



Ministry of
JUSTICE



Statistics on company winding up and bankruptcy petitions issued in the High Court and county courts of England and Wales – fourth quarter 2010

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

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Introduction

This quarterly bulletin presents statistics on the numbers of company winding up petitions and individual bankruptcy petitions made by creditors and debtors issued in the High Court and county courts of England and Wales. It provides provisional figures for the latest quarter (October to December 2010). Supplementary statistical tables which include breakdowns by court are also published in a spreadsheet format on the Ministry of Justice website at:

www.justice.gov.uk/publications/companywindingupandbankruptcy.htm

There are two main methods of winding up (or dissolving) a company which cannot pay its creditor(s), to whom debt is owed. The first commences by a creditor, shareholder or director presenting a petition to a court for a compulsory company winding up order. The second is for the company itself to pass a resolution, subject to the approval of a creditors' meeting, that the company be wound up voluntarily, or for the company to come to a binding agreement with its creditors. This is known as a voluntary company winding up.

An individual insolvency, when a person is unable to pay his or her debts, can also be made on a compulsory or voluntary basis. The process for a compulsory bankruptcy order commences with either the debtor (the person who owes the debt) or one or more of his creditors presenting a petition to a court. Alternatively, an individual voluntary arrangement can be made through debtors coming to an agreement with their creditors.

The statistics provide a summary overview of volumes over time of the number of such petitions issued in the High Court and the county courts, broken down by individual court. In addition to monitoring court workloads, they are used by local authorities to assess the economic wellbeing of areas.

Statistics on the actual numbers of company windings up and bankruptcies occurring are published by the Insolvency Service. On receipt of a petition, the court issue process includes setting up a judicial hearing. At this hearing, once satisfied that there is no prospect of the debt(s) being paid, the court grants a company winding up order or a bankruptcy order and appoints an Official Receiver to take control of relevant assets. The Insolvency Service statistics (which for each quarter are released six days ahead of the Ministry of Justice statistics due to the extra time needed for compilation of the latter) can be accessed on their website at:

www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/insolv.htm

The **Recent developments and statistical revisions** section contains information on recent changes to court and insolvency processes which may impact on the statistics.

The **Explanatory notes** section provides further information about the statistics, how they were compiled, and the symbols and conventions used in the bulletin.

If you have any feedback or questions about this statistical bulletin, or requests for further information, please direct them to the appropriate contact provided at the end of this report.

The High Court and county courts of England and Wales also process many other types of cases. These include other types of civil law matters such as those relating to debt, personal injury and possession, as well as those relating to family matters such as divorce, parental disputes and the protection of children. The Ministry of Justice also publishes several other related statistical publications which include statistics on activity in the courts:

- The quarterly bulletin “Mortgage and landlord possession statistics” provides detailed data on the number of such county court cases and is published at the same time as this bulletin:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/mortgatelandlordpossession.htm>

- The statistical bulletins “Court Statistics Quarterly” and “Judicial and Court Statistics” provide data on all civil and family law cases dealt with in the county courts on a quarterly basis and in the High Court and county courts on a calendar year basis respectively:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/courtstatisticsquarterly.htm>

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/judicialandcourtstatistics.htm>

Proposal to merge this bulletin with Court Statistics Quarterly

It is proposed that the next edition of this bulletin, due to be published in May 2011 and providing statistics for the first quarter (January to March) of 2011, will be the last in the series as a stand-alone publication. After that time, it is proposed instead to include statistics on insolvency petitions within the Ministry of Justice’s Court Statistics Quarterly (CSQ) report alongside the statistics for all types of cases dealt with in the civil courts. As a result of this change, the range of statistics on insolvency cases included within this report would still be available, but data would be published approximately 3 months after the end of each quarter (the standard publication schedule for the CSQ report) rather than approximately 6 weeks after each quarter as currently. Statistics for the second quarter (April to June) of 2011 would therefore be published in the corresponding edition of CSQ at the end of September. We would be grateful for users’ feedback on these plans, which can be provided to the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division using the contact details provided on the penultimate page of this report.

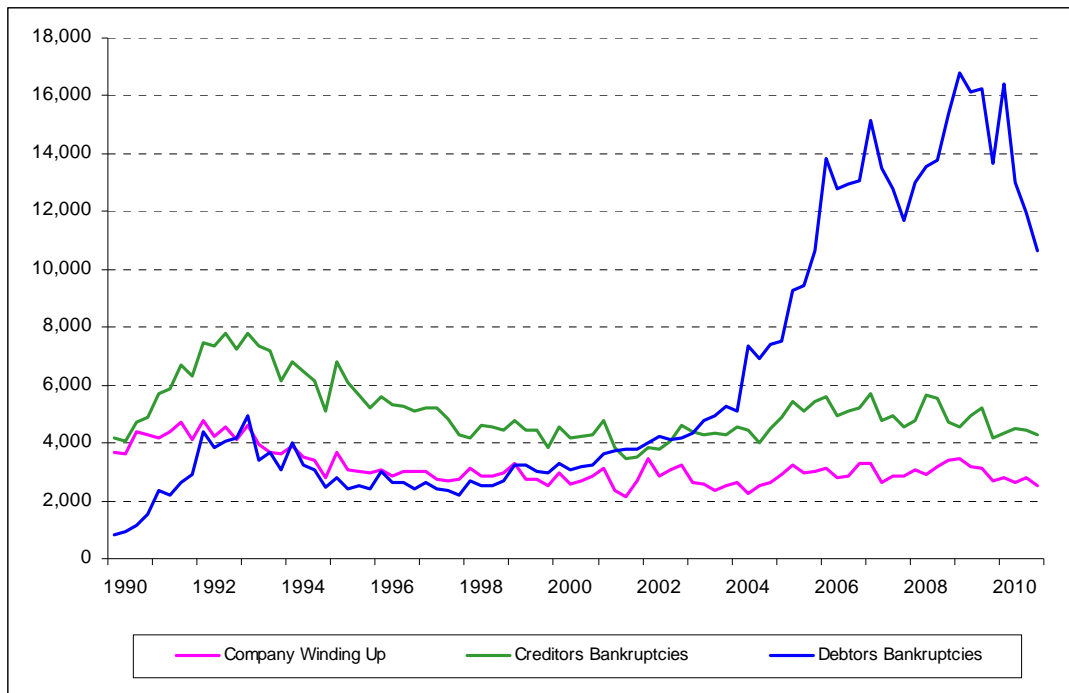
Findings

The analysis in this report mainly consists of comparisons made between the latest quarter with the previous quarter and with the equivalent quarter of the previous year. Seasonal variations affecting the workload of the courts may impact on comparisons between periods; however the statistics are not seasonally adjusted.

The main findings (figures available in Tables 1, 2 and 3) are as follows:

- There were an average of 2,700 company winding up petitions issued per quarter (for dissolving a company that cannot pay its debts) during 2010. This is slightly lower than in each of the previous five years, where there was an average of around 3,000 per quarter. In the fourth quarter of 2010, 2,510 company winding up petitions were issued, a decrease of six per cent compared with the same quarter of 2009 and a decrease of 10 per cent on the third quarter of 2010.
- Individual bankruptcy petitions presented by creditors (to whom debt is owed) have generally fallen in number since 2006. In the fourth quarter of 2010, 4,270 creditors bankruptcy petitions were issued, an increase of three per cent on the same quarter of 2009 and a fall of four per cent compared to the previous quarter.

Figure 1: Company winding up and individual bankruptcy petitions issued – England & Wales, 1990 to 2010 Q4 (Oct-Dec)



- Individual bankruptcy petitions presented by debtors (who owe the debt) fell in 2010 after having generally being on an upward trend between 2000 and 2009, rising five fold over this time. In the fourth quarter of 2010, 10,646 debtors bankruptcy petitions were issued, a decrease of 22

per cent on the same quarter of 2009 and an 11 per cent decline on the previous quarter.

- The six per cent fall in company winding up petitions compared to the same quarter in 2009 reflected at HMCS region level:
 - falls in North West England (19 per cent), the Midlands (15 per cent), North East England (nine per cent), South West England (eight per cent) and London (seven per cent);
 - a rise in South East England excluding London (63 per cent).

Although the percentage rise in South East England (excluding London) was large, it should be noted that companying winding-up petitions in this region only accounted for five per cent of the national total.

- The three per cent increase in bankruptcy petitions made by creditors compared with the fourth quarter of 2009 reflected at HMCS region level:
 - falls in the Midlands (12 per cent), South West England (11 per cent) and London (one per cent);
 - rises in Wales (56 per cent), North East (34 per cent), North West England (16 per cent).
- The 22 per cent fall in bankruptcy petitions made by debtors compared with the same quarter of 2009 was spread across all HMCS regions. The greatest decreases were in the Midlands and North East England (both 28 per cent), followed by South West England and London (both 22 per cent), South East England excluding London (19 per cent) and North West England (17 per cent). By far the lowest fall was in Wales (one per cent).

Recent developments

Increase in fees

Fees relating to The Official Receiver's Deposit towards the costs of administering insolvency cases increased on 6th April 2010; for debtors' bankruptcy petitions from £360 to £450, creditors' bankruptcy petitions from £430 to £600, and company winding up petitions from £715 to £1,000. This created an incentive for companies and individuals to present petitions to the courts before 6th April and may therefore have resulted in an increased number of petitions being made in Q1 of 2010 and a decreased number of petitions being made in subsequent quarters.

Introduction of Debt Relief Orders

Debt Relief Orders (DROs) were introduced on 6 April 2009 through the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007. DROs provide debt relief, subject to some restrictions, and are suitable for people domiciled in England and Wales who do not own their own home, have little surplus income (no more than £50 a month), assets (other than possibly a car) not exceeding £300, and less than £15,000 of debt. As DROs offer an alternative route into personal insolvency, they are likely to have had a downward impact on the number of bankruptcies.

Table 1: Company winding up and individual bankruptcy petitions issued in the High Court and county courts of England and Wales, 1995-2010

| Year | Quarter | Companies winding-up petitions | Creditors bankruptcy petitions | Debtors bankruptcy petitions |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1995 | | 12,757 | 23,765 | 10,139 |
| 1996 | | 11,980 | 21,268 | 10,689 |
| 1997 | | 11,158 | 19,543 | 9,636 |
| 1998 | | 11,771 | 17,755 | 10,380 |
| 1999 | | 11,315 | 17,496 | 12,393 |
| 2000 | | 11,028 | 17,220 | 12,757 |
| 2001 | | 10,265 | 15,571 | 14,984 |
| 2002 | | 12,634 | 16,330 | 16,507 |
| 2003 | | 10,146 | 17,258 | 19,323 |
| 2004 | | 10,006 | 17,459 | 26,776 |
| 2005 | | 12,099 | 20,777 | 36,897 |
| 2006 | | 12,108 | 20,891 | 52,678 |
| 2007 | | 11,676 | 19,987 | 53,080 |
| 2008 | | 12,559 | 20,678 | 55,663 |
| 2009 | | 12,419 | 18,852 | 62,864 |
| 2010 | | 10,723 (p) | 17,729 (p) | 51,992 (p) |
| | | | | |
| 2006 | Q1 | 3,151 | 5,615 | 13,843 |
| | Q2 | 2,775 | 4,966 | 12,811 |
| | Q3 | 2,878 | 5,107 | 12,950 |
| | Q4 | 3,304 | 5,203 | 13,074 |
| | | | | |
| 2007 | Q1 | 3,302 | 5,712 | 15,127 |
| | Q2 | 2,643 | 4,770 | 13,502 |
| | Q3 | 2,859 | 4,938 | 12,772 |
| | Q4 | 2,872 | 4,567 | 11,679 |
| | | | | |
| 2008 | Q1 | 3,054 | 4,771 | 12,985 |
| | Q2 | 2,927 | 5,655 | 13,565 |
| | Q3 | 3,196 | 5,539 | 13,749 |
| | Q4 | 3,382 | 4,713 | 15,364 |
| | | | | |
| 2009 | Q1 | 3,461 | 4,535 | 16,775 |
| | Q2 | 3,187 | 4,955 | 16,145 |
| | Q3 | 3,101 | 5,214 | 16,266 |
| | Q4 | 2,670 | 4,148 | 13,678 |
| | | | | |
| 2010 | Q1 | 2,777 | 4,510 | 16,383 |
| | Q2 | 2,635 | 4,494 | 13,004 |
| | Q3 | 2,801 | 4,455 | 11,959 |
| | Q4 | 2,510 (p) | 4,270 (p) | 10,646 (p) |

Notes:

Figures denoted by (p) are provisional data

Figures in this table are not seasonally adjusted. Care should be taken when drawing comparisons between periods that do not cover the same parts of the year, as any difference may in part be a result of seasonal effects

Table 2: Company winding up and individual bankruptcy petitions issued in the High Court and county courts of England and Wales, HMCS regions and HMCS areas, 2010 Q4 (Oct-Dec)

| | Companies winding-up | | Creditors bankruptcy | | Debtors bankruptcy | |
|---|----------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 |
| Croydon | 8 | - | 103 | -21% | 183 | -31% |
| Kingston-upon-Thames | 9 | - | 67 | 97% | 93 | 0% |
| Romford | 13 | - | 64 | -7% | 97 | -25% |
| London County Court Group | 30 | - | 234 | 0% | 373 | -24% |
| <i>Royal Courts of Justice¹</i> | 1,381 | -9% | 1,316 | -2% | 601 | -20% |
| London | 1,411 | -7% | 1,550 | -1% | 974 | -22% |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| ⊗ Birmingham | 223 | -26% | 65 | -56% | 216 | -29% |
| Coventry | 1 | - | 30 | -29% | 117 | -32% |
| Warwick | 1 | - | 10 | -57% | 37 | -10% |
| Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire | 225 | -28% | 105 | -51% | 370 | -29% |
| Burton-on-Trent | 0 | - | 8 | - | 58 | -34% |
| Dudley | 2 | - | 11 | - | 42 | -14% |
| Hereford | 3 | - | 13 | - | 47 | -18% |
| Kidderminster | 1 | - | 7 | - | 34 | -29% |
| Shrewsbury | 8 | - | 12 | - | 85 | -15% |
| Stafford | 4 | - | 9 | - | 30 | -30% |
| Stoke-on-Trent | 5 | - | 20 | -13% | 96 | -29% |
| Stourbridge | 0 | - | 10 | - | 43 | -10% |
| Walsall | 2 | - | 32 | 23% | 119 | -33% |
| Wolverhampton | 0 | - | 17 | -19% | 51 | -43% |
| Worcester | 2 | - | 11 | - | 91 | -17% |
| Black Country, Staffordshire and West Mercia | 27 | - | 150 | 9% | 696 | -26% |
| Chesterfield | 4 | - | 12 | - | 50 | -26% |
| Derby | 6 | - | 22 | -12% | 104 | -38% |
| Nottingham | 17 | - | 62 | 13% | 204 | -39% |
| Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire | 27 | - | 96 | 14% | 358 | -37% |
| Boston | 1 | - | 6 | - | 66 | -31% |
| Leicester | 13 | - | 41 | 78% | 159 | -4% |
| Lincoln | 3 | - | 15 | - | 120 | -21% |
| Northampton | 4 | - | 43 | 19% | 157 | -35% |
| Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire | 21 | -9% | 105 | 25% | 502 | -23% |
| Midlands | 300 | -15% | 456 | -12% | 1,926 | -28% |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| Darlington | 2 | - | 7 | - | 72 | 29% |
| Durham | 1 | - | 11 | - | 82 | -32% |
| Middlesborough | 3 | - | 34 | -3% | 93 | -38% |
| ⊗ Newcastle-upon-Tyne | 37 | -8% | 70 | 6% | 276 | -32% |
| Sunderland | 1 | - | 22 | - | 91 | -5% |
| Cleveland, Durham and Northumbria | 44 | 2% | 144 | 16% | 614 | -26% |
| Barnsley | 0 | - | 6 | - | 45 | -4% |
| Doncaster | 4 | - | 28 | - | 93 | -11% |
| Gt Grimsby | 0 | - | 21 | - | 45 | -46% |
| Kingston-upon-Hull | 1 | - | 11 | - | 154 | -13% |
| Scunthorpe | 5 | - | 11 | - | 38 | -5% |
| Sheffield | 9 | - | 54 | 100% | 166 | -42% |
| Humber and South Yorkshire | 19 | - | 131 | 85% | 541 | -27% |
| Bradford | 6 | - | 51 | 34% | 122 | -3% |
| Dewsbury | 0 | - | 13 | - | 57 | -35% |
| Halifax | 1 | - | 13 | - | 22 | -59% |
| Harrogate | 0 | - | 6 | - | 23 | -47% |
| Huddersfield | 0 | - | 9 | - | 35 | -43% |
| ⊗ Leeds | 186 | -20% | 31 | 11% | 86 | -42% |
| Scarborough | 2 | - | 7 | - | 55 | -35% |
| Wakefield | 0 | - | 22 | - | 88 | -21% |
| York | 8 | - | 26 | - | 60 | -35% |
| North and West Yorkshire | 203 | -15% | 178 | 24% | 548 | -32% |
| North East | 266 | -9% | 453 | 34% | 1,703 | -28% |

| | Companies winding-up | | Creditors bankruptcy | | Debtors bankruptcy | |
|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 |
| | | | | | | |
| Birkenhead | 2 | - | 24 | - | 68 | 28% |
| Chester | 6 | - | 16 | - | 49 | -13% |
| Crewe | 1 | - | 25 | - | 48 | 17% |
| ☒ Liverpool | 41 | -13% | 62 | 29% | 222 | -33% |
| Macclesfield | 4 | - | 37 | 76% | 39 | -11% |
| Warrington | 0 | - | 18 | - | 113 | -2% |
| Cheshire and Merseyside | 54 | 6% | 182 | 46% | 539 | -16% |
| Barrow-in-Furness | 0 | - | 8 | - | 15 | -48% |
| Blackburn | 1 | - | 9 | - | 52 | -16% |
| Blackpool | 2 | - | 20 | - | 74 | 3% |
| Burnley | 0 | - | 2 | - | 46 | -30% |
| Carlisle | 0 | - | 0 | - | 4 | -86% |
| Kendal | 0 | - | 4 | - | 5 | - |
| Lancaster | 1 | - | 13 | - | 14 | -46% |
| Penrith | 0 | - | 0 | - | 0 | - |
| ☒ Preston | 4 | - | 41 | - | 94 | -31% |
| Whitehaven | 0 | - | 1 | - | 20 | 0% |
| Cumbria and Lancashire | 8 | - | 98 | 36% | 324 | -29% |
| Bolton | 2 | - | 18 | -28% | 36 | -47% |
| Bury | 1 | - | 9 | - | 35 | -13% |
| ☒ Manchester | 159 | -27% | 41 | -36% | 104 | -10% |
| Oldham | 1 | - | 13 | - | 82 | 3% |
| Salford | 0 | - | 12 | -45% | 73 | 4% |
| Stockport | 0 | - | 34 | 21% | 82 | 5% |
| Tameside | 0 | - | 14 | - | 47 | -13% |
| Wigan | 3 | - | 17 | - | 73 | -18% |
| Greater Manchester | 166 | -25% | 158 | -12% | 532 | -11% |
| North West | 228 | -19% | 438 | 16% | 1,395 | -17% |
| Bedford | 2 | - | 10 | - | 29 | -26% |
| Chelmsford | 1 | - | 18 | -44% | 58 | -34% |
| Colchester | 8 | - | 23 | - | 117 | -13% |
| Hertford | 0 | - | 24 | -57% | 72 | 0% |
| Luton | 4 | - | 31 | 29% | 73 | -32% |
| Southend-on-Sea | 4 | - | 105 | 8% | 169 | -24% |
| St. Albans | 2 | - | 33 | -80% | 46 | -53% |
| Watford | 0 | - | 0 | - | 31 | - |
| Bedfordshire, Essex and Herts | 21 | -19% | 244 | -39% | 595 | -22% |
| Bury St Edmonds | 3 | - | 10 | - | 44 | -46% |
| Cambridge | 3 | - | 12 | -77% | 56 | -62% |
| Ipswich | 10 | - | 10 | - | 89 | -17% |
| King's Lynn | 5 | - | 9 | - | 62 | 0% |
| Norwich | 3 | - | 26 | -4% | 172 | -24% |
| Peterborough | 4 | - | 36 | -12% | 101 | -33% |
| Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk | 28 | 40% | 103 | -33% | 524 | -33% |
| Canterbury | 12 | - | 46 | 35% | 161 | -3% |
| Maidstone | 2 | - | 27 | - | 32 | -30% |
| Medway | 12 | - | 71 | 122% | 121 | 39% |
| Tunbridge Wells | 2 | - | 25 | - | 48 | -37% |
| Kent | 28 | - | 169 | 111% | 362 | -3% |
| Brighton | 2 | - | 53 | -20% | 226 | -24% |
| Eastbourne | 0 | - | 8 | - | 39 | -20% |
| Guildford | 8 | - | 29 | - | 96 | -9% |
| Hastings | 2 | - | 7 | - | 50 | -21% |
| Surrey and Sussex | 12 | - | 97 | -5% | 411 | -20% |
| Aylesbury | 12 | - | 131 | 220% | 113 | 49% |
| Banbury | 3 | - | 12 | - | 16 | -50% |
| Newbury | 2 | - | 7 | - | 23 | -18% |
| Milton Keynes | 3 | - | 26 | - | 65 | 7% |
| Oxford | 0 | - | 29 | - | 84 | -9% |
| Reading | 9 | - | 32 | 19% | 122 | -13% |
| Slough | 1 | - | 35 | -20% | 71 | -30% |
| Thames Valley | 30 | - | 272 | 89% | 494 | -7% |
| South East | 119 | 63% | 885 | 0% | 2,386 | -19% |

| | Companies winding-up | | Creditors bankruptcy | | Debtors bankruptcy | |
|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 | 2010 Q4 | % Change ² in total since 2009 Q4 |
| Bath | 7 | - | 18 | - | 100 | -24% |
| ☒ Bristol | 55 | -42% | 29 | -31% | 218 | -32% |
| Taunton | 3 | - | 14 | -70% | 63 | -10% |
| Yeovil | 4 | - | 16 | -20% | 51 | -38% |
| Avon & Somerset | 69 | -34% | 77 | -36% | 432 | -28% |
| Barnstaple | 1 | - | 4 | - | 41 | -37% |
| Exeter | 2 | - | 15 | - | 70 | -33% |
| Plymouth | 8 | - | 14 | - | 130 | -23% |
| Torquay | 2 | - | 17 | - | 133 | 16% |
| Truro | 6 | - | 33 | 43% | 110 | -27% |
| Devon & Cornwall | 19 | - | 83 | 26% | 484 | -20% |
| Bournemouth | 13 | - | 32 | -14% | 139 | -30% |
| Cheltenham | 0 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Gloucester | 2 | - | 15 | -61% | 101 | 5% |
| Salisbury | 0 | - | 2 | - | 26 | -16% |
| Swindon | 1 | - | 14 | - | 90 | 17% |
| Weymouth | 1 | - | 6 | - | 59 | 2% |
| Dorset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire | 17 | - | 69 | -34% | 415 | -17% |
| Newport (I.O.W.) | 0 | - | 7 | - | 38 | 27% |
| Portsmouth | 13 | - | 42 | 75% | 105 | -24% |
| Southampton | 12 | - | 19 | - | 96 | -39% |
| Winchester | 0 | - | 5 | - | 26 | 0% |
| Hampshire & Isle of Wight | 25 | - | 73 | 49% | 265 | -25% |
| South West | 130 | -8% | 302 | -11% | 1,596 | -22% |
| | | | | | | |
| Aberystwyth | 1 | - | 2 | - | 5 | - |
| Carmarthen | 0 | - | 16 | - | 26 | 18% |
| Haverfordwest | 1 | - | 6 | - | 20 | -9% |
| Neath & Port Talbot | 3 | - | 10 | - | 31 | -21% |
| Swansea | 10 | - | 38 | - | 64 | -31% |
| Welshpool & Newton | 0 | - | 5 | - | 22 | - |
| Mid and West Wales | 15 | - | 77 | 103% | 168 | -12% |
| Caernarfon | 1 | - | 15 | - | 26 | -28% |
| Llangefni | 0 | - | 7 | - | 18 | - |
| Mold | 2 | - | 5 | - | 22 | -31% |
| Rhyl | 2 | - | 7 | - | 57 | 12% |
| Wrexham | 0 | - | 8 | - | 55 | 8% |
| North Wales | 5 | - | 42 | 50% | 178 | -4% |
| Aberdare | 0 | - | 4 | - | 8 | -76% |
| Blackwood | 0 | - | 4 | - | 49 | 123% |
| Bridgend | 5 | - | 15 | - | 43 | 26% |
| ☒ Cardiff | 26 | - | 28 | - | 69 | -9% |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 1 | - | 2 | - | 15 | - |
| Newport (Gwent) | 2 | - | 10 | -55% | 88 | -9% |
| Pontypridd | 2 | - | 4 | - | 48 | 55% |
| South East Wales | 36 | - | 67 | 26% | 320 | 8% |
| Wales | 56 | - | 186 | 56% | 666 | -1% |
| | | | | | | |
| England & Wales | 2,510 | -6% | 4,270 | 3% | 10,646 | -22% |

☒ **Provincial High Court Centre**

- 1 The Royal Courts of Justice located in Central London, is the headquarters of the High Court. The Court has nationwide jurisdiction but handles a particularly large proportion of the insolvency work originating in London, and is therefore included in the London regional total.
- 2 The percentage change figures shown in this table reflect, where necessary, revised data for earlier years. They may therefore not be consistent with previously published data for these earlier time periods. Percentages are not shown where the number of petitions in the same quarter a year ago is fewer than 20.
- 3 Figures in this table are not seasonally adjusted

Table 3: Company winding up and individual bankruptcy petitions issued in the High Court and county courts of England and Wales, HMCS regions and HMCS areas, 2009 - 2010

| | Companies winding-up | | Creditors bankruptcy | | Debtors bankruptcy | |
|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 |
| Croydon | 34 | - | 434 | -4% | 997 | -21% |
| Kingston-upon-Thames | 37 | - | 300 | 97% | 435 | 3% |
| Romford | 25 | - | 235 | -13% | 386 | -17% |
| London County Court Group | 96 | 284% | 969 | 10% | 1,818 | -16% |
| <i>Royal Courts of Justice¹</i> | 5,784 | -14% | 5,693 | -24% | 2,832 | -24% |
| London | 5,880 | -13% | 6,662 | -20% | 4,650 | -21% |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| ⊗ Birmingham | 969 | -37% | 573 | 6% | 1,306 | -19% |
| Coventry | 8 | -62% | 122 | -16% | 608 | -22% |
| Warwick | 14 | - | 56 | -3% | 162 | -19% |
| Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire | 991 | -37% | 751 | 1% | 2,076 | -20% |
| Burton-on-Trent | 6 | - | 52 | 33% | 302 | -14% |
| Dudley | 5 | - | 65 | 91% | 256 | 14% |
| Hereford | 10 | - | 47 | 24% | 211 | -22% |
| Kidderminster | 6 | - | 39 | 30% | 147 | -21% |
| Shrewsbury | 14 | - | 58 | -3% | 344 | -19% |
| Stafford | 11 | - | 46 | 84% | 166 | -12% |
| Stoke-on-Trent | 14 | - | 104 | 25% | 570 | -8% |
| Stourbridge | 2 | - | 33 | -31% | 184 | -3% |
| Walsall | 12 | - | 162 | 38% | 588 | -27% |
| Wolverhampton | 7 | - | 66 | -28% | 327 | -25% |
| Worcester | 20 | - | 67 | 20% | 410 | -18% |
| Black Country, Staffordshire and West Mercia | 107 | 67% | 739 | 19% | 3,505 | -16% |
| Chesterfield | 8 | - | 84 | 127% | 330 | 3% |
| Derby | 27 | 8% | 138 | 45% | 520 | -16% |
| Nottingham | 30 | - | 237 | 6% | 1,190 | -18% |
| Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire | 65 | 103% | 459 | 29% | 2,040 | -14% |
| Boston | 9 | - | 55 | -17% | 356 | -5% |
| Leicester | 43 | 105% | 222 | 55% | 755 | 0% |
| Lincoln | 15 | - | 96 | 37% | 589 | -6% |
| Northampton | 38 | -40% | 184 | 10% | 801 | -23% |
| Lincolnshire, Leicestershire & Rutland and Northamptonshire | 105 | 3% | 557 | 25% | 2,501 | -11% |
| Midlands | 1,268 | -29% | 2,506 | 16% | 10,122 | -15% |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| Darlington | 4 | - | 49 | 29% | 269 | 0% |
| Durham | 7 | - | 51 | -19% | 428 | -17% |
| Middlesborough | 16 | - | 164 | 37% | 504 | -27% |
| ⊗ Newcastle-upon-Tyne | 134 | -26% | 243 | 4% | 1,483 | -23% |
| Sunderland | 1 | - | 49 | -39% | 391 | -23% |
| Cleveland, Durham and Northumbria | 162 | -19% | 556 | 4% | 3,075 | -21% |
| Barnsley | 1 | - | 22 | -31% | 227 | -20% |
| Doncaster | 9 | - | 67 | 2% | 443 | -12% |
| Gt Grimsby | 4 | - | 38 | -22% | 265 | -32% |
| Kingston-upon-Hull | 6 | - | 60 | -32% | 692 | -14% |
| Scunthorpe | 9 | - | 25 | -11% | 181 | -2% |
| Sheffield | 15 | - | 134 | -31% | 869 | -8% |
| Humber and South Yorkshire | 44 | -6% | 346 | -24% | 2,677 | -14% |
| Bradford | 9 | - | 131 | -15% | 528 | -5% |
| Dewsbury | 6 | - | 67 | 20% | 300 | -7% |
| Halifax | 4 | - | 51 | -30% | 229 | 4% |
| Harrogate | 0 | - | 21 | -28% | 140 | -37% |
| Huddersfield | 2 | - | 45 | -12% | 208 | -17% |
| ⊗ Leeds | 966 | -27% | 115 | -16% | 464 | -13% |
| Scarborough | 4 | - | 38 | -16% | 251 | -26% |
| Wakefield | 3 | - | 112 | 51% | 420 | -3% |
| York | 16 | - | 82 | 64% | 355 | -15% |
| North and West Yorkshire | 1,010 | -25% | 662 | -1% | 2,895 | -12% |
| North East | 1,216 | -24% | 1,564 | -6% | 8,647 | -16% |

| | Companies winding-up | | Creditors bankruptcy | | Debtors bankruptcy | |
|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 |
| Birkenhead | 16 | - | 143 | 93% | 283 | -14% |
| Chester | 9 | - | 49 | 4% | 197 | -26% |
| Crewe | 3 | - | 61 | -12% | 225 | -1% |
| ☒ Liverpool | 234 | -14% | 311 | 10% | 1,114 | -20% |
| Macclesfield | 11 | - | 79 | 8% | 159 | -34% |
| Warrington | 1 | - | 49 | -27% | 383 | 1% |
| Cheshire and Merseyside | 274 | -4% | 692 | 13% | 2,361 | -16% |
| Barrow-in-Furness | 1 | - | 16 | - | 111 | -9% |
| Blackburn | 5 | - | 48 | -41% | 218 | -32% |
| Blackpool | 10 | - | 109 | 98% | 321 | -9% |
| Burnley | 0 | - | 42 | -25% | 220 | -21% |
| Carlisle | 3 | - | 17 | -55% | 129 | -23% |
| Kendal | 0 | - | 16 | - | 43 | -28% |
| Lancaster | 1 | - | 61 | - | 90 | -16% |
| Penrith | 0 | - | 1 | - | 0 | - |
| ☒ Preston | 48 | 17% | 127 | 119% | 434 | -20% |
| Whitehaven | 0 | - | 10 | - | 113 | -16% |
| Cumbria and Lancashire | 68 | 19% | 447 | 34% | 1,679 | -19% |
| Bolton | 15 | - | 103 | 4% | 204 | -30% |
| Bury | 18 | - | 85 | 89% | 156 | -31% |
| ☒ Manchester | 761 | -25% | 151 | -32% | 447 | -10% |
| Oldham | 2 | - | 74 | -33% | 365 | -2% |
| Salford | 2 | - | 80 | -14% | 349 | 18% |
| Stockport | 8 | - | 136 | 24% | 303 | -5% |
| Tameside | 8 | - | 69 | 57% | 266 | -7% |
| Wigan | 14 | - | 73 | 33% | 398 | -4% |
| Greater Manchester | 828 | -20% | 771 | -1% | 2,488 | -8% |
| North West | 1,170 | -15% | 1,910 | 11% | 6,528 | -14% |
| Bedford | 11 | - | 81 | 76% | 154 | -22% |
| Chelmsford | 20 | - | 77 | 5% | 251 | -36% |
| Colchester | 29 | - | 115 | 42% | 641 | -3% |
| Hertford | 13 | - | 106 | -3% | 303 | -18% |
| Luton | 33 | - | 201 | 33% | 592 | 4% |
| Southend-on-Sea | 18 | - | 365 | 1% | 809 | -17% |
| Watford | 0 | - | 0 | - | 93 | - |
| St. Albans | 33 | - | 202 | -29% | 308 | -31% |
| Bedfordshire, Essex and Herts | 157 | 109% | 1,147 | 4% | 3,151 | -13% |
| Bury St Edmonds | 13 | - | 60 | 11% | 249 | -20% |
| Cambridge | 12 | - | 67 | -41% | 357 | -32% |
| Ipswich | 47 | - | 82 | 91% | 429 | -6% |
| King's Lynn | 13 | - | 53 | -12% | 242 | -9% |
| Norwich | 34 | 70% | 138 | 44% | 883 | -24% |
| Peterborough | 16 | - | 100 | 9% | 498 | -20% |
| Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk | 135 | 101% | 500 | 9% | 2,658 | -21% |
| Canterbury | 15 | - | 118 | 11% | 653 | -27% |
| Maidstone | 8 | - | 56 | 115% | 217 | -4% |
| Medway | 29 | - | 164 | -27% | 577 | -12% |
| Tunbridge Wells | 4 | - | 64 | 25% | 169 | -41% |
| Kent | 56 | 93% | 402 | -1% | 1,616 | -22% |
| Brighton | 12 | -52% | 169 | -40% | 953 | -33% |
| Eastbourne | 14 | - | 10 | -58% | 197 | -31% |
| Guildford | 18 | - | 112 | -13% | 461 | -10% |
| Hastings | 7 | - | 42 | 27% | 267 | -8% |
| Surrey and Sussex | 51 | 16% | 333 | -29% | 1,878 | -25% |
| Aylesbury | 20 | - | 221 | 42% | 376 | -6% |
| Banbury | 4 | - | 30 | 43% | 98 | -38% |
| Newbury | 4 | - | 28 | 27% | 125 | -12% |
| Milton Keynes | 9 | - | 77 | 1% | 238 | -33% |
| Oxford | 9 | - | 75 | -10% | 353 | -11% |
| Reading | 17 | -23% | 116 | 6% | 569 | -11% |
| Slough | 4 | - | 135 | -31% | 351 | -22% |
| Thames Valley | 67 | -22% | 682 | 3% | 2,110 | -17% |
| South East | 466 | 55% | 3,064 | -1% | 11,413 | -19% |

| | Companies winding-up | | Creditors bankruptcy | | Debtors bankruptcy | |
|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 | 2010 | % Change ² in total from 2009 |
| Bath | 28 | - | 79 | 5% | 448 | -14% |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bristol | 250 | -33% | 174 | -10% | 1,066 | -21% |
| Taunton | 17 | - | 70 | -19% | 316 | 1% |
| Yeovil | 12 | - | 66 | 16% | 289 | -29% |
| Avon & Somerset | 307 | -22% | 389 | -5% | 2,119 | -18% |
| Barnstaple | 10 | - | 25 | 14% | 179 | -41% |
| Exeter | 3 | - | 38 | -49% | 346 | -34% |
| Plymouth | 33 | - | 68 | 19% | 620 | -25% |
| Torquay | 8 | - | 47 | 2% | 393 | -30% |
| Truro | 20 | - | 92 | 2% | 603 | -21% |
| Devon & Cornwall | 74 | 32% | 270 | -7% | 2,141 | -28% |
| Bournemouth | 67 | 148% | 134 | -5% | 686 | -23% |
| Cheltenham | 0 | - | 1 | -97% | 0 | -100% |
| Gloucester | 16 | - | 82 | 6% | 532 | 23% |
| Salisbury | 0 | - | 16 | - | 121 | -12% |
| Swindon | 14 | - | 64 | 31% | 413 | -4% |
| Weymouth | 9 | - | 14 | -36% | 202 | -25% |
| Dorset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire | 106 | 112% | 311 | -6% | 1,954 | -18% |
| Newport (I.O.W.) | 4 | - | 24 | - | 162 | -19% |
| Portsmouth | 31 | - | 136 | 45% | 556 | -17% |
| Southampton | 22 | - | 83 | 1% | 488 | -29% |
| Winchester | 0 | - | 19 | - | 103 | -9% |
| Hampshire & Isle of Wight | 57 | 138% | 262 | 28% | 1,309 | -22% |
| South West | 544 | 4% | 1,232 | 0% | 7,523 | -22% |
| Aberystwyth | 1 | - | 4 | - | 27 | -7% |
| Carmarthen | 0 | - | 28 | 12% | 94 | 7% |
| Haverfordwest | 2 | - | 31 | 41% | 135 | 5% |
| Neath & Port Talbot | 3 | - | 27 | - | 153 | -30% |
| Swansea | 20 | - | 105 | 18% | 325 | -7% |
| Welshpool & Newton | 1 | - | 17 | - | 77 | -5% |
| Mid and West Wales | 27 | - | 212 | 26% | 811 | -9% |
| Caernarfon | 1 | - | 52 | 100% | 153 | -26% |
| Llangefni | 0 | - | 18 | - | 48 | -17% |
| Mold | 5 | - | 15 | - | 109 | -24% |
| Rhyl | 3 | - | 36 | 16% | 230 | 3% |
| Wrexham | 3 | - | 49 | 53% | 210 | -12% |
| North Wales | 12 | - | 170 | 42% | 750 | -14% |
| Aberdare | 3 | - | 22 | - | 60 | -9% |
| Blackwood | 0 | - | 33 | - | 200 | -9% |
| Bridgend | 9 | - | 41 | 32% | 194 | -16% |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cardiff | 113 | 183% | 202 | 17% | 382 | 7% |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 1 | - | 18 | - | 91 | 75% |
| Newport (Gwent) | 11 | - | 70 | -9% | 419 | -17% |
| Pontypridd | 3 | - | 23 | -15% | 202 | 5% |
| South East Wales | 140 | 141% | 409 | 21% | 1,548 | -4% |
| Wales | 179 | 106% | 791 | 26% | 3,109 | -8% |
| England & Wales | 10,723 | -14% | 17,729 | -6% | 51,992 | -17% |

Provincial High Court Centre

- The Royal Courts of Justice located in Central London, is the headquarters of the High Court. The Court has nationwide jurisdiction but handles a particularly large proportion of the insolvency work originating in London, and is therefore included in the London regional total.
- The percentage change figures shown in this table reflect, where necessary, revised data for earlier years. They may therefore not be consistent with previously published data for these earlier time periods. Percentages are not shown where the number of petitions in the same period a year ago is fewer than 20.

Explanatory notes

Introduction

1. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practise for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced accordingly to sounds methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

2. Figures on the numbers of company winding up petitions and individual bankruptcy petitions issued in the High Court and county courts of England and Wales are published on a quarterly basis.
3. **Insolvency:** A company or individual with debts that they are unable to pay is said to be 'insolvent'. Insolvencies can either be made on a compulsory basis through court orders being made, or on a voluntary basis through an agreement between the company or individual **debtor** (who owes the debt) and **creditor(s)** (to whom the debt is owed).
4. **Company winding up:** When a company's existence is terminated because it is unable to pay its' creditor(s), to whom debt is owed. To obtain a compulsory company winding up order, a creditor, shareholder or director must first present a petition to a court. Company winding up proceedings will normally be commenced at the court centre local to the registered office of the company, which will not necessarily be situated in the same geographical area as the company's base or operational area. The relative regional levels of winding-up activity do not therefore necessarily reflect the geographical distribution of the companies involved.
5. There is a restriction on proceedings commenced in county courts based on the paid-up capital of the company. Well over half of winding up proceedings are commenced and handled in the Chancery Division of the High Court at the Royal Courts of Justice in London and at the eight provincial High Court centres. These centres are flagged [⊗] in Tables 2 and 3.

6. **Individual bankruptcy:** Where a person is unable to pay his or her debts. To obtain an individual bankruptcy order, the debtor or one or more of his creditors must first present a petition to a court. Proceedings for bankruptcy are normally commenced at the nearest county court with the appropriate jurisdiction, or in the Chancery Division of the High Court.

Presentation

7. Percentage changes are not provided where there are fewer than 20 observations in the past period.

Revisions

8. The 2010 Q4 figures are provisional, and are therefore liable to revision to take account of any late amendments to the databases from which these statistics are sourced. The standard process for revising the published statistics to account for these late amendments is as follows. An initial revision to the statistics for the latest quarter may be made when the next edition of this bulletin is published. Final figures for this quarter, and for other quarters in the same calendar year, will be published in the bulletin presenting the statistics for the second quarter of the following year.

Production process and quality assurance procedures

9. The statistics in this bulletin are sourced from manual counts made by court staff on weekly basis. These are aggregated for each period of 13 weeks to produce the quarterly figures. As such they represent quarterly periods which are not exactly the same as traditional calendar quarters (covering January to March, April to June, July to September and October to December).
10. Since April 2009 the manual counts have been recorded in the One Performance Truth (OPT) database, a web-based data monitoring system allowing direct inputting of performance data by court staff. Prior to April 2009 they were input into the Business Management System, designed for the purpose of monitoring and assessing court workloads. Quality assurance measures are in place to ensure that data are of sufficient quality. These measures include querying with the courts where counts look unusually high or low and obtaining corrected figures if errors are identified.

Insolvency Service data

11. Statistics on the actual numbers of company compulsory liquidations (winding up orders) and individual bankruptcy orders are published by the Insolvency Service. On receipt of a petition, the court issue process includes setting up a judicial hearing. At this hearing, once satisfied that there is no prospect of the debt(s) being paid, the court grants a company winding up order or a bankruptcy order and appoints an Official Receiver to take control of relevant assets. The Insolvency Service data are derived from administrative records of the Insolvency Service and

Companies House, two executive agencies of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). These statistics (released six days before the Ministry of Justice data for the same quarter due to the extra preparation time needed for the latter) can be accessed on their website at:

www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/insolv.htm

12. The Insolvency Service also releases statistics showing the numbers of voluntary insolvencies. A voluntary company winding up can occur by the company passing a resolution, subject to the approval of a creditors' meeting that it be wound up voluntarily, or by the company coming to a binding agreement with its creditors. An individual voluntary arrangement can be made through debtors coming to an agreement with their creditors.

Symbols and conventions

The following symbol has been used in the tables of this bulletin:

(p) = Provisional data

Contact points for further information

Current and previous editions of this publication are available for download at: www.justice.gov.uk/publications/companywindingupandbankruptcy.htm

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