



Ministry
of Justice

Statistical Notice

Intention to publish experimental
statistics: analysis of estimated
hearing duration in Private Law cases,
England and Wales

Background

The implementation of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) in April 2013 made changes to the scope and eligibility of legal aid.

From April 2013, legal aid is now only available for private family law cases (such as contact or divorce) if there is evidence of domestic violence or child abuse and child abduction cases. Legal aid remains available for public family law cases (such as adoption).

The full details of the LASPO Act can be found here:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/enacted

The removal of legal aid for many private law cases has resulted in a change in the pattern of legal representation – since April 2013, there has been an increase in the number of people without legal representation in private law cases. However, it is less clear what impact that has had on the associated hearings – both in terms of number of hearings and their duration.

What is being published, and why?

This ad-hoc experimental statistics bulletin presents the result of exploratory analyses into the impact of an increased number of parties in Private Law cases without legal representation on:

- the number of hearings; and
- hearing duration.

This stand-alone statistical bulletin also attempts to ascertain the quality and availability of centrally held data on hearing duration in private law cases.

These are exploratory statistics and as such, there are caveats associated with the analyses and underlying data. However, these findings provide an important contribution to addressing a key evidence gap in relation to the impact of the LASPO reforms.

This publication will be published on 27 November 2014.

Contact details and further information

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General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from: www.statistics.gov.uk