



Civil Justice Statistics Quarterly, England and Wales, October to December 2016 and annual 2016 (provisional)

Main points

County court claims up 19%, driven by specified money		473,000 County Court claims lodged in October to December 2016, 369,000 of these being specified money claims (up 29% on Oct-Dec 2015).
Unspecified claims down 14%, driven by personal injury claims		The number of unspecified money claims stood at 34,000 in October to December 2016 (down 5,500 on last year), the lowest quarterly figure since Q2 2014, driven by a 14% drop in Personal Injury claims.
Non-money claims at lowest quarterly level		There were 70,000 non-money claims, down 5% on Oct-Dec 2015. This was driven by Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims, which dropped 13% to 36,000.
Defences up 7% to 71,000 in October to December 2016		A 7% increase in the number of claims defended- both claimant and defendant has legal representation in 54% of defences (down 5 percentage points on Oct-Dec 2015).
Judgments increased by a third, compared to same quarter in 2015		There were 287,000 judgements made in October to December 2016, of which 86% were default judgements.
4,300 judicial review applications in 2016 , down 8% on 2015		Drop seen across all three topics (civil-other, criminal and immigration). Of the 2,700 cases that reached the permission stage, 550 (20%) were found to be 'totally without merit'.

This publication gives civil county court statistics for the latest quarter (October to December 2016), compared to the same quarter the previous year. The judicial reviews figures are annual 2016 figures and the privacy injunctions (which are published biannually) cover July to December 2016. For more details, please see the supporting document.

We are changing how our quarterly bulletins look, and would welcome any feedback to commentary.champions@justice.gsi.gov.uk

For other feedback related to the content of this publication, please let us know at cajs@justice.gsi.gov.uk

1. Claims summary

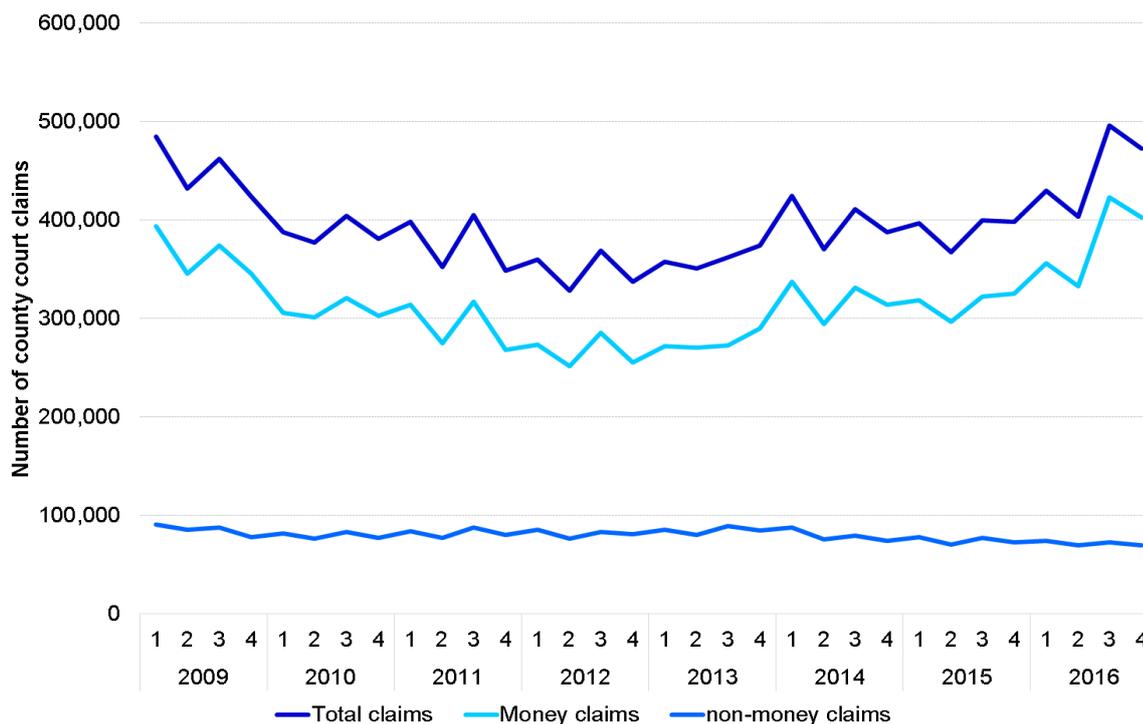
County court claims up 19% (74,000 more), driven by specified claims

473,000 County Court claims lodged in October to December 2016, up 19% on Oct-Dec 2015 and driven by specified money claims (up 29% over the same period).

Non-money claims are at their lowest quarterly level

There were 70,000 non-money claims, down 5% on Oct-Dec 2015. This was driven by Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims, which dropped 13% to 36,000.

Figure 1: County Court Claims by type, Q1 (Jan-Mar) 2009 to Q4 (Oct-Dec) 2016 (source: table 1.2)



County Court claims have been generally increasing since a low of 328,188 in April to June 2012, driven by money claims, which make up the majority of claims received (85% of claims in October to December 2016). ↑

Non-money claims on the other hand have been generally declining since the peak of 89,309 claims in Q3 2013. In the most recent quarter (October to December 2016), it stood at 69,822, the lowest quarterly figure since the recording of quarterly figures (January to March 2000). ↓

Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims account for around half (51% - 35,718) of non-money claims in October to December 2016 and have been driving the downward trend seen. ↓

Of the other non-money claims in October to December 2016, 3% were for return of goods (2,014), which has been increasing quarter on quarter since July to September 2015; and 46% are for other non-money claims (32,090), which has generally been increasing since April to June 2014. ↑

2. Money Claims

Increase in specified money claims driven by claims issued at the CCBC

The 29% increase specified money claims was driven by claims issued at the County Court Business Centre (CCBC). The CCBC had 89,500 more claims (up 38%) when compared with the same quarter last year.

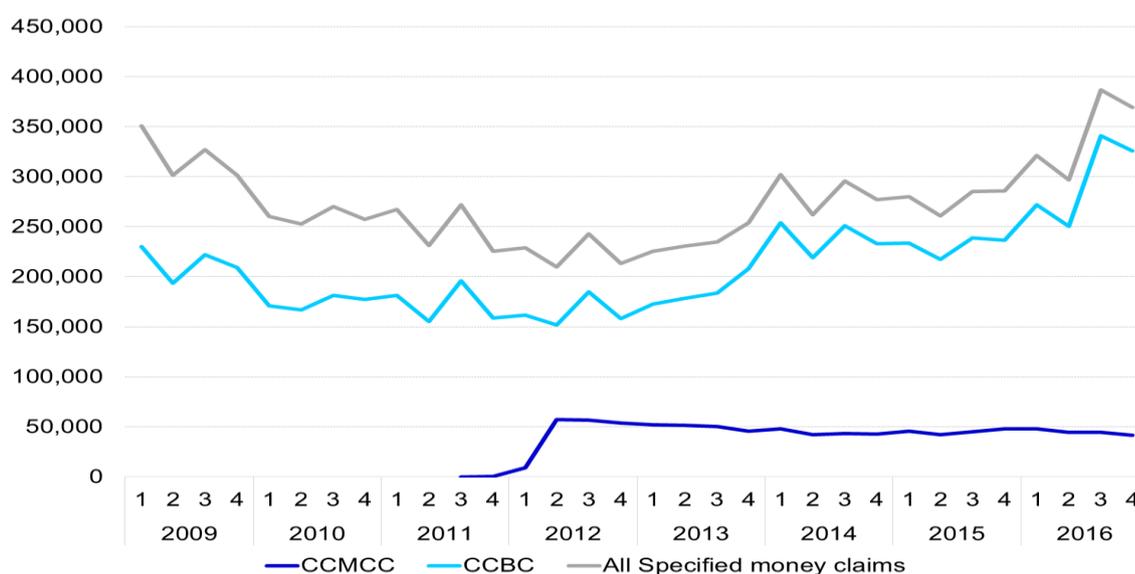
Unspecified claims down 14% (5,500 less) on the same quarter in 2016

The number of unspecified money claims stood at 34,000 in October to December 2016, driven by a 14% drop in Personal Injury claims. This is the lowest quarterly level since Q2 2014.

The majority (88%) of specified money claims are processed and issued at the CCBC, followed by the County Court Money Claims Centre (CCMCC). There were 326,096 such claims at the CCBC in October to December 2016 (up 38% on the same quarter the previous year) and 41,362 at the CCMCC (down 13% on October to December 2015).



Figure 2: Specified money claims by issuing centre, Jan-Mar 2009 to Oct-Dec 2016 (source: table 1.2 and civil workload CSV)



Unspecified money claims have been generally declining since a peak of 46,674 in January to March 2013, and have reached a low of 33,790 in October to December 2016. Personal injury accounts for almost all (95%) of the unspecified money claims.

In October to December 2016, 38,585 money claims were allocated to track, 2% more than the same period in 2015. Of these allocations;

- 19,643 were allocated to small claims, an increase of 11% on the same quarter in 2015, accounting for 51% of all allocations;
- 15,689 were allocated fast track, a decrease of 4% on the same quarter in 2015, accounting for 41% of all allocations;
- 3,253 were allocated multi-track, a decrease of 13% on same quarter of 2015), accounting for 8% of all allocations.



3. Defences (including legal representation) and Trials

Defences up 7% (to 71,000)

A 7% increase in the number of claims defended and both claimant and defendant had legal representation in 54% of defences (down 5 ppt on Oct-Dec 2015).

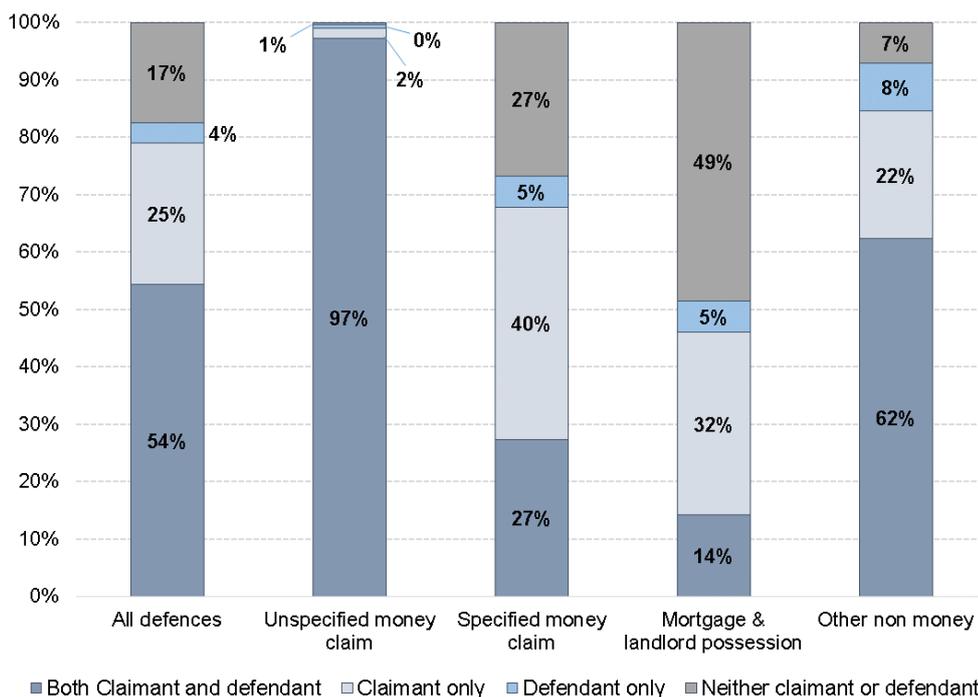
The number of trials that took place in county courts increased 15% to 13,500 in October to December 2016, when compared to the same period in 2015.

The increase in the number of defences was driven by specified money claim cases, where 38,213 specified money claims were defended, a 17% increase on the same quarter in 2015. Over the same period un-specified money claims drop by 4% to 27,631.



In 54% of defences both sides had legal representation (down 5 percentage points on the same quarter last year) compared with 25% of defences where only the claimant had representation (5 percentage points increase over the same period). This shift in proportion is driven in part by the reduction in un-specified money defences and the increase in specified money, as the proportion of legal representation differs depending on the type of claim (as figure 3 shows). For un-specified money defences in October to December 2016, 97% had legal representation for both the respondent and claimant, compared with only 27% in specified money defences.

Figure 3: Proportion of civil defences and legal representation status, October to December 2016 (Source: table 1.6)



Defended cases which are not settled or withdrawn generally result in a trial. In total, there were 13,828 trials (of all types) in October to December 2016, up 17% on the same quarter in 2015. Of the claims that went to trial 9,474 (69%) were small claim trials (up 12% on the same quarter in 2015) and 4,354 were fast and multi-track trials (up 28% on the same quarter in 2015).



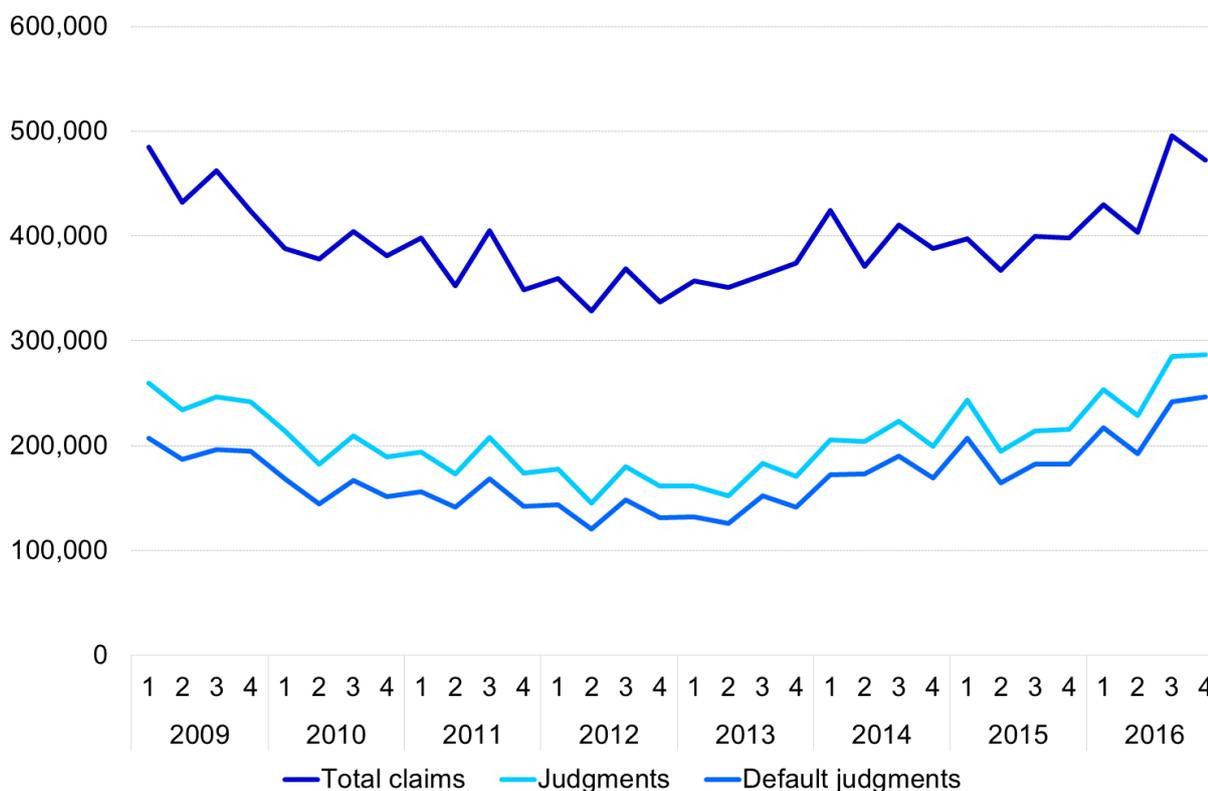
The average time for a small claim to reach trial from the issue stage was 30.4 weeks and for a fast and multi-claim it was 54.0 weeks (compared to 31.6 and 53.9 weeks respectively, in October to December 2015).

4. Judgements and Enforcements

Judgments increased by 33%, compared to same quarter in 2015

There were 287,000 judgements made in October to December 2016, of which 86% were default judgements.

Figure 4: All claims, judgements and default judgements, Jan-Mar 2009 to Oct-Dec 2016 (Source: table 1.2 and 1.4)



Of the 286,986 judgements that were made in October to December 2016, 246,509 (86%) were a judgment in default, an increase of 33% and 35% respectively on the same quarter in 2015. The second largest type of judgment were ‘admissions’, of which there were 24,888 (9% of all judgments) in October to December 2016, up 18% on the same quarter in 2015.

Enforcements

There were 29,346 enforcement-related order applications (which include attachment of earnings orders, charging orders, third party orders, and orders to obtain information) in October to December 2016 and 21,227 actual enforcement related orders made (a decrease of 11% and 15% respectively compared to the same period last year).

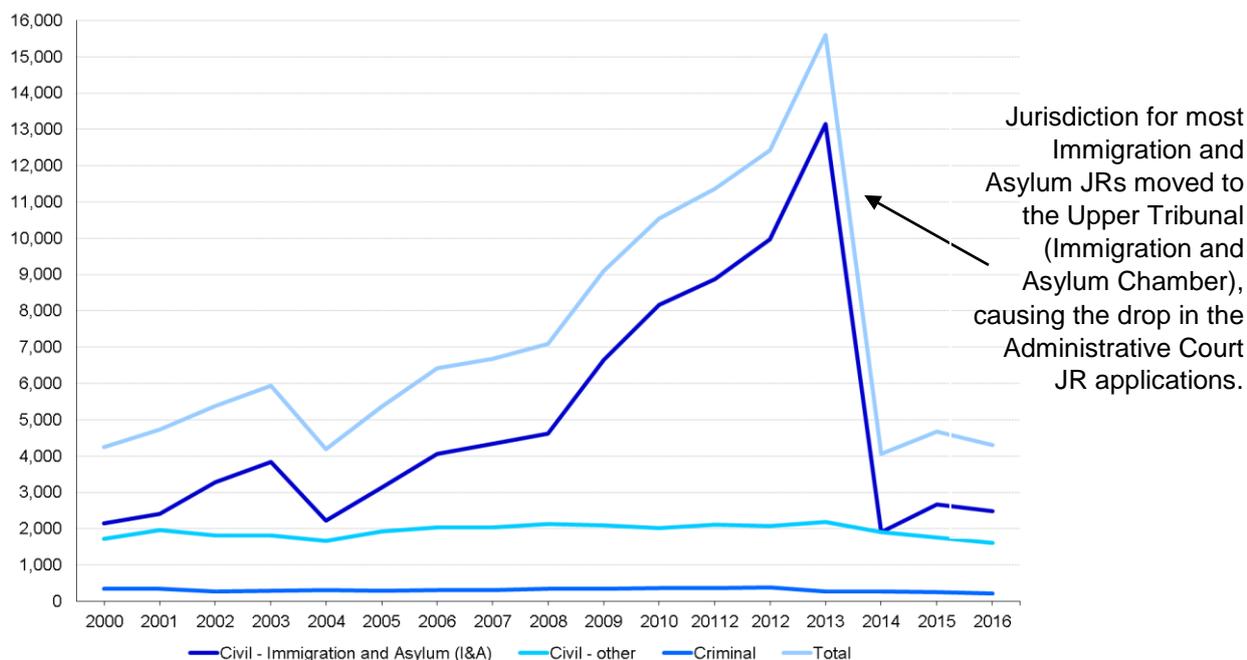
Annually, over the longer term, enforcement-related applications and orders steadily increased to a peak of 248,103 and 231,278, respectively, in 2008. They have since been on a declining trend, to a low of 122,204 and 91,989 in the most recent year (2016).

5. Judicial Reviews¹

There were 4,300 judicial review applications received in 2016, down 8% on 2015.

Of the 2016 applications received, 65% have already closed, and 550 were found to be 'Totally Without Merit' (20% of cases that reached the permission stage).

Figure 5: Annual Judicial Review Application, by type calendar year 2000-2016 (Source: table 2.1)



Of the 4,298 judicial review applications received in 2016, 2,479 were Civil Immigration and Asylum applications, 1,605 were civil (other) and 214 were criminal, down 7%, 8% and 18% respectively on 2015. Forty four of the civil Immigration and Asylum cases have since been transferred to the UTIAC.

So far 65% of the 2016 applications have been progressed and are now closed. There were 2,712 of the 2016 applications that had so far reached the permission stage, and of these:

- 20% (545) were found to be totally without merit (TWM), level with the proportion in the previous year.
- 442 cases were granted permission to proceed and 2,212 were refused at the permission stage. However, 99 of cases refused at permission stage went on to be granted permission at the renewal stage.
- 541 of the 2016 cases have been assessed to be eligible for a final hearing and of these, 94 have since been heard.
- For the 2016 cases, the mean time from a case being lodged to the permission decision was 64 days, down from 67 days in 2015 and 77 days in 2014.

Future quarterly bulletins will give more insight into the 2016 cases, as the work their way through the system.

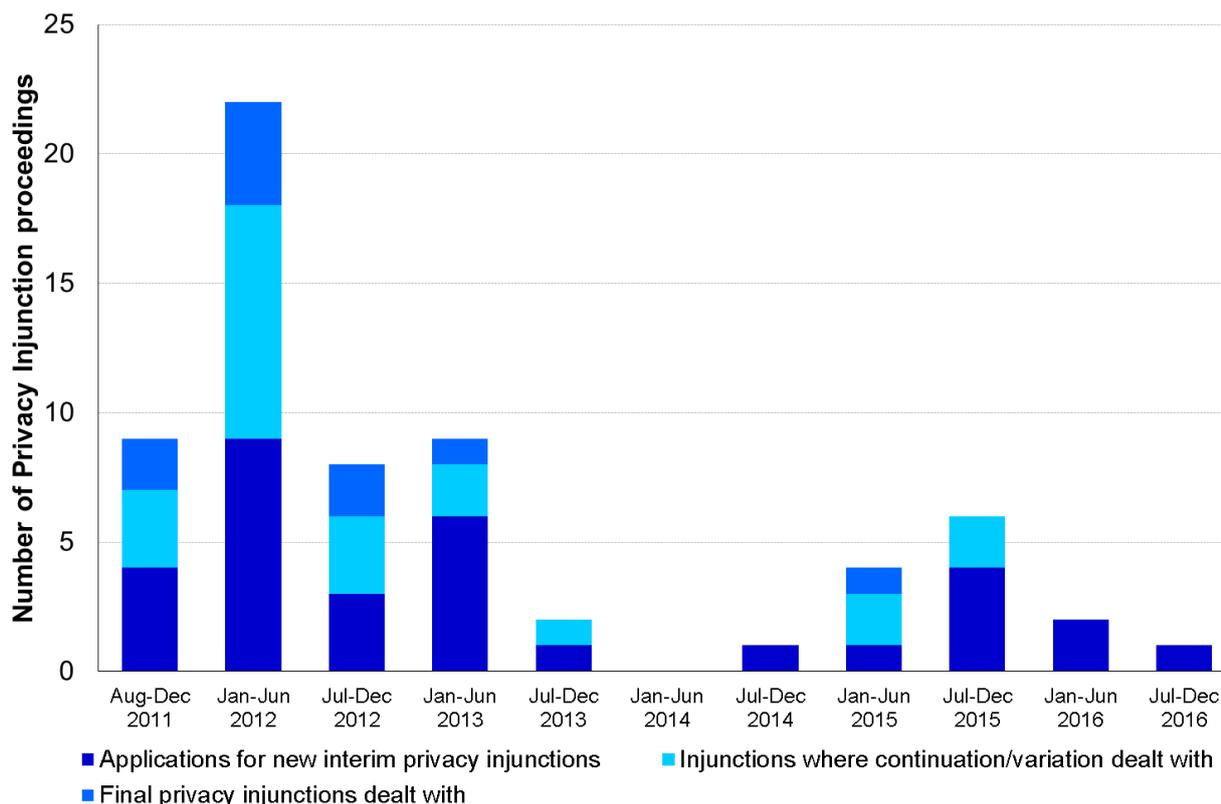
¹ The judicial review data are Official Statistics

6. Privacy Injunctions²

In July to December 2016 there was one proceeding where the High Court considered an application for a new interim privacy injunction.

During the same time period, no proceedings were considered at the High Court on whether to continue or amend an interim injunction or to issue a final permanent injunction.

Figure 6: Number of privacy injunction proceedings, by type of proceeding, from August-December 2011 to July-December 2016 (Source: tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3)



New interim privacy injunctions (Table 3.1)

The proceeding at the High Court that took place in July to December 2016, was granted, compared with two proceedings that took place the previous six months (January to June 2016), in which one was granted and the other refused.

Continuation of existing interim injunctions (Table 3.2) and Final privacy injunctions (Table 3.3)

During July to December 2016, there were no proceedings by the High Court for a continuation of an existing interim injunction, nor was there any applications for a final privacy injunction.

² The privacy injunction data are Official Statistics

Further information

The statistics in the latest quarter are provisional and revisions may be made when the next edition of this bulletin is published. Further revisions may be made when the figures are reconciled at the end of the year. If revisions are needed in the subsequent year, these will be clearly annotated in the tables.

Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A technical guide providing further information on how the data is collected and processed, as well as information on the revisions policy and legislation relevant to civil justice.
- A set of overview tables and CSV files, covering each section of this bulletin.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.



All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) or Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) press offices:

Sebastian Walters (MoJ) - email: sebastian.walters@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Camilla Marshall (HMCTS) - email: camilla.marshall@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division of the Ministry of Justice:

Bridgette Miles - email: cajs@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Next update: 1 June 2017

© Crown copyright

Produced by the Ministry of Justice

Alternative formats are available on request from cajs@justice.gsi.gov.uk