount of work possible	74.9	71.7
Ever had any other long-term health problem or disability	14.3	15.6

<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590
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Weighted column per cent

Finally in this section, Table 2.20 considers respondents' caring responsibilities. Such responsibilities are relevant not only in their consequences for employment search and availability, but also as a Joint Claimant with substantial caring responsibilities can be exempted from the JSA requirement to be available and actively seeking work. A small proportion performed caring duties, seven per cent of men and eight per cent of women. Women tended to provide longer hours of care than men; 60 per cent of those men who had caring duties performed these duties for less than ten hours a week, compared with 42 per cent for women. However, for both men and women, about a third of those with caring responsibilities felt it affected the kind or amount of work they could do.

**Table 2.20 Caring responsibilities**

Caring responsibilities	Male	Female
Whether respondent cares for or gives special help to anyone	6.6	8.0
Number of hours caring per week		
Up to 10 hours	59.6	42.4
11-20 hours	16.3	16.4
21-30 hours	10.9	18.1
31-40 hours	9.4	12.1
Over 40 hours	3.8	11.0
Whether caring affects type or amount of work possible	31.7	33.0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	40	48

Weighted column per cent

## Chapter 3 Current activity and history of employment

In this chapter, attention turns to economic activity, both current and historic. This is an important aspect of the survey since from this information it is possible to assess the extent of movements into employment. Thus, the results in this chapter provide a baseline against which the broader evaluation question of the employment effects of Joint Claims will be addressed.

### 3.1 Current employment status

Respondents were asked to consider their activity in the week prior to interview. This represents a lag of some 15 to 22 weeks after the sample date (depending on when the interview was carried out) and allows the extent of movements between economic states in this period to be considered.

Table 3.1 presents the results. Whereas the results presented so far have largely been at the level of the individual, couple-level information is also of interest for employment. Consequently there are four columns of results in Table 3.1. The third column indicates the proportion of couples for which either of the partners was characterised by a given activity, while the fourth column indicates the proportion of couples for which both partners were involved in a given activity.

Considering those in employment, it is clear that working 30 or more hours per week is more common than working shorter hours. This is especially true for men. Men were also more likely than women to move into any kind of work; 19 per cent compared to 14 per cent. Considering couples as a whole, the results show that one quarter of couples were not workless by the time of interview. That is, for one quarter of couples one or other partner had work of some description at the point of interview.

Some caution should be exercised when considering these results. First, there is the potential for ambiguity in how individuals choose to categorise themselves. For example, somebody on the employment option of the New Deal for Young People may choose to categorise him/herself as either an employee or as being on the New Deal. Similarly, those on the New Deal may describe themselves as unemployed. Some consideration will be given later to the extent to which this biases the results in Table 3.1. Second, it is not immediate that the results indicate a move away from worklessness. It is permissible to work less than 16 hours per week and still receive JSA and individuals working at this level may have also been doing so at the point of sampling. Hence, it is not possible, on the basis of these results alone, to interpret this as a change. The duration of current status is considered separately below. This analysis of duration will also reveal another aspect which is of some concern; namely, that a sizeable proportion of individuals record themselves as working full-time at the time of sampling. Again, this will be discussed more fully below, but for now the salient point is that if a workless status at the time of sampling cannot be guaranteed, the

interpretation of the current level of employment cannot necessarily be regarded as indicating a transition.

Considering the fourth column, in eight per cent of couples both partners were in work of some definition in the week prior to interview. As already noted, it is an established empirical finding that the employment prospects of partners within a couple tend to be linked, with the result that couples tend to become polarised between those where both partners are in work and those where neither partner is in work. The results in Table 3.1 support this. Specifically, were the employment statuses independent, one would expect both partners to be in work in only 2.7 per cent of couples. The fact that the actual level is nearly three times as high as this shows that the employment statuses are inter-related.

The other main results in Table 3.1 are that in about 70 per cent of cases couples were claiming JSA and that approximately one in ten men were on the New Deal or another government programme. This result is considered further below for the reasons already mentioned. The only other sizeable category is that of looking after the home, children or other relatives which reached a level of 11 per cent for women, yet barely registered for men.

**Table 3.1: Activity in the week prior to interview**

<b>Current activity</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Either</b>	<b>Both</b>
Employee – 30+ hours per week	12.7	6.1	16.2	2.5
Employee – 24-29 hours per week	1.3	1.8	3.0	0.1
Employee – 16-23 hours per week	2.2	2.1	4.3	0.0
Employee – 1-15 hours per week	1.9	3.7	5.2	0.4
Self-employed	0.9	0.2	0.9	0.2
<i>All work (employees and self-employed)</i>	<i>19.0</i>	<i>13.8</i>	<i>25.1</i>	<i>7.9</i>
New Deal or other government programme	10.6	3.9	13.1	1.5
Full-time education or training	0.8	1.2	2.0	0.0
Unemployed, couple claiming JSA	58.8	54.8	69.1	44.2
Unemployed, couple not claiming JSA	4.6	6.4	9.5	1.6
Long-term sick, injured or disabled	1.9	1.1	2.7	0.2
Temporarily sick or injured, or pregnant - no job	2.5	5.6	7.4	0.6
Looking after the home, children, or other relatives	0.6	11.4	11.7	0.4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>

Weighted column per cent

Table 3.2 follows the same format as Table 3.1 but considers only the proportion on the New Deal or some other government programme. These results are somewhat higher than those presented above, reflecting the fact that respondents were asked in a subsequent question to state whether they were currently taking part in the New Deal (or other government programme) irrespective of how they had classified their current activity. The results show that it is much more common for the men in couples to be taking part in the New Deal than it is for the women. In fact, it appears from Table 3.2 that among these couples participating in New Deal, in about 70 per cent of cases

it was the man who was participating rather than the woman. This coincides with the composition of the New Deal for Young People (NDYP) as a whole; Bryson et al. (2001) report 71 per cent of participants to be male. It is to be expected that, among couples, New Deal participants were predominantly male since, as already noted, in the majority of cases it was the male who was registered as the JSA claimant and who would automatically joint NDYP or ND25+ at the appropriate point. Table 3.2 also shows that for nearly one quarter of couples, there was at least one New Deal participant. Both partners participating was relatively rare, accounting for less than two per cent of all couples.

**Table 3.2: New Deal or other government programme**

<b>On New Deal or other government programme</b>	Male	Female	Either	Both
New Deal	17.5	7.5	23.5	1.6
Another government programme	2.4	1.4	3.4	0.4
No	80.1	91.1	97.5	73.6
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>586</i>	<i>589</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>

Weighted column per cent

As noted, Table 3.1 suggests that about 70 per cent of couples were claiming JSA at the time of interview. Again, due to the potential for ambiguity in self-categorisation, those respondents not indicating explicitly that they were either claiming or not claiming JSA were subsequently asked whether they or their partner were, in fact, receiving the benefit. This only slightly increased the proportion of couples claiming JSA, to 73 per cent. Those who were unemployed yet not claiming were asked the reasons for this. However, they were very few in number (29 men and 39 women) and therefore their responses cannot be regarded as reliable. However, with this proviso in mind it appears that the most commonly cited reason for not claiming was the partner working. This was given as a reason by half of the women and one-fifth of the men. Slightly less than a quarter of men and women were no longer claiming due to having moved to another benefit.

### **3.2 Employment since the sample date**

As well as their current status, it is also of interest to know whether respondents have had any work since the time of sampling. Given the rules governing JSA, employment of 16 hours or more per week is of particular relevance. Overall, 22 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women had held jobs of this kind at some point since the interview date. Table 3.3 shows how long it took to find such jobs.

The first point to note in Table 3.3 is that a substantial proportion of individuals appeared to be working at the time of sampling. This should not be the case since the sample was drawn from administrative records identifying couples claiming JSA and therefore not in employment of 16 hours or more per week. The fact that approximately two-fifths and three-fifths of men and women respectively who had worked since the sample date appear to have been already working at this level when sampled is a cause for some concern, not



least because this type of information will be important when evaluating the impact of Joint Claims. In fact, the third column shows that for those couples who had worked since the sample date, more than half had already been working at the time of sampling. This amounts to 15 per cent of the total sample. To rationalise this seeming contradiction involves a degree of conjecture. Perhaps the most likely explanation is that the dates provided by the respondents are subject to recall error. Should this be the case, it will be possible to adjust their responses to tie in more closely with administrative records. There may also be a response error in classifying the hours of employment. Alternatively, it is possible that some respondents are being paid for work but not declaring it.

While no particularly strong pattern is evident in the results, there is some indication of moves into employment being concentrated in the weeks nearer to the sample date. Ignoring those who appear to be already working at the time of sampling, about half of the remainder found their job within about one month of being sampled. It should be noted, however, that these results are based on relatively few individuals. Only 130 men and 81 women were recorded as having worked in a job for 16 or more hours per week since the time of the sample. There were 163 couples for whom either partner had worked since the sample date.

**Table 3.3: Time taken to find a job of 16 or more hours per week**

<b>Days since sample to being employed 16+ hours</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Either</b>
Already working on 1st October, 2000	39.3	62.6	53.7
1-10 days	17.1	10.3	15.2
11-30 days	10.6	7.5	7.5
31-60 days	16.1	7.4	10.2
61-90 days	5.6	2.4	4.1
More than 90 days	11.2	9.8	9.2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>163</i>

Weighted column per cent

The proportion of time spent in employment since the sample date can also be investigated. This is again subject to the provisos discussed above, but is useful since it gives an indication of the permanence of employment for those who found work. Each row in Table 3.4 considers employment at or above a specified number of hours per week. The rows consider progressively fewer hours and consequently the definition broadens with each successive row. The results display a marked difference between the sexes. Considering the proportion of time spent in jobs of 30 or more hours per week, the level is twice as high for men as for women; men, on average, spent 12 per cent of their time in such jobs compared with only six per cent for women. As the hours definition broadens, the difference between the sexes diminished such that considering the broadest definition (employed or self-employed) reveals an average of 18 per cent for men and 14 per cent for women. This reflects the tendency for women to work shorter hours than men. The final column in Table 3.4 presents the proportion of time for which couples as a whole had at least one partner with employment at the specified level. For the average



couple, one quarter of the days since the sample date could be accounted for by some kind of employment for either partner.

**Table 3.4: Proportion of time in employment since the sample date**

<b>Proportion of time employed since sample</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Either</b>
% days employed 30+ hours	11.9	6.0	14.9
% days employed 24+ hours	13.0	8.2	16.8
% days employed 16+ hours	14.5	10.2	19.4
% days employed any hours	16.4	13.7	23.7
% days employed or self-employed	17.9	14.2	25.2
<i>Unweighted</i>	589	589	589

Weighted column per cent

### 3.3 Employment history pre-sample

The variables considered in this chapter thus far can be considered outcome variables. That is, they reflect changing circumstances since the point of sampling. It is also important to consider characteristics before this point since this can inform our perception of the degree to which individuals are distanced from the labour market. Particularly relevant is the length of time since last employment. This is presented in Table 3.5.

The first row in Table 3.5 shows the proportion who had had any employment since the sample date. This amounts to approximately one-quarter of men and one-fifth of women. This is higher than the levels quoted earlier for the simple reason that the results in Table 3.5 include all types of employment, rather than just those of 16 or more hours per week as in Table 3.3. However, the most substantial group includes those who worked at some point in 2000 but not since the sample date. Those whose most recent experience of employment was in 1999 accounted for the next largest group among those who had experience of employment. Hence, for most individuals, non-employment was a relatively recent event. In fact, excluding those who had never worked, about two-thirds of both men and women had worked in 2000. It is with respect to the proportion having never worked that the differences between the sexes are most evident. While only six per cent of men had no experience of any kind of employment, the corresponding level for women was 23 per cent.

**Table 3.5: Length of time since last employment**

<b>When last worked</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Since 9/10/2000	26.4	18.7
2000 before 9/10/2000	37.0	30.1
1999	15.2	15.7
1998	5.4	6.2
Before 1998	9.6	6.9
Never worked	6.4	22.5
Unweighted base	590	590

Weighted column per cent

Table 3.6 considers the proportion of time in employment over the period 1998-2000. As an overall comment, it appears that men had accumulated more work experience than women. This is not surprising considering the results just presented on the relatively high proportion of women who had never worked. However, the results in Table 3.6 are likely to be an underestimate of the true difference between the sexes since no account is taken of the number of hours worked per week in this definition of employment. The greater tendency for women to work part-time has already been noted. Hence, the impression of men's greater accumulation of work experience is compounded by the fact that the time that they did spend in employment is likely to have been in jobs involving more hours per week than those in which women worked. Table 3.6 also shows that 18 per cent of men and 29 per cent of women were not employed at any time over the period 1998-2000.

**Table 3.6: proportion of time in employment, 1998-2000**

<b>Amount of time spent in employment, 1998-2000</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
None	17.5	28.9
Up to 20 per cent	18.4	24.1
20-40 per cent	19.3	16.8
40-60 per cent	17.1	11.5
60-80 per cent	17.0	13.2
80-100 per cent	10.8	5.5
Unweighted base	590	590

Weighted column per cent

### **3.4 Job search pre-sample**

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 indicate the degree to which individuals had become detached from a working environment. In this regard, it is informative of the extent to which partners within the surveyed couples were distant from the labour market. However, it is possible to gain a further insight into this concept of distance by considering individuals' attempts to find work. It is to this that attention turns in the remainder of this chapter.

Respondents were asked to consider their job search efforts. For each of the three years 1998-2000, individuals were asked to state whether they were actively looking for any kind of paid work in those months in which they had no work. The results are summarised in Table 3.7. For men, the majority were actively seeking work in those months when they were not in paid employment. This level was high in all three years considered, although noticeably higher in 2000. For women, there also appeared to be an increase although this took place earlier than 2000. The reason for these jumps is considered in more detail below. The finding that the proportion of men involved in active job search was higher than that for women is unsurprising given the tendency for men to be the claimant partner and hence obliged to meet the job search requirements of JSA.

**Table 3.7: Actively looking for work, 1998-2000**

Active job search	Male			Female		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Actively seeking work	94.8	84.5	83.5	72.8	70.2	61.6
Unweighted base	580	453	373	566	421	341

Weighted column per cent

It is also revealing to consider the intensity of job search. Table 3.8 shows that in the majority of cases, a lot of time was reported to be devoted to job search. There was a slight tendency for more men than women to report spending all or most of their time looking for work when unemployed. However, for both men and women the proportion accounted for by these two categories exceeded four-fifths in all years considered.

**Table 3.8: Amount of time spent looking for work when out of employment, 1998-2000**

Amount of time spent looking for a job when out of employment	Male			Female		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
All of the time	67.8	76.1	73.9	57.4	65.1	69.4
Most of the time	18.8	15.7	18.4	24.4	19.6	15.1
A lot of the time	5.6	2.9	1.1	4.8	6.1	3.5
Some of the time	6.5	4.5	5.8	9.9	6.6	10.0
A little of the time	1.1	0.6	0.3	2.9	1.8	1.1
None of the time	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.7	0.9
Unweighted base	550	383	309	418	302	214

Weighted column per cent

Those who were not actively looking for work all the time in those months when they were without work were asked the reasons for this. A large number of reasons were given and the main responses are summarised in Table 3.9. Participating in full-time education or training was cited by many as a reason. However, the importance of this declined over time as the cohort aged. This is particularly noticeable for women. In fact, in each of the three years considered, a higher proportion of women than men gave education and training as their reason for not looking for work. This reflects the tendency for the women in the couples surveyed to be younger than the men.

While the importance of education in reducing job search intensity declined over time, pregnancy or maternity emerged as the dominant factor in 2000. Nearly one-third of women gave this as a reason for their reduced search intensity. This has important consequences for Joint Claims since it only applies to couples without dependent children. More specifically, the apparent high proportion of women who were on pregnancy or maternity leave suggests that the requirement to make a Joint Claim may be short-lived in a sizeable number of cases. Long-term sickness, injury or disability was the reason given by some (more men than women) while temporary sickness or injury or pregnancy was more prevalent, especially in later years. The

inclusion of pregnancy in this category reinforces the point made above relating to the short duration of the requirement to make a Joint Claim.

Predictably, a higher proportion of women than men could not search for jobs all the time due to domestic responsibilities. About one-fifth of women gave the reason of 'looking after the home' in 2000. The corresponding proportion for men was 14 per cent; a substantial increase on the preceding two years. Men were more likely to state that they were caring for a sick or disabled person than women. They were also much more likely to not have been looking for work all the time due to being in prison or on bail. About one in ten men gave this as a reason in 1998 and 1999 compared to barely any women. The proportion giving this as a reason in 2000 apparently halved, this reflecting their selection into the sample.

These results provide some insight into the degree of distance from the labour market. It is worth emphasising that, in the majority of cases, those who were unemployed were actively searching for work, and those actively searching for work tended to devote all or most of their available time to it. However, the results show that this was less true for women than for men. Table 3.7 shows that, among the couples surveyed, women were not engaged in active job search in 2000 in 30 per cent of cases. For women in the age group under consideration, their distance from the labour market, both historic and current, can be relatively simply explained. At a younger age, participation in education prevented them from looking for work, while pregnancy and bringing up children became more relevant at a later stage. These are very definite stages in the life-cycle. The constant theme of looking after the home presents a less rigid obstacle to employment.

**Table 3.9: Main reasons for not looking for work all of the time when out of employment, 1998-2000**

Main reasons for not looking for a job (all of the time)	Male			Female		
	2000	1999	1998	2000	1999	1998
Full-time education or training	9.4	19.0	20.3	13.0	26.8	36.9
Pregnancy or maternity leave	1.9	0.0	0.0	30.0	1.5	2.0
Long-term sick, injured or disabled	7.7	8.2	8.6	4.9	5.8	5.3
Temporarily sick or injured, or pregnant - no job to return to	11.4	10.4	7.2	14.3	10.8	6.4
Looking after the home	13.5	5.1	5.1	20.9	26.5	23.6
Caring for sick, disabled or elderly household member or relative	8.7	4.8	4.8	4.0	6.3	4.7
In prison/on bail/custodial sentence	4.9	9.9	8.9	0.0	0.4	0.0
Out of the country or just arrived from another country	1.2	5.4	2.8	0.5	4.0	4.2
Personal reasons/difficulties	4.5	5.0	1.8	2.2	5.7	2.6
Don't know	18.3	14.1	21.9	4.9	3.9	4.3
<i>Unweighted</i>	<i>211</i>	<i>163</i>	<i>143</i>	<i>326</i>	<i>223</i>	<i>191</i>

Weighted column per cent

## Chapter 4 Characteristics of most recent employment

In this chapter consideration is given to the characteristics of the most recent employment for those respondents who had worked at some point since the time of sampling. Individuals were interviewed approximately five months after sampling, on average, and by this point some 19 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women were in work, as shown in chapter 3. The group of individuals on whom the analysis in this chapter is based includes those who were not in work at the time of interview but who had worked since October 2000.<sup>2</sup>

### 4.1 Occupation

The main occupation of recent work for men and women is shown in Table 4.1. The most commonly described work role for men was 'other' occupations, held by 29 per cent of men. This is a very diverse grouping of job types, covering 'other' occupations in a range of industries including agriculture, forestry & fishing, mining & manufacture, construction, transport, communication, and the sales & service industries. These jobs are commonly described as labourers or mates, postal workers and couriers, porters, kitchen hands, shelf-fillers, cleaners and refuse collectors. Both 'Craft and Related' (19 per cent) and 'plant and machine operatives' (20 per cent) were also roles commonly held by men. Together with 'other occupations' already described, these roles described two-thirds of the nature of work held by men.

The recent work of women was quite different in nature from that of men. For women, work was most commonly in 'Sales', with a third of women performing sales roles, including that of check-out assistant. As with men, a large share of women's work was in 'other' occupations (24 per cent), while another quarter of women held work in 'personal and protective services', which is also very wide-ranging including hairdressers, assistant nursing roles, care assistants, childcare and nursery workers and waiters. Overall, 83 per cent of the jobs held by women fell into one of these three broad occupations. This shows a greater concentration of work occupations than for men, where the three most commonly held occupations accounted for only two thirds of men's working roles. Service roles dominated the work of women, with a third in 'Sales' and another quarter in 'personal and protective services'.

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<sup>2</sup> These figures exclude the few (2 per cent) of individuals who indicated they were self-employed.

**Table 4.1 Occupation in most recent job**

Occupation of employee job	Male	Female
Managers and administrators	2.4	0.0
Professional	0.9	2.1
Associate professional & technical	3.6	5.2
Clerical & secretarial	11.0	5.9
Craft & related	18.6	1.7
Personal & protective services	6.4	25.1
Sales	8.4	33.7
Plant & machine operatives	20.1	2.8
Other	28.5	23.5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>109</i>

Weighted column per cent . Note: SOC 1990 1 digit code.

## 4.2 Industry

The main industry for recent work is described in Table 4.2. Although the main occupations for men and women were highly concentrated, especially for women, the main industries they worked in were more evenly spread. To some extent, this can be related to the importance of 'other' occupations, which includes roles from diverse industries. For men, the three main industries were manufacturing (26 per cent), the wholesale and retail trade (18 per cent) and hotels and restaurants (11 per cent). However, these accounted for only half of men's work, and no further industries accounted for more than ten per cent. For women, a third were working in the wholesale and retail trade, reflecting the dominant sales occupations. The health and social work industry accounted for a further 19 per cent, but no other industries had work concentrations higher than ten per cent. Half of the work of women fell into these two industry categories.

**Table 4.2 Main industry in most recent job**

Industry of employee job	Male	Female
A Agriculture, hunting & forestry	3.9	0.0
D Manufacturing	26.0	8.3
E Electricity, gas & water supply	0.0	2.0
F Construction	8.9	0.0
G Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal household goods	18.0	32.6
H Hotels & restaurants	11.3	6.5
I Transport, storage & communication	6.7	7.3
J Financial intermediation	1.8	0.7
K Real estate, renting & business activities	6.2	8.7
L Public administration & defence; compulsory social security	5.9	3.6
M Education	2.2	6.8
N Health & social work	2.9	18.8
O Other community, social & personal service activities	6.2	1.9
P Private households with employed persons	0.0	2.8
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>107</i>

Weighted column per cent . Note: SIC 1992 1 digit code

### 4.3 Supervisory responsibilities and size of the workplace

It is instructive to consider the supervisory responsibilities of the most recent job since this provides an indication of the level within an organisation at which an individual was employed. Table 4.3 shows that only a small proportion of jobs had involved supervising other workers. This proportion was similar for men and women.

**Table 4.3 Supervisory role in work**

<b>Employee: Do/did you supervise other people's work</b>	Male	Female
No	88.1	87.1
Yes	11.9	12.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	147	109

weighted column per cent

The size of the place of work is considered in Table 4.4. A large proportion of both men and women worked in establishments with fewer than 50 employees. For men, this figure was 62 per cent, while for women it was 67 per cent. At the other end of the scale, large firms with more than 500 employees accounted for the work of 12 per cent of male workers and nine per cent of female workers.

**Table 4.4 Size of Establishment where Joint Claimants work**

<b>Size of establishment</b>	Male	Female
Up to 10	32.5	25.9
11-24	17.1	22.4
25-49	12.0	19.1
50-99	4.6	9.4
100-499	21.9	14.2
Over 500	12.0	9.0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	146	108

weighted column per cent

### 4.4 Pay and hours

An important indicator of the quality of jobs is their level of pay. The hourly take-home pay for workers is shown in Table 4.5. As a pertinent reference point, it should be noted that the minimum wage at this time was £3.70 per hour, or £3.20 for 18-20 year olds. The results show that, on average, both men and women received more than the national minimum wage. Men tended to be paid at a higher rate, with their average remuneration being £4.25 per hour compared to an average of £3.94 per hour for women. Inspection of the distribution of pay is revealing and suggests that a substantial proportion of both men and women were being paid at a rate below the national minimum wage. Women's pay appeared relatively concentrated with half of them receiving take home pay of between £3-3.99 per hour.



**Table 4.5 Hourly take home pay rate for work**

Take home pay - hourly rate	Male	Female
Average	4.25	3.94
Below £3	12.8	18.4
£3.00-£3.99	36.2	49.6
£4.00-£4.99	25.2	11.6
£5.00-£5.99	13.6	13.0
£6 and over	12.1	7.5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>91</i>

weighted column per cent. Note that this table considers take home pay after deductions for tax and national insurance but including overtime pay, bonus, commission and tips. Three individuals were recorded as having anomalously high pay and they were excluded from the results in this table. These comprised two women recording pay of £33 and £60 per hour, and one man recording pay of £23 per hour.

Table 4.6 shows that, while men earned higher hourly take-home pay rates, they also worked longer hours. On average men worked 36 hours per week while women worked 27 hours per week. The important threshold with regard to JSA and Joint Claims is 16 hours, since working up to this level does not affect eligibility. The results show that the proportion working fewer than 16 hours per week was greater for women than for men. Whereas 11 per cent of men worked at this level, the corresponding proportion for women was 27 per cent.

**Table 4.6 Weekly hours relating to hourly pay rates**

Weekly hours	Male	Female
Average	36	27
Up to 16	11.1	27.4
17-24	7.5	15.2
25-30	9.9	15.3
31-40	54.7	36.5
40+	16.9	5.6
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>135</i>	<i>102</i>

weighted column per cent

A few workers received allowances additional to their pay. The allowances received were generally for travel expenses, or sometimes for clothing and tools. Table 4.7 shows that it was more common for men to receive allowances. However, this was still relatively rare; only 11 per cent of men received such allowances (and two per cent of women).



**Table 4.7 Work allowances additional to pay**

Any other allowances for work expenses	Male	Female
Yes	11.4	2.1
No	88.6	97.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>110</i>

weighted column per cent

Another indicator of job quality is whether the job is permanent or temporary. The casualisation of labour is a widely-recognised development in the labour market over recent years with a greater proportion of jobs being temporary in nature. Table 4.8 shows the work contract of recent jobs. A significant share of work took place in non-permanent positions. Only 62 per cent of men and 70 per cent of women held permanent posts. A quarter of men held seasonal, temporary or casual work, with 13 per cent performing work under a limited period contract. Women also had more seasonal, temporary or casual work (19 per cent) than time limited contracts (11 per cent).

**Table 4.8 Nature of work contract**

Permanence of most recent job	Male	Female
a permanent one,	61.5	70.4
a seasonal, temporary or casual one,	25.4	18.9
or a job done under contract for a limited period of time?	13.0	10.8
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>109</i>

weighted column per cent

The role of government programmes in work is shown in Table 4.9. A small share of work was part of a New Deal placement, but this was almost exclusively for men (9 per cent). In fact, for 11 per cent of men their most recent job had been part of a government programme. This is largely explained by the fact that men tended to be the claimant partner and would therefore be eligible for such programmes.

**Table 4.9 Work placements as part of Government programmes**

Current job a placement under New Deal or other government programme	Male	Female
New Deal	9.2	0.5
Another government programme	1.8	0.9
No	88.9	98.5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>110</i>

weighted column per cent

#### 4.5 How heard about job

Finally, Table 4.10 considers how those in work actually found out about their job. Most common, was to hear about the job from a friend, relative, colleague or trade union. This was especially important for men, with 37 per cent having found out about their job in this way compared with 29 per cent of women. The next three most common sources of information for men were

Jobcentre displays (18 per cent), private employment/recruitment agencies (10 per cent) and Jobcentre staff (10 per cent). For women, the next two most common sources of information were advertisements in the local paper (19 per cent) and the Jobcentre displays (18 per cent). Contacting the employer directly was also a relatively popular means of finding work with 15 per cent of women having secured their job in this way.

Altogether, the methods by which men came to their job were more diverse than for women. Considering the four most common methods for men, these combined to account for only two thirds of jobs, while for women the four top methods accounted for four-fifths of jobs. This more diverse range of methods for men may be partly due to their usually being the JSA claimant, and therefore having access to a wider range of resources thanks to receiving job search assistance measures. Certainly more of the men cited Jobcentre resources than did women, who more commonly used the local paper or direct employer contact. This view is supported by the finding that although men and women differed little in the extent to which they had found out about their job from vacancies displayed in Jobcentres, there was a marked variation in the extent to which staff informed individuals about particular vacancies.

**Table 4.10 Job search method which led to most recent job**

How did you first hear about your current job	Male	Female
Saw advert in local paper	9.1	19.1
Saw advert in national newspaper/magazine	1.6	1.3
Saw advert in shop window/noticeboard	1.3	3.7
From a private employment/recruitment agency	10.0	5.2
Jobcentre - saw vacancy on display	18.4	17.9
Jobcentre - heard about vacancy from staff	9.9	2.1
Telephoned the ES direct job finding service	0.6	0.0
Contacted employer direct (by telephone, letter or visit)	7.6	14.6
From a friend, relative, colleague or trade union	35.6	28.9
From a Jobclub or careers office	1.2	2.9
Advertised for a job	0.0	0.8
Through a training course	1.3	2.1
Word of mouth	1.6	0.0
From previous employer/transfer	1.0	1.6
Off my own back	0.8	0.0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>110</i>

weighted column per cent

## Chapter 5 Job search

This chapter focuses on job search and associated factors such as the degree of flexibility in looking for work. While there was some consideration of job search in Chapter 3, this was largely aimed at providing an understanding of job search in the past. The emphasis in this chapter is on current job search for those without work at the time of interview. As well as this distinction, the aim of this chapter is to probe more deeply into the job search process to provide an understanding of how the individuals in these households approach the task of finding work.

### 5.1 Job search and job search potential

In this section, consideration is given to the whether individuals were actively engaged in job search. The central focus is on those who were looking to enter employment rather than just change jobs. For those who were out of work but not engaged in job search, the main reasons for this are presented. Also, for those who were not currently engaged in job search but would like to at some point in the future, the events that may act as a spur to this are investigated.

Table 5.1 shows that, across all individuals, approximately three-quarters of men and one half of women were actively looking for any kind of paid work in the four weeks preceding the interview. This provides a very broad view of job search since it includes not only those who were without work but also those who were in work but looking for a change of job. Of those who were looking, almost all would have been able to start within two weeks.

**Table 5.1: Job search and availability – all individuals**

	Men	Women
Actively looking for paid work	77.5	47.8
<i>of which:</i>		
Available to start within 2 weeks	95.5	93.9
Unweighted base	590	590

Weighted column per cent

While the results presented in Table 5.1 provide an interesting summary of the degree to which individuals were looking to change their current circumstances, it is more revealing within the overall context of considering transitions away from non-employment to focus exclusively on those out of work. This permits an insight into the efforts being made to enter employment and thereby move away from benefits rather than just change job. Table 5.2 shows that the effect of concentrating on those out of work is to further increase the difference between men and women. While 87 per cent of workless men had been actively looking for work at some point in the four weeks preceding the interview, the level among women was only 50 per cent. As has been mentioned several time in this report, this may reflect the fact that it was the man who was most often the registered claimant and hence

obliged under the JSA requirements to seek and be available for work. However, it is likely that even without this encouragement from the benefit system the male partners would be more active in their search for work for reasons associated with views on gender roles and, in particular, the assumption that the man should be the breadwinner for the couple. There was no real difference between men and women who were searching in their availability, however; almost all were available to start within two weeks. Hence, it appears that individuals did not engage in job search unless they were in a position to take up employment almost immediately.

Some respondents were not looking despite not being in work. This was fairly rare among men but accounted for more than two-fifths of women. Asked if they would like to have a paid job at the moment, about one-third of the women said that they would. Among men, the corresponding level was three-quarters, although this was based on quite a small number of respondents.

**Table 5.2: Job search and availability – individuals without work**

	Men	Women
Actively looking for paid work	87.3	49.5
<i>of which:</i>		
available to start within 2 weeks	97.0	94.3
Unweighted base	462	498
<i>if not looking and not working:</i>		
Would like to have a paid job at the moment	73.2	30.9
Unweighted base	58	250

Weighted column per cent

Given the large numbers of women not looking for work and the existence of a number of people who would have liked to work but were not looking, it is interesting to consider their reasons for not looking. Table 5.3 shows that, for men, the main reason given was being on a government scheme or training course. Aside from this, health factors were commonly cited, particularly temporary sickness or injury. For women, these reasons were given relatively rarely. The dominant reason given by women was that they were either pregnant or had recently had a baby; this was true for more than half the women. This corresponds to the findings presented in Chapter 3 showing pregnancy to be a major factor in women's decision not to look for work.

**Table 5.3: Main reasons for not looking for work**

Main reasons for not looking for work	Men	Women
Long term sickness/incapacity/disability	13.2	6.5
Temporarily sick/injured	18.4	4.8
On a government scheme/training course	29.4	0.8
Looking after the home	5.0	27.8
Studying (in term time)	9.2	2.8
Pregnancy/had a baby	0.0	53.8
Unweighted base	58	250

Weighted column per cent

In addition to the results presented in Table 5.3, there were a small number of people who gave other reasons for not looking for work. These included, for example, doubts as to the possibility of finding suitable work and concerns about being worse off. It is possible that the partners within a couple influence each other's decisions about looking for work. To investigate this, those individuals who were out of work but were not looking for work and who gave a subjective reason for their not looking were asked whether their partner had influenced their decision. There were only 19 men meeting these criteria so it was not possible to consider the female partner's influence. However, there were sufficient women (69, in fact) to allow some tentative examination of the extent to which their decision not to look for work was influenced by their partner. It would appear that such an influence did exist. In 45 per cent of cases, women made the decision on their own not to look for work. However, in the majority of cases (55 per cent) the decision was made jointly with the male partner.

Those who were out of work but not looking for work were asked if they intended to look for paid work at some point in the future. For men, the response to this was almost unanimously positive. For women, the response was more equivocal. While the majority of women stated that they would look for work in the future, eight per cent stated that they would not and six per cent were not sure.

**Table 5.4: Whether will look for a paid job one day in the future**

Whether will look for a paid job one day in the future	Male	Female
Yes	97.2	86.6
No	2.8	7.6
Don't know	0.0	5.7
Unweighted base	58	250

Weighted column per cent

The events that could prompt job search are considered in Table 5.5. These results relate to all those who were out of work at the time of interview, not engaged in active job search but who stated that they would look for a paid job at some point in the future. For men, the dominant event was the completion of education or training. However, caution should be exercised before attaching too much significance to this result. The small number of men considered in Table 5.5 means that, in fact, only 13 men cited this as the event that would allow them to start looking for work. In view of this small sample size, it is only defensible to make a broad statement to the effect that the events stated by men correspond to the reasons given for not currently searching: poor health and education or training commitments.

For women, their larger number allows us to inspect the results more closely. It is evident that there is a definite correspondence with the reasons presented in Table 5.3 for not currently looking for work. These are child-related events. Hence, one quarter of women stated that they would look for work when their children were grown-up/older, one fifth when their children had started at school, creche or nursery, and 14 per cent stated that they would begin their job search when the baby was born.

**Table 5.5: Change that will prompt job search**

Event/reason that will mean you will start looking for work	Male	Female
None	3.5	3.6
When the baby is born	6.0	14.0
When child(ren) goes to school/creche/nursery	1.6	20.7
When chil(ren) are grown up/older	5.1	24.0
When health improves	23.6	9.2
When a suitable job comes up	13.9	2.8
When finished studies or training	28.4	8.5
Unweighted base	56	218

Weighted column per cent

Finally in this section, attention turns to the question of how long it had been since those out of work and not actively seeking work had been engaged in job search. For women, a sizeable proportion (18 per cent) had never looked for work. For the remainder, the largest proportion had not looked for work within the last nine months. This is unsurprising given their reasons for not looking for work and the events cited that would trigger job search. Specifically, reasons related to childcare are long-term in nature and preclude rapid resumption of job search. For men, no strong pattern was evident. As an overall comment, out of work men not currently looking for work appeared to have been active in job search more recently than women.

**Table 5.6: When last actively looked for paid work**

When last actively looked for a job	Male	Female
Less than 1 month before the interview	16.9	2.5
At least 1 month ago, but less than 3 months ago	21.3	8.8
At least 3 months ago, but less than 6 months ago	30.6	16.7
At least 6 months ago, but less than 9 months ago	5.1	12.8
At least 9 months ago	21.0	41.1
Never looked for work	5.0	18.1
Unweighted base	55	236

Weighted column per cent

## 5.2 Looking for work

The focus in this section is on those who had looked for work at some time in the six months before the interview. Both the degree and type of job search activity are considered along with an account of the aspirations of those looking for work in terms of the characteristics of the job sought. Some examination of the worries surrounding starting work are also presented.

In Table 5.7, the main methods of job search are considered. Looking through advertisements in local papers was a popular method, used by over 90 per cent of both men and women. The next most common method was to inspect the vacancies on display in the Jobcentre. Talking to Jobcentre staff was also popular; about half of all men and two-fifths of women had done so. It was, in fact, these more traditional Jobcentre services that had more of an

impact.<sup>3</sup> Touch-screen displays and the 'ES Direct' service were cited by relatively few respondents. It is also worth noting the large number of people who asked friends, relatives, colleagues or trade unions about jobs. This emphasises the importance of social and other networks in the job search process. Finally, another popular method was to apply directly to employers for jobs. This was particularly common for men, about half of whom had tried to find work in this way.

**Table 5.7: Methods of job search**

<b>What you were doing when looking for a job</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Advertisements in local papers	92.2	92.3
Advertisements in national newspapers or magazines	40.7	30.3
Advertisements in shop windows/noticeboards	53.0	61.4
Private employment/recruitment agency	21.1	19.3
Jobcentre –vacancies on display	87.4	81.8
Jobcentre –touch-screen display (or Jobpoint)	11.8	10.0
Jobcentre – talked to staff about jobs	51.5	40.8
Telephoned ES DIRECT	16.2	13.0
Applied directly to employers	48.6	36.3
Ask friends, relatives, colleagues or trade unions about jobs	65.6	59.9
Try to become self-employed	10.6	3.2
Look at Internet/Job websites	19.0	14.6
Visit a Jobclub or Careers Office	14.1	13.7
Advertise for jobs	5.9	2.0
Unweighted base	500	358

Weighted column per cent

Having assessed the popularity of different methods of job search, it is natural to investigate the intensity of job search. The results in chapter 3 have shown that the majority of men and women involved in job search devoted all or most of their time to it over the period 1998-2000. The same pattern is evident when considering those engaged in active job search in the last six months. This is illustrated in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8: Time spent looking for a job in 6 months before interview**

<b>Amount of time spent looking for a job</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Most of the time	83.1	75.2
a lot of the time	10.4	9.5
Some of the time	5.2	10.2
a little of the time	1.2	4.4
None of the time	0.0	0.8
Don't know	0.2	0.0
Unweighted base	500	358

Weighted column per cent

However, the question remains as to how the time spent looking for work translates into tangible steps taken to increase the chances of entering

<sup>3</sup> Note that Jobpoints had not been introduced nationally at the time of writing.



employment. For example, while checking local papers and vacancies advertised in Jobcentres may be time-consuming, it will not result in employment unless accompanied by job applications. In the discussion below, consideration is given to the number of job applications, the proportion that resulted in interviews and the proportion of these interviews that led to job offers.

Table 5.9 shows that among those who had been actively involved in job search in the six months leading up to the interview, few had not submitted any job applications. The proportion was higher for women than for men but still only reached 15 per cent. This suggests that, for the majority of those looking for work, acceptable jobs existed and that they made definite efforts to secure them. Furthermore, for most of those seeking work the number of job applications was high. Half of all men and just under two-fifths of all women who were looking for work had applied for ten or more jobs. Relatively few (one fifth of men, one quarter of women) had applied for at least one but fewer than five jobs. Taken together, these findings provide evidence that those involved in active job search were making significant efforts to enter employment.

**Table 5.9: Number of job applications in 6 months before interview**

Number of job applications made in last 6 months	Male	Female
None	6.8	14.5
One	3.3	4.1
Two to four	16.9	21.2
Five to nine	23.2	22.7
Ten or more	49.7	37.5
Unweighted base	497	357

Weighted column per cent

The success of these job applications in achieving interviews is considered in Table 5.10. For a significant minority, no interviews had resulted. Approximately a third of men and two-fifths of women were in this position. However, the converse of this is that two-thirds of men and three-fifths of women had attended at least one interview. Most common was to have had between one and four interviews. This accounted for half the men and about 45 per cent of the women.

**Table 5.10: Number of job interviews in 6 months before interview**

Number of job interviews in last 6 months	Male	Female
None	32.1	39.5
One	14.6	14.8
Two to four	33.0	29.7
Five to nine	13.2	10.4
Ten or more	7.0	5.6
Unweighted base	462	302

Weighted column per cent



Overall, however, the majority of those who had been actively looking for work in the last six months had received no offers of employment. For both men and women, approximately three-quarters were in this position. Of those who had received job offers, most common was to have received just one. Unsurprisingly, very few had received five or more offers. Hence, it appears that despite considerable job search activity, less than a quarter of people actually received offers.

**Table 5.11: Number of job offers in 6 months before interview**

Number of job offers in the last 6 months	Male	Female
None	76.2	78.5
One	13.9	14.4
Two to four	9.2	5.5
Five to nine	0.0	1.6
Ten or more	0.7	0.0
Unweighted base	500	358

Weighted column per cent

Of those who did receive job offers, these offers were not always accepted. This is shown in Table 5.12. About half of the men had rejected one or more job offers, while the corresponding proportion for women was about two-fifths. For those who had turned down offers of employment, most had rejected only one job.

**Table 5.12: Number of job offers rejected in 6 months before interview**

Number of jobs turned down in the last 6 months	Male	Female
None	51.3	58.0
One	28.2	28.8
Two to four	19.8	13.2
Five to nine	0.7	0.0
Unweighted base	122	75

Weighted column per cent

The reasons for turning down job offers are considered in Table 5.13. It should be noted that this table is based on those individuals who had turned down jobs and that they are very few in number. Consequently, only those reasons cited by more than five per cent of men or women are included. Even after this selection, the results must be regarded as tentative. With this proviso in mind, it appears that the main reason for turning down the offer of employment among men was that the wages were too low. Also commonly cited by men as a reason was the location of the job, insufficient hours of work or some other unsuitable aspect of the job. Women also had concerns about the wages on offer and other aspects of the job, particularly the location. It is revealing that a relatively small proportion of men and women turned down a job offer for the reason that they had already been offered another job. This suggests that those looking for work were quite discerning in their requirements of a job and could not be assumed to accept the first offer made. This impression is reinforced by those stating that the job on offer was not what they wanted.

**Table 5.13: Main reasons for turning down job offers**

Main reasons for turning down job offers	Male	Female
Not enough hours	9.3	0.0
Too many hours	5.4	0.0
Too far to travel/bad location	25.3	22.2
Wages were too low	33.7	16.0
Other unsuitable job conditions or type of work	11.5	15.8
I'm pregnant	0.0	9.1
Been offered another job	7.4	13.1
Wasn't what I wanted/was looking for	6.6	11.1
Job description wasn't what was expected	1.3	8.8
Unweighted base	56	32

Weighted column per cent

Table 5.14 considers the take-home expected by those looking for work in the six months before the interview. This shows that men were looking for an hourly rate of £5.20 on average, while women were expecting £4.71. Examination of the distribution of expected wages in Table 5.13 reveals that men most commonly expected to receive an hourly take-home pay of between five and six pounds, while for woman the modal category was between three and four pounds.

**Table 5.14: Expected hourly take-home pay**

Hourly take home pay sought	Male	Female
Average (£)	5.20	4.71
<i>Distribution of expected pay (col %):</i>		
Below £3	2.6	6.3
£3.00-£3.99	18.0	31.6
£4.00-£4.99	25.4	25.1
£5.00-£5.99	30.8	22.2
£6 and over	23.2	14.8
Unweighted base	482	333

Weighted column per cent

These hourly rates were associated with a certain level of working. It is of interest in itself to examine the number of hours individuals expect to work. This is presented in Table 5.15. The differences between men and women in the average level of hours desired were not substantial. Men wanted to work 41 hours on average compared with 37 hours for women. The distribution of hours reveals that both sexes were most likely to expect to work between 31 and 40 hours per week. However, there is evidence of some differences. Whereas 13 per cent of women wanted to work 30 hours or less a week, the corresponding proportion for men was only three per cent. At the other end of the scale, 20 per cent of men expected to work in excess of 40 hours per week, while only five per cent of women wanted to work this many hours.

**Table 5.15: Expected hours per week**

Weekly hours	Male	Female
Average	41	37
<i>Distribution of expected hours (col %):</i>		
Up to 16	1.5	1.6
17-24	0.1	2.6
25-30	1.6	8.7
31-40	76.9	82.1
40+	19.9	4.9
Unweighted base	482	333
Weighted column per cent		

It is interesting to consider the types of job individuals were hoping to find at these wages. Respondents were asked to describe the kind of work they would accept at their level of expected wage. In Table 5.16 the responses for those who were able to specify a type of work are presented, grouped according to the 1990 Standard Occupation Classification. The results show substantial differences between the sexes. Men were most likely to want jobs that fall into the 'Other' category. This is a miscellaneous group, comprising a range of manual positions. Next most common was craft and related work; more than one fifth of men stated this as their desired occupation. Between them, the two categories mentioned accounted for more than half of all men. Other prominent categories for men were associate professional and technical occupations, working as a plant or machine operative and working in sales. For women, the pattern was somewhat different. The 'Other' category was still an important one (accounting for over a fifth of women) but was exceeded by those wanting to work in personal and protective services (a quarter of women) and sales (slightly less than a quarter). The other sizeable category for women was clerical and secretarial occupations.

This pattern is broadly similar to the distribution of occupations for those in work since the sample date which was shown in chapter 4. These results showed two-thirds of the men in work were in craft and related occupations, were working as plant or machine operatives or were in other occupations. There were fewer working in associate professional and technical occupations than would be expected from the inspection of Table 5.16 and more in clerical and secretarial jobs. For women, the top three categories for those in work were the same as for the type of occupation wanted by those looking for work and between them accounted for more than four-fifths of all jobs. The main difference was with respect to clerical and secretarial work. While 16 per cent of women who were looking for work wanted a job of this type, only six per cent of those in work had such a job. Conversely, while only 23 per cent of women wanted to work in sales, this category accounted for 34 per cent of actual jobs.

**Table 5.16: Type of job wanted**

Type of job wanted (SOC 90)	Male	Female
Managers and administrators	2.9	3.2
Professional	3.1	4.2
Associate professional & technical	13.3	6.8
Clerical & secretarial	4.4	16.3
Craft & related	21.6	0.0
Personal & protective services	2.7	24.5
Sales	9.5	22.7
Plant & machine operatives	12.5	1.2
Other	30.1	21.3
Unweighted base	265	205

Weighted column per cent

On balance, those looking for work were quite confident of being able to secure employment at their desired rate of pay. Overall, about two-thirds of both men and women were either very confident or fairly confident that they could find work paying that amount. This is shown in Table 5.17. There appear to have been only slight differences between men and women in this regard. Men were slightly more likely to state that they were very confident rather than fairly confident.

**Table 5.17: Confidence of getting a job at expected rate of pay**

Confidence of getting a job at expected rate of pay	Male	Female
Very confident	22.0	16.9
Fairly confident	46.1	50.7
Not very confident	24.7	27.3
Not at all confident	5.5	3.5
Don't know	1.7	1.5
Unweighted base	491	336

Weighted column per cent

Accepting the fact that it might not prove possible to find work at the desired rate of pay, respondents were asked to specify what was the least amount they would accept. Table 5.18 shows that these were quite substantially below the expected amount but that, once again, women were prepared to work for a lower rate of pay than men. The lowest acceptable rate of pay was £4.29 for men and £3.94 for women, on average. This is remarkably similar to the rates of pay achieved by those respondents who were actually in work or had worked since the time of sampling. As shown in chapter 4, the average rates of pay for those in jobs since the sample date were £4.25 for men and £3.94 for women. Hence, it would appear those respondents who had been engaged in active job search in the six months before the interview had a good understanding of the labour market. Alternatively, one could view this coincidence of findings as suggesting that those in work tended to be paid at their lowest acceptable rate. Once again, inspection of the distribution of lowest acceptable wage shows the tendency for women to be concentrated at

the lower ends of the scale, with men relatively concentrated at the higher pay rates.

**Table 5.18: Lowest acceptable hourly take-home pay**

Lowest acceptable pay – hourly	Male	Female
Average (£)	4.29	3.94
<i>Distribution of expected pay (col %):</i>		
Below £3	10.9	20.3
£3.00-£3.99	32.6	45.0
£4.00-£4.99	26.1	17.8
£5.00-£5.99	20.2	8.8
£6 and over	10.2	8.2
Unweighted base	488	334

Weighted column per cent

As noted, the average lowest acceptable wage was considerably below the level of the expected wage. This provides some evidence of flexibility in job search and of willingness to accept work at a lower rate of pay than desired in order to establish themselves in work. This impression is reinforced by the results shown in Table 5.19. Respondents were asked whether taking a job at the lowest rate of pay that they would accept would make them worse-off or better-off. For 56 per cent of men and 51 per cent of women, their financial situation would have improved had they found a such a job. However, the converse of this is that nearly half of men and women would have taken such a job despite the fact that it would not have improved their financial standing. In other words, such was the desire to enter employment that these respondents were willing to work despite the fact that it brought no effective pecuniary reward. The motivation behind doing this was likely to be the long-term benefits that would accrue from embarking on a career or, more modestly, improving their value in the labour market through the acquisition of skills and experience. Most compelling in this interpretation was the result that a quarter of men and a third of women would have taken a job at the lowest acceptable rate of pay despite the fact that it would actually worsen their financial position.

**Table 5.19: Whether a job of lowest acceptable wage would improve financial situation**

Whether lowest wage job would improve financial situation	Male	Female
Much better off	20.3	18.9
A little better off	36.4	31.6
No different/about the same as before	19.0	16.3
Worse off	24.2	33.2
Unweighted base	475	339

Weighted column per cent

The assessment of how a low-paying job would affect the financial position of a couple took into account the consequences for benefits payments associated with starting work as well as the additional expenses that would be

incurred in the course of a working day. Such concerns can be significant in influencing the decision to accept work and they are explored in Tables 5.20 and 5.21. Both tables are based on all those actively seeking work at some point in the six months before the interview.

The results in Table 5.20 show that there were a number of concerns about taking a job at the lowest acceptable pay. There is little difference between men and women in this regard. The main concerns centred around housing-related issues and the transition from benefit dependency to being reliant on earned income. As evidence of the former, more than half the men and women feared losing housing benefit or mortgage assistance and a similar proportion (in fact, slightly higher for men) were concerned about the amount of council tax they would have to pay. As an example of worries about the transition to work, about half the men and women stated that they were concerned about how they would manage until the first pay day. Furthermore, a substantial minority had misgivings about having to pay back debts, loans or overdue bills straight away. Respondents valued the passport that benefits provided to the receipt of free prescriptions etc and two-fifths were concerned about losing this. Perhaps the most noticeable difference between men and women was that twice as many men as women had concerns about the health of their partner. This appears to conform to the results presented in chapter 3 showing the greater tendency for men to have been caring for a sick or disabled household member in 2000. Finally, only a small minority of people had no concerns about accepting a job at the lowest acceptable rate.

**Table 5.20: Concerns about accepting low-paid work – 1**

Worries when taking a job paying the lowest acceptable wage	Male	Female
Losing housing benefit or help with mortgage	54.8	57.7
Not knowing how I would manage financially until the first pay day	49.1	47.7
Not knowing exactly how much money I would have coming in each week	23.7	24.4
Having to pay back debts, loans or overdue bills straight away	45.6	42.6
Having to pay for things I get free on benefit eg prescriptions	38.9	40.2
The amount of council tax I would have to pay	61.6	57.3
Having to wait for other benefits	10.2	11.1
The hassle of sorting out my benefits	20.8	19.1
Worries about care of sick/disabled/elderly relative/household member	6.8	4.0
Worries about health of husband/wife/partner	13.8	6.8
Being blamed by my partner for loss of benefits	12.4	8.9
My partner doesn't want me to work	1.8	3.4
None of these	13.5	12.9
Unweighted base	500	358

Weighted column per cent

Table 5.21 considers some additional concerns. Whereas the results presented in Table 5.20 were largely related to benefits and the transition into employment, Table 5.21 focuses more on job-related concerns. Again, the results are quite similar across the sexes. The main differences were that

men were more likely to voice a concern that the job would turn out to be temporary (this was a significant issue, concerning more than half of all men) and were also nearly twice as likely as women to worry that they would find a better job if they continued searching. The main concerns revealed by both men and women were that the wages would be too low and that they would need to meet additional work-related expenses. The location of the job was an issue with approximately a third of men and women worried about the cost of travelling to work or simply the difficulty of reaching the workplace. Again, it was only a small proportion who had none of the concerns listed.

**Table 5.21: Concerns about accepting low-paid work – 2**

Worries when taking a job paying the lowest acceptable wage	Male	Female
Worries about wages being too low	55.7	54.6
Having to pay extra costs for travelling or work clothes	51.2	50.8
Worries about the job being temporary	51.3	43.9
Worries about the job not being the sort of work I want	33.7	33.2
Not being fit enough to do a paid job	9.5	12.4
I couldn't afford the cost of transport to get to work	30.9	33.4
Travelling to work would be difficult	35.3	31.2
Worries that my/our income would be less reliable than when claiming benefits	25.0	26.4
I might not be able to do the job very well	10.4	10.6
Would be worse off in work	21.6	19.4
I might find a better job if I just keep looking instead	18.8	10.8
None of these	12.7	13.1
Unweighted base	500	358

Weighted column per cent

Bearing all these points in mind, respondents were asked to assess their chances of getting a job in the next three months. Table 5.22 presents this assessment for those who were able to make a guess. Overall, the men appear to have been more positive about their employment prospects, with three-quarters rating their chances of finding work within the next three months as very good or fairly good, while for women the corresponding proportion was about three-fifths. Women were more than twice as likely as men to reckon their chances of finding work very bad. More than a fifth of women felt this way.

**Table 5.22: Self-assessed chances of getting a job in the next 3 months**

Self-assessed chances of getting a job in the next 3 months	Male	Female
Very good	22.2	14.3
Fairly good	52.0	44.5
Fairly bad	17.1	20.2
Very bad	8.7	21.0
Unweighted base	466	328

Weighted column per cent



### 5.3 Job search flexibility

In this section, different aspects of job search flexibility are considered. While this has already been touched upon in the investigation of the lowest wage acceptable to those looking for work, there are other considerations that also play a role. The section finishes with an overview of the problems encountered in entering and remaining in employment.

The difficulty in reaching the workplace was cited earlier as one of the concerns about taking a job. All survey respondents were asked to state how long they were willing to spend travelling to work each day. Table 5.23 summarises the results. Overall, men were more willing than women to tolerate a lengthy commute. Three-fifths of women were only prepared to spend up to half an hour travelling to work. For men, the proportion was two-fifths. This greater reluctance among women to accept more distant jobs is likely to be associated with their domestic responsibilities. Additionally, the fact that they are more likely to work shorter hours means that a lengthy commute becomes disproportionately onerous. Nearly half the men would accept a journey time of between half an hour and an hour, while nearly one tenth would contemplate a longer journey.

**Table 5.23: Maximum commuting time, one way**

Acceptable commuting time, one way	Male	Female
Up to 30 mins	41.5	59.0
31-60 mins	47.0	31.0
Over an hour	8.5	2.3
Unweighted base	571	546

Weighted column per cent

Table 5.24 considers whether individuals would be willing to move in order to get a job. Here also, men appear more flexible, with 47 per cent of those who were able to say being prepared to move to a new area. This compared with 38 per cent of women.

**Table 5.24: Whether prepared to move to a new area to get a job**

Whether prepared to move to a new area to get a job	Male	Female
Yes	47.3	38.1
No	52.7	61.9
Unweighted base	531	540

Weighted column per cent

Another aspect of flexibility is the maximum number of hours that individuals are willing to work each week. This question was put to the respondents and the results are summarised in Table 5.25. Almost all men were willing to work in excess of 30 hours per week. Among women, however, a quarter were unwilling to work this number of hours. These results are similar to those already presented to the extent that there was a greater tendency of women



to work fewer hours. However, there is an apparent contradiction if one compares the results to those presented earlier. For example, while Table 5.25 implies that only 77 per cent of women were prepared to work more than 30 hours a week, Table 5.15 shows that 87 per cent of women looking for employment expected to work at this level. The contradiction largely disappears, however, when account is taken of the fact that while the earlier results were based on those seeking work, the results in this section are based on all women. This suggests that those women who were actively seeking work were more flexible in terms of the maximum hours they were prepared to work.

Unsurprisingly, the reasons most often given by women for not wanting to work longer hours were related to childcare. Three-fifths of women stated that they could not work longer hours as they had to look after their baby or they were about to have a baby. This was by far the most common reason. The two other main reasons were that they were looking after the home or that they were prevented from working longer hours for reasons of health or disability.

**Table 5.25: Maximum hours per week**

Maximum hours per week	Male	Female
Up to 16	0.3	6.5
17-24	0.2	7.0
25-30	1.4	10.0
31-40	46.0	61.1
40+	52.2	15.4
Unweighted base	575	550

Weighted column per cent

One area in which women were more flexible than men was in their readiness to accept a temporary job. Half the women interviewed were willing to accept a temporary or short-term job compared to less than two-fifths of men.

**Table 5.26: Whether would accept a temporary job**

Whether would accept a temporary job	Male	Female
Yes	37.5	49.5
No	44.1	34.8
Depends	18.4	15.6
Unweighted base	589	583

Weighted column per cent

All respondents were asked to state any problems that made it difficult to find or keep a job. These problems are summarised in Table 5.27. The main problems cited by men were the lack of nearby jobs and the lack of personal transport to allow them to reach less accessible jobs. Insufficient work experience and not having any references from a previous employer also presented difficulties. More than a fifth complained of debt or money problems. Debt can present a barrier to employment since creditors may

expect payment from individuals who are in work but will not bother those who are out of work (Marsh and McKay, 1993). A fifth faced problems due to ill-health or disability while a similar proportion stated that they had no problems finding or keeping a job. The results for women were quite similar. The main differences were that fewer women gave the lack of available jobs and the lack of personal transport as problems. Also, women were less likely to cite debt or money problems or the lack of references. One dramatic difference between men and women was in relation to having had problems with the law or a criminal record. Very few women were likely to have had such problems, compared to 14 per cent of men. Overall, slightly more women than men felt that they had no problems finding or keeping work.

**Table 5.27: Problems with finding or keeping a job**

Problems that have made it difficult to find or keep a job in the past year	Male	Female
Own ill-health or disability	21.8	20.1
Illness of other member of family	7.1	4.5
Lack of public transport	17.3	14.9
Lack of personal transport	30.8	20.5
No jobs near here	32.6	26.1
Care of disabled/elderly, relative or household member	3.1	3.6
Debt or money problems	22.1	14.4
No permanent place to live	6.9	4.2
Problems with the law, or a criminal record	14.0	2.1
Problems with drugs or alcohol	4.9	2.3
Lack of references from previous employer	22.1	16.1
Lack of previous work experience	26.0	27.5
Problems with reading or writing English	12.5	9.4
Problems with numbers or simple arithmetic	4.9	5.0
Pregnancy	0.4	5.8
No problems	20.2	25.9
Unweighted base	590	590

Weighted column per cent

Finally, respondents were asked to state other factors that made it difficult to work. Table 5.28 shows that, for both men and women, insufficient qualifications and experience was the main problem, followed by the difficulty of finding suitable work (more important for men than for women) and then problems associated with travelling to work. Women were twice as likely as men to state that their lack of confidence was a problem. In only four per cent of cases did women feel that their partner or family did not want them to work. More than a quarter of both men and women felt that there was nothing in particular that made it difficult for them to work.

**Table 5.28: Things that make it difficult to work**

Things that make it difficult to work	Male	Female
Its difficult to find the kind of work that would suit me	35.3	27.2
I'm unlikely to get a job because of my poor sickness record	4.9	8.1
I'm unlikely to get a job because of my health problems	10.6	12.8
My confidence about working is low	10.1	19.9
Insufficient qualifications and experience to find the right work	44.1	39.4
My partner/family doesn't want me to work	0.6	4.0
My/our religious or cultural beliefs	1.1	1.4
Other people's prejudices make it difficult or me to work/get work	6.1	4.1
Travelling to work would be difficult	26.6	25.5
I'm unlikely to get a job because of my criminal record	14.4	3.3
No difficulties	27.9	27.1
unweighted base	590	590

Weighted column per cent

## Chapter 6 Summary and conclusion

This report has presented a detailed account of the characteristics of those couples meeting the Joint Claims criteria. The results are useful in providing a better understanding of the client group in terms of both their personal and their work-related characteristics. This descriptive analysis does not attempt to evaluate the effect of Joint Claims since this will form the focus of the second stage report. Nevertheless, it does provide some clues as to issues that are likely to be important. The aim of this final chapter is to expand on some of these issues.

Before the introduction of Joint Claims, the most common situation for couples claiming JSA was for the man to claim the benefit and the woman to be the dependent partner. In view of this, the introduction of the legislation will be expected to have a greater effect on the female rather than the male partner in most cases. Consequently, it is appropriate to consider separately the findings relating to women. Of particular importance are those relating to the labour market.

In terms of human capital, women were as equipped for the labour market as men. Their levels of qualifications and basic skills were, if anything, slightly higher than those for men. Also, there was little difference with regard to health. However, clear differences were evident when considering work experience. Many more women than men had no experience of work. Furthermore, women were less likely than men to actively seek work when not employed. The biggest single reason for this was pregnancy, but there may also be a tendency for women to prefer to remain at home.

Hence, barriers to job entry that are specific to women include their lack of work experience and, in some cases, a reluctance to abandon their domestic roles. The lack of work experience manifests itself, in some cases, in a low level of confidence both in their ability to find work and in their ability to perform adequately at work. The need to combine both work and domestic responsibilities is evident in the reduced flexibility of women's job search compared to that of men. For instance, women were more likely to consider only those jobs involving shorter hours and which required a shorter commuting time. To be effective in helping women into the labour market, Jobcentres will need to be sensitive to these considerations. As with men, women most commonly cited insufficient qualifications and experience as being the main barrier to work. However, the additional barrier of low confidence is something that must be taken into account. Conversely, the perceived barrier arising from having a criminal record is something that is very much more relevant to men than women.

Aside from the policy implications of the findings, one of the key results of the survey relates to the size of the Joint Claims population. Overall, one fifth of the sample were shown to have dependent children by the time of survey interview. Furthermore, as mentioned above, pregnancy was the main reason

for women not actively looking for work. Clearly, a proportion of those couples currently without dependent children will soon have dependent children. Since couples with dependent children are not required to make a Joint Claim, these two points together suggest that many couples may only be required to make a Joint Claim for a relatively short period of time. Furthermore, the results show a tendency for many partnerships to have formed quite recently. This further adds to the impression of a relatively volatile client group. Overall, it seems that the size of the Joint Claims populations may be smaller than anticipated and, for many couples in this population, the requirement to make a Joint Claim will be short-lived.

# Appendix 1      **Comparative analysis of survey respondents**

The purpose of this appendix is to put the Joint Claims sample in context by comparing the survey results with other survey data. Survey data from two sources are considered: the Labour Force Survey (LFS), from which a sample of unemployed couples was identified, and the survey of NDYP participants. Hence, it is possible to compare the Joint Claims sample with unemployed couples as a whole and with young people participating in NDYP and to thereby highlight differences and similarities. However, it should be noted that the comparison cannot deliver a test of how representative or 'good' the Joint Claims sample is.

## **The samples used for comparison**

The LFS sample is similar to that used in the study "Workless couples: characteristics and labour market transitions" (Dorsett, 2001) whereby a sample of workless couples was derived from the LFS covering the period 1994 to 2000. For the comparison conducted here, couples where both partners were inactive were excluded. This left 8,957 couples in which at least one partner was unemployed. The NDYP sample was based on the survey of 5,948 NDYP participants (Bryson et al, 2000). It is important to note that these were individuals and not couples.

## **Comparing the data sets**

There are some important differences between the three data sets used in this comparison. These are summarised below

### *Comparing Joint Claims with LFS couples*

Both data sets had couples as the basic unit and in both data sets men and women in a couple were considered separately. However, there are four important differences between the data sets:

- Joint Claims only covers couples where at least one partner is aged between 18 and 24 whereas the LFS sample covers all age groups.
- Joint Claims data was a cross-section of people at one point in time whereas the LFS sample was constructed from a number of cross-sections between 1994 and 2000.
- In principle, Joint Claims couples have no dependent children while there was no such restriction on the LFS couples. However in practice there was a considerable number of couples with children in the Joint Claims sample but the percentage (16 per cent) was much lower than in the LFS (30 per cent).
- Questionnaire design, interview technique and wording of questions differed substantially between the two surveys.

### *Comparing Joint Claims with NDYP*

There are a number of similarities between the Joint Claims and the NDYP sample:

- Both cover young people. The NDYP is a programme for young people aged 18 to 24. For Joint Claims at least one of the partners had to be in the same age range.
- The questionnaires were designed in a similar way and some of the questions were exactly the same. In both cases personal interviews were conducted with the aid of computers using CAPI.

In other important aspects the data sets differed:

- For the Joint Claims survey the unit of interest was a couple while in the case of the NDYP study the unit was the individual and only a small number of NDYP participants were married or cohabiting.
- Because NDYP was based on individuals, all persons in the sample were claiming JSA for at least six months before entering the programme. To be in the Joint Claims population only one of the partners had to be claiming JSA. In addition there was no minimum length of claim required, although those with unemployment spells in excess of 12 months were excluded from the sample.
- Both data sets are cross-sections but at different points in time. The sampling date for the Joint Claims sample was October 2000, while the sampling date for NDYP was some two years earlier.

Obviously, these similarities and differences affect the kind of comparisons possible between the data sets. Problems with particular variables and questions are discussed below.

### **Comparing respondents' characteristics**

Appendix Table 1.1 shows the age of individuals in the three data sets. As expected, the LFS had the highest average age. About 70 per cent of men and 60 per cent of women were aged over 30. In the Joint Claims sample only 13 per cent of men and two per cent of women fell into this age category. In NDYP, due to programme eligibility, the maximum age was 25. These differences in the age structure, especially between Joint Claims and LFS, will contribute to explaining differences in other characteristics. Furthermore, also as expected, in the two samples of couples men were older than women, around four years in the case of Joint Claims and three in the case of the LFS. In contrast, there was hardly any age difference between the genders in the NDYP sample.

**Appendix Table 1.1: Age**

	Joint Claims		LFS		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Under 18	0.4	10.1	0.2	1.6	-	-
18	7.4	17.7	0.6	1.9	2.3	3.0
19	8.3	13.8	0.8	2.1	17.9	24.2
20	7.4	12.3	1.6	2.3	16.9	19.8
21	10.9	12.8	1.9	2.7	14.7	14.8
22	9.2	11.4	2.1	3.2	13.8	11.7
23	9.0	6.8	2.3	2.9	13.5	11.8
24	8.5	9.2	2.6	3.3	13.0	9.6
25-30	25.9	4.1	19.3	21.6	7.9	5.2
Over 30	13.1	1.7	68.7	58.3		
Average	24.5	20.6	37.3	34.5	21.5	21.1
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>8957</i>	<i>8957</i>	<i>4204</i>	<i>1735</i>

Appendix Table 1.2 depicts marital status. Given that the Joint Claims and LFS samples relate to couples, the only distinction was between married and cohabiting couples whereas in the NDYP the full range of marital statuses are present. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the number of married couples was only five percentage points lower in the Joint Claims sample compared to the LFS, despite the age difference. However, it is important to keep in mind that it is unemployed couples and not at the population at large that is being considered. The number of married or cohabiting men and women in the NDYP sample was relatively low, accounting for 14 per cent of men and ten per cent of women. The vast majority were single and only about one per cent were separated or divorced.

**Appendix Table 1.2: Marital Status**

Marital Status	Joint Claims	LFS	NDYP	
	Couples	Couples	Men	Women
Married	23.1	28.0	13.7	10.3
Cohabiting *	76.9	72.0		
Single	-	-	85.6	88.3
Separated/divorced	-	-	0.7	1.4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>7198</i>	<i>4212</i>	<i>1736</i>

\* NDYP did not distinguish between married and unmarried couples that were living together.

In Appendix Tables 1.3 and 1.4 comparative results regarding educational attainment are presented. Appendix Table 1.3 summarises the age people left education whereas Appendix Table 1.4 focuses on the highest qualifications gained. Looking first at the age individuals left education, there



is a clear age effect. This has two dimensions; first, the expansion of education and, second, the catching up of women relative to men. In the LFS over 30 per cent of the sample left school before they reached the age of 16. This percentage was 18 to 21 per cent for Joint Claims and nine to eleven per cent for NDYP. At the other end of the spectrum, the number of people that left after 18 was around 20 per cent in Joint Claims and NDYP compared to about half that level for the LFS (nine per cent). This reflects the recent expansion of third level education. This expansion was especially marked for women. While for the LFS the proportion of women staying on in education beyond the age of 18 years was lower than that for men, this was reversed for Joint Claims and NDYP. NDYP participants stayed on longer in education compared to the Joint Claims sample.

**Appendix Table 1.3: Age left education \***

	Joint Claims		LFS		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Under 16	21.1	17.7	34.6	30.3	11.4	9.0
16	34.0	32.9	45.6	47.0	31.2	27.9
17-18	27.0	30.7	10.8	15.3	37.7	39.4
Over 18	17.9	18.7	9.1	7.4	19.8	23.7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>8852</i>	<i>8799</i>	<i>4102</i>	<i>1703</i>

\* The definition is slightly different in the three data sets. In Joint Claims and NDYP the question asks when individuals left school or further/higher education whereas in the LFS it refers to leaving full-time education.

A similar picture emerges when analysing the highest qualification held by the survey respondents (Appendix Table 1.4). There were substantially fewer women without qualifications in the NDYP and Joint Claims samples than in the LFS sample. More people had a qualification equivalent to a NVQ at level 4 or higher in Joint Claims than in the LFS sample. Again, the dramatic catching-up of women in terms of education is evident. While in the LFS there are more women than men with no qualifications and fewer with the highest level of qualifications, the opposite is true in the Joint Claims and NDYP samples.

**Appendix Table 1.4: Highest qualifications**

Highest qualification (NVQ equivalent)	Joint Claims		LFS		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
NVQ4 or higher	7.7	10.2	8.5	6.0	5.0	5.6
NVQ3	12.6	10.8	24.6	8.7	8.1	8.6
NVQ1 or 2	45.4	49.6	22.1	33.3	56.5	61.9
Other qualifications	2.2	2.3	13.4	8.5	1.9	1.1
No qualifications	31.9	27.0	32.2	43.6	28.5	22.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>589</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>8830</i>	<i>8868</i>	<i>4212</i>	<i>1736</i>

Appendix Table 1.5 compares the three samples with regard to housing tenure. Among the NDYP participants, over ten per cent were living in accommodation that was owned outright. This was a much higher percentage than in the case of similarly aged Joint Claims couples. Among these ten per cent, a large number were likely to still be living with their parents, although this information was not explicitly recorded in the NDYP questionnaire. The higher percentage of LFS couples owning their accommodation reflects a clear age effect.

**Appendix Table 1.5: Housing tenure**

Housing tenure	Joint Claims	LFS	NDYP
	Couples	Couples	Individuals
Accommodation owned outright	3.0	8.6	11.7
Being bought on a mortgage or a bank loan	4.2	24.1	19.0
Part rent, part mortgage*	-	0.3	-
Rented	91.2	65.3	68.6
Rent free or squatting	0.4	0.04	0.7
Live with parents/family <sup>†</sup>	1.0	-	-
<b>Unweighted base</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>5457</b>	<b>5652</b>

\* This category does not exist in the Joint Claims questionnaire

<sup>†</sup> Neither the LFS nor the NDYP list this category.

Appendix Table 1.6 summarises ethnic background. A noticeable result is that there was a much higher proportion of individuals from an ethnic minority among the NDYP participants compared to both Joint Claims and the LFS (which show similar proportions).

**Appendix Table 1.6: Ethnicity**

Ethnic group	Joint Claims		LFS		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
White	86.8	87.3	87.1	87.6	77.8	67.6
Black – Caribbean	1.2	0.4	0.8	0.6	5.2	5.0
Black – African	1.1	2.0	1.2	1.1	2.3	4.3
Black – Other	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.2	1.6	2.7
Indian	1.5	1.4	2.5	2.6	2.6	3.4
Pakistani	4.6	4.8	3.9	3.8	5.5	8.4
Bangladeshi	1.3	1.3	1.7	1.7	2.0	4.2
Other	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.5	3.1	4.4
<b>Unweighted base</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>8670</b>	<b>8671</b>	<b>3984</b>	<b>1652</b>

There are some problems in interpreting the results presented in Appendix Table 1.7. The questions in the LFS changed over the sample period (1994 to 2000). The only consistent way to present results was to list people who reported having a health problem that affects work (Question 1) and

distinguish whether this problem was likely to last for more than twelve months. This can be found in the last two columns of Appendix Table 1.7. In Joint Claims (and in NDYP) the Questions were asked in reverse order. First people reported whether they had a health problem or disability that was likely to last for more than twelve months and then they were asked whether this affected the kind or amount of work they could do.

Assuming that all the remaining people in the LFS sample responded 'no' to Question 1, it is possible to compare the percentages. The 41.1 per cent in Appendix Table 1.7 expressed as a percentage of the total base (all 8,957 in the LFS) suggests that about 30 per cent of all LFS respondents had a long-term health problem affecting their work. This is still a higher number than for Joint Claims which is likely to be due to the fact that the LFS sample was older.

**Appendix Table 1.7: Long-term health problem affecting work**

	Joint Claims		LFS	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Yes	19.3	17.1	41.1	41.1
No	80.7	82.9	58.9	59.0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>586</i>	<i>584</i>	<i>4561</i>	<i>4550</i>

Appendix Table 1.8 presents the long-term health problem question (not relating to work) for Joint Claims and NDYP where the wording and ordering of the questions was exactly the same. Joint Claims men were ten percentage points more likely to report a long-term health problem than NDYP men. For women the difference was about five percentage points. Part of this difference could be due to more inactive people among Joint Claims individuals as only one person in a couple had to be unemployed while among the NDYP participants there were no inactive people<sup>4</sup>. However, this is unlikely to be the only reason since in this case the difference would be larger for women than men because in most Joint Claims couples it was the man who claimed JSA.

**Appendix Table 1.8: Long-term health problem\***

	Joint Claims		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Yes	25.7	23.9	16.1	18.1
No	74.3	76.1	83.9	82.0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>586</i>	<i>584</i>	<i>3947</i>	<i>1636</i>

\* Exact question was: "Do you have any health problems or disabilities that you expect will last more than one year?".

<sup>4</sup> This was true for the start of the programme. Some NDYP participants ended up on sickness or incapacity benefits during and after New Deal.

A similar picture was evident with regard to the question whether people ever had a long-term health problem. Again the percentage reporting a long-term health problem was much higher for Joint Claims men and women compared to those in the NDYP sample. Yet there were hardly any gender differences for this health measure.

**Appendix Table 1.9: Ever had health problem\***

	Joint Claims		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Yes	14.3	15.6	8.8	8.1
No	85.7	84.4	91.2	91.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>4212</i>	<i>1736</i>

\* Exact question was: "Have you ever had any health problems or disabilities (apart from the ones you have already told me about) that have lasted for longer than one year?".

The last health measure is self-reported general health. Results for this measure are given in Appendix Table 1.10. Again, the question was asked in the same way for Joint Claims and NDYP and, again, the NDYP participants were healthier. Interestingly, using this measure it now seems that men were healthier than women. For both men and women, over 20 per cent reported excellent health and less than eight per cent poor health. This was true for both Joint Claims and NDYP.

**Appendix Table 1.10: General self-assessed health\***

	Joint Claims		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Excellent	26.6	21.2	31.3	29.9
Very good	30.2	27.1	31.8	32.4
Good	24.7	28.6	23.8	22.0
Fair	14.0	15.9	9.5	11.4
Poor	4.5	7.3	3.6	4.3
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>3991</i>	<i>1658</i>

\* The wording of the question was: "in general would you say your health is...".

Appendix Table 1.11 reports the occurrence of basic skill problems. While more than 30 per cent of the Joint Claims sample had some kind of basic skill problem this number was only about 20 per cent in the case of NDYP. The most common basic skill problem was a literacy problem. Gender differences went along 'stereotypical' lines with more men reporting literacy problems and more women saying they had problems with numbers. Even though there were fewer people with basic skill problems in the NDYP sample, there was a higher number, nearly ten per cent, reporting both skill problems.

**Appendix Table 1.11: Basic skill problems**

	Joint Claims		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Literacy problems	21.5	16.0	11.3	7.6
Numeracy problems	7.5	9.7	3.7	5.3
Literacy and numeracy problems	4.5	5.6	8.0	9.2
No basic skill problems	66.5	68.7	77.0	77.8
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590	4162	1710

The proportion in possession of a driving licence and with access to a car as reported in Appendix Table 1.12 were fairly similar in the two samples. Over 60 per cent of people with a driving licence also had access to a car.

**Appendix Table 1.12: Driving licence and access to car**

	Joint Claims		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Current full driving licence	34.8	13.7	26.6	15.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590	4162	1710
Access to motor vehicle	63.7	68.3	61.2	65.6
<i>Unweighted base</i>	200	74	1097	268

Although the Joint Claims survey was designed to cover couples without dependent children, 16 per cent reported dependent children in the household. This number is slightly higher than among male NDYP participants. It is higher than for female NDYP participants, which is due to the fact that young mothers were less likely to be claiming JSA compared to their male counterparts and were thus underrepresented in NDYP. The percentage of couples with dependent children was roughly 30 per cent for the LFS. This is a pure age effect.

**Appendix Table 1.13: Dependent Children living in the household**

	Joint Claims		NDYP	
	Couples	LFS Couples	Men	Women
No children	84.0	71.4	85.3	88.5
Children	15.9	28.6	14.7	11.5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	8957	3634	1412

Appendix Table 1.14 lists the status of people at the time of interview. There are some important differences between Joint Claims and NDYP on the one hand and LFS on the other hand. For the LFS, unemployed couples were selected and thus nobody fell into any of the work-related categories. In contrast, for both Joint Claims and NDYP unemployed people were sampled but as they were interviewed later a number of them found jobs in the meantime. In the case of Joint Claims 19 per cent of men and 14 per cent of

women were in some form of work at the time of interview. This was higher for NDYP where 24 per cent of men and 27 per cent of women were in work. However, NDYP was designed to help people find work whereas only a fraction of the Joint Claims sample was on New Deal. Turning to different forms of inactivity one thing to note is the large gender gap especially in the LFS. Hardly any men were looking after the home, children or relatives whereas this description covered over 50 per cent of women in the LFS sample.

**Appendix Table 1.14: Type of inactivity\***

Current activity	Joint Claims		LFS		NDYP	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Employee - 30 hours or more per week	12.7	6.1			17.9	18.0
Employee – less than 30 hours per week	5.4	7.6			4.9	8.0
Self-employed	0.9	0.2			1.0	0.7
<i>All work (employees and self-employed)</i>	<i>19.0</i>	<i>13.8</i>			<i>23.7</i>	<i>26.7</i>
On new deal or government programme	10.6	3.9			6.9	4.8
Full-time education or training	0.8	1.2	0.9	1.8	13.6	15.2
Unemployed	63.4	61.2	93.5	24.8	51.2	44.5
Long-term sick, injured or disabled	1.9	1.1	3.0	8.0	3.3	3.6
Temporarily sick or injured, or pregnant <sup>††</sup>	2.5	5.6	0.7	1.9	-	-
Looking after the home, children, or relatives	0.6	11.4	0.3	55.5	0.9	4.3
Others	1.1	1.9	1.5	7.5	0.5	0.8
<b><i>Unweighted base</i></b>	<b><i>590</i></b>	<b><i>590</i></b>	<b><i>8957</i></b>	<b><i>8957</i></b>	<b><i>4162</i></b>	<b><i>1710</i></b>

\* Categories are defined differently. LFS adapted to Joint Claims as far as possible. For details of LFS categories see Dorsett (2001).

+ Pregnant with no job to return to.

† Not a separate category in NDYP.

The remaining tables refer to work history and previously held jobs. Here NDYP could not be included in the comparison. Appendix Table 1.15 gives details about the last job people held. Unfortunately it was not possible to derive equivalent categories for the two samples. There was a higher percentage of men and women who never worked among the Joint Claims sample. However, it is important to keep in mind that they were younger and thus had shorter work histories. This fact also explains why a smaller percentage of them had their last job quite a while ago.

**Appendix Table 1.15: Work history**

When last worked	Joint Claims		LFS	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Since sample date*	26.4	18.7		
Since 2000	37.0	30.1		
<i>Less than 1 year ago</i>			42.8	21.9
Since 1999	15.2	15.7		
<i>1 year ago</i>			16.1	11.1
Since 1998	5.4	6.2		
<i>2 years ago</i>			18.0	15.7
Earlier than 1998	9.6	6.9		
<i>3 years ago</i>			23.1	51.3
Never worked	6.4	22.5	3.3	15.3
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>8652</i>	<i>7660</i>

\* This was 10 October 2000. Interviews were 15 to 22 weeks after the sample date. Thus it was not possible to have an exact overlap between the Joint Claims and the LFS categories for this question.

Appendix Tables 1.16 and 1.17 list the industry and occupation of the current or last job. In the Joint Claims survey, respondents were asked this question only when they had had a job since the sampling date. This explains the small number of observations. In contrast, in the LFS this question was put to everybody who ever had a job. This disparity in the questionnaire can, to a large extent, explain the differences between Joint Claims and LFS. One point that can be seen is the shift from manufacturing and construction to service industries.

**Appendix Table 1.16: Industry (SIC) in current or last job\***

SIC of employee job	Joint Claims		LFS	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Agriculture, hunting & forestry	3.9	0.0	2.3	0.9
Manufacturing	26.0	8.3	26.0	19.9
Electricity, gas & water supply	0.0	2.0	2.5	0.1
Construction	8.9	0.0	21.2	1.2
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	29.3	39.1	19.9	32.6
Transport and communication	6.7	7.3	7.7	2.8
Banking, finance & insurance	8.0	9.4	7.0	8.0
Other services	17.2	31.1	12.2	33.2
Others	0.0	2.8	1.3	0.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>7942</i>	<i>5397</i>

\* In Joint Claims the question was asked only for jobs between entry into cohort (October 2000) and the interview data. In LFS this question was asked about the last job for all who ever worked see Table 8 above. Categories were aggregated from different SIC in the data sets.

Differences in occupation are more likely to reflect an age effect. There are also some expected gender differences. Yet it is interesting, that among the Joint Claims sample there were more men in clerical and secretarial occupations while in the LFS it was much more women.

**Appendix Table 1.17: Occupation (SOC) current/last job\***

SOC of employee job	Joint Claims		LFS	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Managers and administrators	2.4	0.0	10.9	7.1
Professional	0.9	2.1	3.6	2.9
Associate professional & technical	3.6	5.2	3.8	3.7
Clerical & secretarial	11.0	5.9	4.4	16.1
Craft & related	18.6	1.7	27.7	6.5
Personal & protective services	6.4	25.1	8.2	21.0
Sales	8.4	33.7	4.5	15.3
Plant & machine operatives	20.1	2.8	21.2	11.1
Other	28.5	23.5	18.9	16.2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>7947</i>	<i>5409</i>

\* In Joint Claims the question was asked only for jobs between entry into cohort (October 2000) and interview data. In LFS this question was asked about the last job for all who ever worked see Table 8 above.

The last comparison, in Appendix Table 1.18, is with regard to the type of job people were looking for. While the number of men looking for part-time work was virtually the same in both surveys (even though men in the LFS were, on average, twelve years older) for women this number increased from 13 per cent in Joint Claims to well over 50 per cent in the LFS, presumably because of family responsibilities.

**Appendix Table 1.18: Type of work sought\***

Weekly hours wanted	Joint Claims		LFS	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Part-time (up to 30h)	3.2	12.9	3.3	54.5
Full-time (31+ hours)	96.8	87.0	96.7	45.5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>482</i>	<i>333</i>	<i>7043</i>	<i>2535</i>

\* In Joint Claims respondents were asked how many hours they look for, in the LFS the distinction was between full-time vs. part-time work.



## **Conclusion**

This comparison had the aim of putting the Joint Claims sample into context through comparisons with the NDYP survey, which had a similar age structure but was not based on couples, and a sample of workless couples derived from the LFS. Most of the differences detected could be explained by differences in the structure of the samples, the organisation of the questionnaire and the wording of questions. Thus, it seems that the Joint Claims sample fits well into the context and shows no oddities.

## Appendix 2      **Weighting to account for clustering and sample non-response**

While every effort is made to ensure that those couples surveyed are representative of the population from which they are drawn, in practice this can be compromised by geographical clustering when carrying out the survey and by individuals' non-response to the survey. To overcome any potential biases that may result, weights can be calculated that will have the effect of restoring the representativeness of the achieved sample, at least in respect of those characteristics that are measured in the population as a whole. This appendix sets out the approach taken to derive weights that achieve this for that population judged eligible for Joint Claims.<sup>5,6</sup>

The weights were calculated by estimating a probit model of survey response across all individuals in the sampling frame. The inverse of the estimated probabilities of response can then be used to weight back to the sampling frame.

The results of estimating the probit model over the 7,019 couples in the sample are presented in the Appendix Table 2.1. There are three groups of variables that are considered in the model: age, region and duration of claim. The coefficients in the first column show that several significant effects were captured. Couples in which the male was aged between 21 and 24 years were more likely to appear in the sample than couples in which the male was aged under 21, 25-26 or (especially) 31-35 years. Similarly, the regional variables show that those in London were generally less likely to feature than couples in other parts of the country, although these differences were insignificant for those in Scotland and Wales. Finally, there was some evidence that those with longer claims (ie those whose claims began in 1999) were more likely to respond than those couples whose claims began more recently.

However, the analysis presented in this report is based on those couples who both provided information about themselves, rather than couples for which one partner's information was provided by the other partner. In view of this, it is appropriate to construct weights that restore the profile of characteristics of those non-proxy couples back to the population as a whole. This requires the estimation of a probit model where the dependent variable is whether or not both partners in a couple provided information. The results of this estimation are given in the second column. As a general comment, the results can be

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<sup>5</sup> A similar approach has been used in the evaluation of New Deal for Young People (Bonjour et al, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that the sampling frame excluded those in ONE areas, those who had been interviewed for the purposes of earlier qualitative research relating to Joint Claims and those who had no recorded national insurance number. Furthermore, the fieldwork did not include any couples in Northern Ireland, hence the results are representative of the eligible population in Great Britain rather than the United Kingdom.

seen to be broadly similar to those in the first column. More formally, for all variables the estimated coefficients in the second column are insignificantly different from those in the first column. It is the results in the second column that are relevant for this report; the additional results are included as they provide some reassurance that the composition of the non-proxy respondents is insignificantly different from that of respondents as a whole, at least in terms of those variables available for the full population.

**Appendix Table 2.1: Modelling survey response**

	(1)	(2)
	Any response	Non-proxy response
Male aged under 21	-0.128 (2.41)*	-0.114 (2.02)*
Male aged 25-26	-0.166 (2.35)*	-0.135 (1.82)
Male aged 27-30	-0.094 (1.48)	-0.091 (1.35)
Male aged 31-35	-0.256 (2.90)**	-0.288 (2.99)**
Male aged 36 and over	-0.024 (0.24)	0.029 (0.28)
Scotland	0.103 (1.15)	0.128 (1.34)
North east	0.394 (4.51)**	0.430 (4.69)**
North west	0.385 (5.33)**	0.392 (5.12)**
Yorkshire & Humberside	0.349 (4.69)**	0.357 (4.51)**
Wales	0.058 (0.56)	0.058 (0.52)
West midlands	0.300 (4.01)**	0.247 (3.05)**
East Midlands/Anglia	0.347 (4.69)**	0.362 (4.61)**
South west	0.227 (2.53)*	0.211 (2.19)*
Claim started 1999	0.191 (2.52)*	0.167 (2.08)*
Claim started 2000, qtr 1	-0.029 (0.47)	-0.086 (1.28)
Claim started 2000, qtr 2	0.042 (0.88)	0.067 (1.32)
Constant	-1.450 (24.63)**	-1.568 (24.90)**
Observations	7019	7019

Absolute value of z-statistics in parentheses  
\* significant at 5% level; \*\* significant at 1% level

The reference couple has a male aged 21-24, lives in the London and South East region and has a claim that started in the third quarter of 2000.

As a check on the performance of these weights, Appendix Table 2.2 considers their effectiveness in returning the profile of characteristics in the sample to that of the population. Column (1) shows the profile of the population. Column (2) shows the profile of responding couples. The characteristics outlined above as important determinants of response can be seen to exert their influence; couples with males aged 21-24 years are over-represented in the sample, those in London and the South East are under-represented and those with a claim beginning in 1999 are over-represented. Applying the weights from the first probability model yields column (3), which has come close to restoring the profile of characteristics seen in the sample as a whole.

**Appendix Table 2.2: Adjusting for clustering and non-response bias**

	Population	Non-proxy respondents unweighted	Non-proxy respondents weighted
Male aged under 21	0.24	0.23	0.23
Male aged 21-24	0.37	0.43	0.37
Male aged 25-26	0.12	0.10	0.12
Male aged 27-30	0.15	0.14	0.15
Male aged 31-35	0.07	0.05	0.09
Male aged 36 and over	0.04	0.05	0.05
Scotland	0.08	0.07	0.08
North east	0.07	0.09	0.06
North west	0.13	0.17	0.12
Yorks & humb	0.12	0.14	0.12
Wales	0.06	0.04	0.06
West mids	0.12	0.13	0.13
East mids/anglia	0.12	0.14	0.12
South west	0.07	0.07	0.08
London/south east	0.23	0.15	0.23
Claim started 1999	0.07	0.10	0.07
Claim started 2000, qtr 1	0.15	0.14	0.18
Claim started 2000, qtr 2	0.29	0.30	0.27
Claim started 2000, qtr 2	0.29	0.30	0.27

## **Appendix 3      The reliability of the proxy responses**

In this appendix, consideration is given to the reliability of those responses collected by means of proxy. While this is not relevant to the results presented in this report, it is important when considering using the proxy responses in stage 2 of the evaluation.

### **A1. General design and method**

The Joint Claims survey was designed as two personal interviews of both partners in the couple. To maintain the 'couple' data integrity, interviewers were instructed to collect proxy information about partners on key items, in cases where the partner was not present and the individual agreed to supply information about their partner. Interviewers were additionally required to continue to make the required number of attempts to interview the partner, in order to gain a personal interview with them.

Fortunately, it turned out that in the majority of cases, both partners were available for personal interview. However, in a number of cases (257), both the proxy and personal interview information was gathered. This additional information allowed an examination of the error resulting from proxy information.

In examining the proxy information, it was compared with the personal survey responses which are assumed to be more appropriate for analysis. Personal or subject responses are not always accurate, and dates can often be incorrect or imprecise, but this is ignored in this analysis.

Two types of analysis are presented; an analysis of the proxy error, where the proxy informant gives a different answer to that given by the subject, and an analysis of the proxy missing information. The proxy informant can be more likely to offer different responses to a question if the question is subjective, requires a degree of interpretation or is complex. As well, some information is not shared between a couple, limiting the ability of the proxy to provide information accurately. The proxy information can be missing for several reasons. It can arise in the form of 'don't know' responses where the proxy informant was unable to provide an answer. In addition, proxy information can be missing on a particular question because the proxy informant answered a previous question incorrectly which affected the filtering of the questionnaire so that the subsequent question was not asked.

### **A2. Background**

LFS research<sup>7</sup> on proxy informants' information quality compared to that given by the subject themselves found 90-100 per cent agreement on some items,

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<sup>7</sup> Section 11 "Report on a proxy response study based on labour force survey questions' LFS user guide, Volume 1:Background and methodology, 10 Nov 1999, pp62-72, ONS, HMSO.

for example age, marital status, economic activity status, full-time/part-time work. The comparison was less satisfactory for variables requiring less straightforward information or requiring detailed numeric or precise material. For example, items such as age of leaving full-time education and qualifications had agreement of 62 per cent and 63 per cent respectively. Spouses were found to have quite a low percentage of correct answers for highest qualification, age of leaving full-time education and usual hours of work (precise).

### **A3. Discussion of findings**

In the following analysis certain key subgroups are identified separately, to reflect the structure of the Joint Claims survey: the ‘treatment group<sup>8</sup>’ and the ‘comparison group<sup>9</sup>’, which are defined on the basis of age, and gender<sup>10</sup> of the proxy informant. Note that the analysis presented in the main body of this report does not examine the comparison group, but members of this group are included here since the accuracy of their proxy responses is an important issue for stage 2 of the evaluation. Analysis is performed on unweighted data.

#### **A3.1 Proxy error**

##### **A3.1.1 Simple items**

Proxy error for simple items was very low. As shown in Appendix Table 3.1, proxy error for identification of ethnicity was only two per cent for all cases. These errors were related to categorisation, for example one partner was described as white but described himself as Algerian. Proxy error in identifying whether the partner held a driver’s licence was four per cent overall, while proxy error in defining whether the partner had caring duties was five per cent. There was no significant variation by proxy gender or treatment/control grouping.

##### **A 3.1.2 Complex items**

Some questions require subjective interpretation, and examples of the proxy error for these are shown in Appendix Table 3.2. Both of these questions involve a degree of subjectivity which the proxy informant and subject may interpret differently, leading to higher proxy error. As well, both of these questions relate to a time period, which the proxy and subject might not determine similarly, and the date of interview being different for the proxy and subject may also confound this information and lead to higher error.

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<sup>8</sup> Those couples where one partner is aged 18-24 years. Thus the treatment group is younger on average. 148 cases in total.

<sup>9</sup> Those couples where one partner is aged 27-25 and neither partner is aged 18-24. 109 cases in total

<sup>10</sup> 105 male proxy informants, and 153 female proxy informants.

**Appendix Table 3.1 Proxy Error for simpler topics**

Item	All	Treatment group	Control group	Male proxy informant	Female proxy informant
Ethnicity	2	2	2	-	3
Holds Drivers licence	4	3	4	4	3
Carer <sup>11</sup>	5	3	6	5	5
<b>Base</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>153</b>

Column per cent. Notes: - indicates none / zero; Proxy error = those where proxy answer differs to subject;

The item relating to health problems had an overall proxy error of 16 per cent, while the item identifying job search had a proxy error of 18 per cent. It is interesting to compare the overall response rate to the item collecting information about whether those looking for work were available to start in the next two weeks, which is more objective and has a short time frame. Here the overall proxy error was three per cent.

The question about long-term health problems had some variation in the incidence of proxy error for subgroups. The treatment group had slightly more proxy error in describing long-term health problems (18 per cent) than did the control group (14 per cent). Female proxy informants had more proxy error when describing their partner's long-term health (18 per cent) than did male proxy informants (13 per cent). Those in the control group had higher error in identifying their partners recent job search activity (22 per cent) than did those in the treatment group (15 per cent). Such variation could arise due to the limits of shared information between partners.

**Appendix Table 3.2 Proxy error for questions involving perceptions and time**

Item	All	Treatment group	Control group	Male proxy informant	Female proxy informant
Long-term health problems	16	18	14	13	18
Active job search in the last 4 weeks	18	15	22	19	18

Column per cent.

### *Education*

The survey collected information about education in several questions. The questions ask about the year respondents left school/sixth form college,

<sup>11</sup> "care for or give special help to anyone in your household or a close relative who is elderly or sick?"

whether they had any further education, the year when this was finished, and the academic and vocational qualifications held. The format of the questions for the proxy simplified the information about qualifications and level. The overall proxy error was 11 per cent for whether the partner held any academic or vocational qualifications. There was no significant variation by gender or group. Other research<sup>12</sup> indicates that lower qualifications are more likely to be misreported, often because the subject has not revealed these to others because they themselves perceive them as being of little value. In support of this, further analysis indicates that most proxy error on this item was due to understatement, where the proxy did not mention qualifications held while the subject did mention qualifications.

The overall proxy error for further education was 12 per cent, very similar to that relating to the holding of any qualifications. Those in the treatment group had more proxy error (17 per cent) for the further education question than those in the control group (six per cent), and male proxy informants had more proxy error (17 per cent) than female proxy informants (nine per cent).

The year school or sixth form college was completed had an overall error of 34 per cent. Male proxy informants had a higher proxy error (40 per cent ) than did female proxy informants (30 per cent). This compares favourably with the LFS analysis of proxy response, where husbands describing the year their partner left school had 44 per cent proxy error and wives 42 per cent<sup>13</sup>. Most proxy error was due to understatement of the year left school, with partners dating the school leaving about a year earlier than the subject.

**Appendix Table 3.3 Proxy error for education questions**

Item	All	Treatment group	Control group	Male proxy informant	Female proxy informant
Any qualifications	11	12	10	10	12
Any further education	12	17	6	17	9
Year left school	34	32	36	40	30

Column per cent. Notes: - indicates none / zero; Proxy error = those where proxy answer differs to subject;

### *Current status*

The proxy error for questions about current status is shown in Appendix Table 3.4. The question has a large amount of detail in hours and description of current activity requiring 13 codes in its original form. The overall proxy error at this level of detail was 15 per cent. Male proxy informants had more difficulty in reliably reporting their partner's activity, with 21 per cent proxy

<sup>12</sup> Bradley, M.; Knight, I.; & Kelly, M. (1996) "Collecting qualifications data in sample surveys – a review of methods used in government surveys", HMSO.

<sup>13</sup> Table 5, p70.



error compared to 12 per cent for female proxy informants. This is likely to be due to the difficulty in successfully describing the separate states of inactivity and unemployment for women. When the level of detail is collapsed, the overall error falls, and the male proxy error becomes similar to that of women. In Appendix Table 3.4, the proxy error for two further levels of current status is shown, in which the status is collapsed to three codes (employment, unemployment and inactivity) and then simply to employment and non-employment. The overall error rate falls to nine per cent for employment, unemployment and inactivity, and then falls to five per cent for employment and non-employment. At the same time, the male proxy informant error drops to 13 per cent when describing their partner as employed, unemployed or inactive, and then to seven per cent for employment and non-employment, which is then very similar to that of female proxy informants (five per cent). This reduction in error as the level of detail falls indicates that separating states of unemployment and inactivity is a difficult task, and may be more difficult when describing women's activities.

**Appendix Table 3.4 Proxy error in current status**

Item	All	Treatment group	Control group	Male proxy informant	Female proxy informant
All current status (13 codes) <sup>14</sup>	15	17	13	21	12
Employed, unemployed, inactive	9	9	10	13	7
Employed / non employed	5	6	5	7	5

Column per cent. Notes: - indicates none / zero; Proxy error = those where proxy answer differs to subject;

Appendix Table 3.5 presents the proxy error in dating the start of the current activity. As noted earlier, subject accuracy for dates is not in itself reliable and can lead to great error in dates. The level of precision for dates is accounted for in the survey design, where the interviewer records information about what level of detail the respondent could provide. All dates considered in Table 5 were recorded as precise to the month and year. The overall proxy error was 48 per cent in estimating the month and year their partner started their current activity. If only those who had no proxy error in current status (employment and non-employment) are considered, and responses are not judged erroneous unless more than one month different, the overall proxy error falls to 29 per cent.

<sup>14</sup> Employee - 30 hours or more ; Employee - 24 hours to 29 hours ; Employee - 16 to 23 hours ; Employee - 1-15 hours ;Self-employed ; On New Deal or another government/TEC/LEC programme; Full-time education or training; Unemployed, claiming JSA or partner claiming JSA; Unemployed, not claiming JSA & partner not claiming JSA; Long-term sick, injured or disabled; Temporarily sick or injured, or pregnant – no job to return to; Looking after the home, children, or other relatives; Doing something else

**Appendix Table 3.5 Proxy error in dating start of current status**

Item		All	Treatment group	Control group	Male proxy informant	Female proxy informant
Date started current economic activity	Month, year For those who could give month, year precision	48	49	46	54	44
Base		199	114	85	82	117
Date started current economic activity	Month, year For those who could give month, year precision and where proxy gave correct economic status, and month is correct to within 1 month	29	29	29	36	24
<b>Base</b>		<b>183</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>111</b>

Column per cent. Notes: - indicates none / zero; Proxy error = those where proxy answer differs to subject.

For the second stage analysis, it is useful to compare the proxy error for whether the partner has ever held a job. This is shown in Appendix Table 3.6. This is a combination of all current and historical data on activity collected in the survey. The questionnaire format for the proxy information differs from that of the subject, and might lead to some expansion in the proxy error. The overall error rate is 13 per cent, with very little variation by gender or group. This is very low considering the compound nature of the collection and the 'lifetime' aspect, where information about the whole working life is gathered. Further examination shows that most error was due to underestimation, where the proxy informant did not mention a job that the subject mentioned.

**Appendix Table 3.6 Combined proxy error for partner ever held a job**

		All	Treatment group	Control group	Male proxy informant	Female proxy informant
Ever held a job	Combined. Any jobs recorded in current status, jobs since 1 oct 2000, jobs in 2000, jobs in 1999, jobs in 1998, or any job since school. [proxy not asked separately about jobs in 2000, jobs in 1999, jobs in 1998]	13	13	13	12	13
<i>Base</i>		<i>257</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>153</i>

Column per cent. Notes: - indicates none / zero; Proxy error = those where proxy answer differs to subject.

### A3.2 Proxy missing

In addition to proxy error, proxy information can be missing, as described earlier. This is considered in Appendix Table 3.7. For most items, the proxy missing is less than four per cent. The key items leading to high proxy missing were education items, where proxy error was also high, as previously discussed. Proxy informants led to missing information in 40 per cent of cases for the item 'any academic or vocational qualifications', 35 per cent proxy missing for the year left school, and 13 per cent for 'any further education'. For long-term health problems and job search there was three per cent proxy missing, for current economic status and drivers licence less than half a per cent had proxy missing, while for ethnicity and carer status there were no proxy missing.

**Appendix Table 3.7 Proxy missing**

Item	% proxy missing
Any qualifications	40
Year left school/6 <sup>th</sup> form	35
Any further education	13
Long-term health problems	3
Active job search in the last 4 weeks	3
Current status	<0.5
Holds Drivers licence	<0.5
Carer <sup>15</sup>	-
Ethnicity	-

Notes: - indicates none / zero. Proxy missing is those where proxy informant does not know/refuses etc.

#### **A4. Conclusions**

Overall proxy error and proxy missing was low, indicating good reliability of proxy information. Education had the lowest reliability for proxy responses, with the highest share of proxy error as well as the highest proxy missing. The proxy error in describing current status can be reduced by collapsing categories to employment/non-employment. Some variation in proxy error arises with gender and treatment/control groupings. Comparison with available information on proxy error in the LFS indicates the Joint Claims survey was relatively successful in collecting proxy information reliably.

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<sup>15</sup> “care for or give special help to anyone in your household or a close relative who is elderly or sick?”

## **Annex: Attitudes and mental health**

In this annex, the responses to questions relating to attitudes and mental health are presented without interpretation. In addition to these straightforward tabulations, summary indices were constructed and are presented as the last two tables. These indices relate to the attitude towards women in work and to the mental health of the respondents. A note on the construction of these indices is provided below, to aid interpretation.

### **Positive attitude to women in work score**

A number of attitudinal statements were included in the survey, and six of these were designed to reflect attitudes towards women and work. The statements were asked in a randomised order, so that within a couple, the same ordering of statements was not presented to each individual. The questions were introduced with:

“I am now going to read out some statements about employment and pay. For each one please can you tell me how much do you agree or disagree?  
.....”

and then the statements they were asked to consider were given. These were<sup>16</sup>:

4. Important decisions should be made by the man/husband rather than the woman/wife;
5. A woman/wife who doesn't have to work, should not work;
6. It is less important for a woman to go out to work than it is for a man;
7. Both the man and woman should contribute to the household income;
8. Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person;  
and
9. A man's job is to earn money, a woman's job is to look after the home.

A five point scale (presented on a showcard) was used to categorise replies as follows:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Slightly Agree
3. Neither Agree Nor Disagree
4. Slightly Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree.

Factor analysis and reliability analysis supports the grouping of these items. The six questions were therefore summarised into an index by taking the mean (after reversing the scales for items eight and nine). Those individuals who offered no opinion on any item were excluded from the scale. This resulting index was categorised as follows:

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<sup>16</sup> Note that the numbering relates to the numbering of the items on the questionnaire.

low/very low: a score of less than 3,  
intermediate: a score of 3,  
high: a score greater than 3 but less than 4  
very high: a score greater than 4

and represents the degree to which respondents had a 'positive' attitude towards women working.

## **Mental health index**

There are five questions in the survey which form the '5 item general mental health indicator' from the 'Medical Outcomes Study 36 item Short Form Health Survey' (Ware & Sherbourne, 1992). The items cover nervousness, depression, anxiety and happiness. The five questions are worded as follows:

"How much of the time during the past 4 weeks have you :

1. been a very nervous person?
2. felt so down in the dumps that nothing could cheer you up?
3. felt calm and peaceful?
4. felt down-hearted and low?
5. been a happy person?"

A seven point scale (presented on a showcard) was used to gauge replies:

1. All of the time,
2. Most of the time,
3. A good bit of the time,
4. Some of the time,
5. A little of the time,
6. None of the time.

Factor and reliability analysis supports the effective combination of these items. The five questions were combined, once items three and five had had their scales reversed. Individual scores were averaged to produce a generalised scale of subjective well-being or mental health for the individual. The resulting index was categorised as follows:

Poor: a score of less than 3,  
Fair: a score greater than 3 but less than 4,  
Good: a score greater than 4 but less than 5,  
Very good: a score of 5 or higher.

Those individuals who offered no opinion on any item were excluded from the index.

**Table A1: Even if I had enough money to live comfortably for the rest of my life, I would still want to work**

Even if I had enough money to live comfortably for the rest of my life, I would still want to work	Male	Female
strongly agree	<b>37.6</b>	<b>37.0</b>
slightly agree	24.9	25.4
neither agree nor disagree	7.9	7.5
slightly disagree	7.2	8.3
strongly disagree	22.2	20.2
don't know/no opinion	0.2	1.6
<i>unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A2 Benefits give a more stable income than trying to earn a wage**

Benefits give a more stable income than trying to earn a wage	Male	Female
strongly agree	10.6	8.6
slightly agree	15.0	13.8
neither agree nor disagree	13.1	17.1
slightly disagree	19.3	16.8
strongly disagree	<b>41.0</b>	<b>40.4</b>
don't know/no opinion	1.0	3.4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A3 It would not be worth my partner working while we are receiving benefit**

It would not be worth my partner working while we are receiving benefit	Male	Female
strongly agree	14.7	12.8
slightly agree	17.1	10.6
neither agree nor disagree	19.2	16.1
slightly disagree	17.1	17.9
strongly disagree	<b>26.8</b>	<b>35.7</b>
don't know/no opinion	5.1	7.0
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A4 Important decisions should be made by the man/husband rather than the woman/wife**

Important decisions should be made by the man/husband rather than the woman/wife	Male	Female
strongly agree	9.4	5.1
slightly agree	5.7	5.0
neither agree nor disagree	19.8	8.5
slightly disagree	11.0	6.6
strongly disagree	<b>53.7</b>	<b>73.9</b>
don't know/no opinion	0.4	0.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A5 A woman/wife who doesn't have to work, should not work**

A woman/wife who doesn't have to work, should not work	Male	Female
strongly agree	13.8	11.8
slightly agree	16.5	10.4
neither agree nor disagree	23.3	18.9
slightly disagree	19.1	21.1
strongly disagree	<b>24.8</b>	<b>35.4</b>
don't know/no opinion	2.4	2.4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A6 It is less important for a woman to go out to work than it is for a man**

It is less important for a woman to go out to work than it is for a man	Male	Female
strongly agree	10.3	7.8
slightly agree	12.9	8.3
neither agree nor disagree	16.0	12.0
slightly disagree	15.7	16.1
strongly disagree	<b>44.6</b>	<b>54.8</b>
don't know/no opinion	0.4	1.1
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent



**Table A7 Both the man and woman should contribute to the household income**

Both the man and woman should contribute to the household income	Male	Female
strongly agree	<b>59.3</b>	<b>71.1</b>
slightly agree	21.2	14.8
neither agree nor disagree	9.7	7.5
slightly disagree	4.7	3.0
strongly disagree	4.7	2.7
don't know/no opinion	0.4	0.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A8 Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person**

Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person	Male	Female
strongly agree	<b>32.6</b>	<b>45.7</b>
slightly agree	27.1	24.2
neither agree nor disagree	18.1	12.1
slightly disagree	11.0	7.6
strongly disagree	9.4	8.4
don't know/no opinion	1.8	2.1
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A9 A man's job is to earn money, a woman's job is to look after the home**

A man's job is to earn money, a woman's job is to look after the home	Male	Female
strongly agree	14.0	7.0
slightly agree	11.3	6.7
neither agree nor disagree	12.3	8.5
slightly disagree	11.4	13.0
strongly disagree	<b>50.8</b>	<b>64.1</b>
don't know/no opinion	0.1	0.7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	590	590

Weighted column per cent

**Table A10 Mental health index**

Mental health index	Male	Female
Very good/good	<b>66</b>	<b>56</b>
Fair	20	25
Poor	12	18
<i>Weighted base</i>	99	99
<i>Unweighted base</i>	584	585

Weighted column per cent

**Table A11 Positive attitude to 'women and work' score**

Positive attitude to 'women and work' score	Male	Female
Very high	<b>38</b>	<b>60</b>
High	<b>38</b>	26
Not low, not high	5	3
Low or very low	14	7
<i>unweighted base</i>	563	569

Weighted column per cent. Note: high score indicates positive attitude.

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