

Freedom of Information request 2014-4957

Date received 13 November 2014

Date of response 11 December 2014

Information request

Information on the payment method for claimants of working age claiming JSA (IB), ESA (IR), IS (and if available WTC) – relating to Hackney LA

In particular, we are interested in the breakdown of numbers receiving payment by cheque, simple payment accounts and post office accounts as well as bank/building society accounts and any other payment methods used.

DWP response

We can confirm that the Department does hold some information falling within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the cost of complying exactly with your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Under section 16 of the FOIA we are obliged to assist you in providing options to narrow your request, by reforming or refocusing it, so that it will fall beneath the cost limit. In this case our advice would be to narrow your question so that it only asks for information on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Income Support (IS) overall, rather than income-based JSA and income-related ESA. For your convenience, we have provided this data in Table 1 below.

Please note that the data we hold regarding your query relates to payment accounts rather than people. A customer may receive benefits in the form of a separate payment for each benefit to which they are entitled or a single, combined payment. Each of these payments is termed a payment account.

Information on the number of payment accounts paid into bank / building society accounts, cheques, post office card accounts and simple payment accounts for JSA, ESA and IS in Hackney Local Authority is available in Table 1 below. Please note that the figures are from November 2013, which is the latest data available at the time of request.

Please also note that the figures supplied are derived from unpublished information and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Table 1: Number of payment accounts by method of payment for JSA, ESA and IS in Hackney Local Authority, November 2013.

	Method of Payment				
	All methods	Bank / building society accounts	Cheque	Post Office Card Accounts (POCA)	Simple Payment Accounts
JSA	7,270	6,250	10	940	70
ESA	9,470	7,330	-	2,060	80
IS	6,320	5,170	-	1,140	20

Source: DWP, 100% data

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten, totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. Figures only relate to accounts live and in payment on the specified date.
3. Figures refer to payment accounts. Claimants with more than one account will be counted for each account.

In response to your question regarding payment methods for Working Tax Credits (WTC) in Hackney, we can confirm that DWP does not hold this information.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) may be able to assist with your enquiry regarding WTC. Information on how to submit a freedom of information request to HMRC can be found via the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/about/publication-scheme>