



# Civil Justice Statistics Quarterly, England and Wales, April to June 2017 (provisional)

## Main points

In April to June 2017, increases can be seen across most stages of county court activity (claims, defences, trials and judgments made). Although driven by the increases in specified money claims, increases have also been seen in non-money claims.

<b>County court claims up 40%, driven by specified money claims</b>		In April to June 2017, the highest quarterly number of County Court claims were lodged since 2009, at 565,000. Of these, 457,000 were specified money claims (up 54% on April to June 2016).
<b>Unspecified money claims were down 5% to 35,000</b>		Unspecified money claims have decreased for both Personal Injury (down 4% to 33,000) and other unspecified money claims (down 19% to 1,800)
<b>Claims defended and claims to trial up 2% and 10% respectively</b>		There were 72,000 claims defended and 14,000 claims that had gone to trial in April to June 2017
<b>Average time taken from claim to hearing has increased</b>		Average time taken for small claims has increased to 37.8 weeks, over six weeks longer than the same period in 2016. Multi and fast track claims increased to 56.6 weeks (three weeks longer than Apr-Jun 2016)
<b>Judgments up 43%, compared to same quarter in 2016</b>		There were 327,000 judgments made in April to June 2017, of which 87% were default judgments (with 285,000, up 48% on the same quarter of 2016).
<b>Judicial Reviews in first half of 2017 down 2% on same period of 2016</b>		There were 2,200 Judicial Reviews in the first half of 2017. Of the 1,300 2017 cases that reached the permission stage, 225 (18%) were found to be 'totally without merit'.
<b>There were 5 interim privacy injunction proceedings in first half of 2017</b>		Additionally there was one continuation proceeding and two final privacy injunction proceedings recording over the period of January to June 2017.

This publication gives civil county court statistics for the latest quarter (April to June 2017), compared to the same quarter the previous year. The judicial review and the privacy injunction figures cover the period January to June 2017. For more details, please see the supporting document.

# 1. Claims summary

## County court claims up 40% on the same quarter of 2016, driven by an increase in money claims

The number of County Court claims lodged in April to June 2017 were the highest of the time series, at 565,000. Of these, 492,000 were money claims (up 48% on April to June 2016).

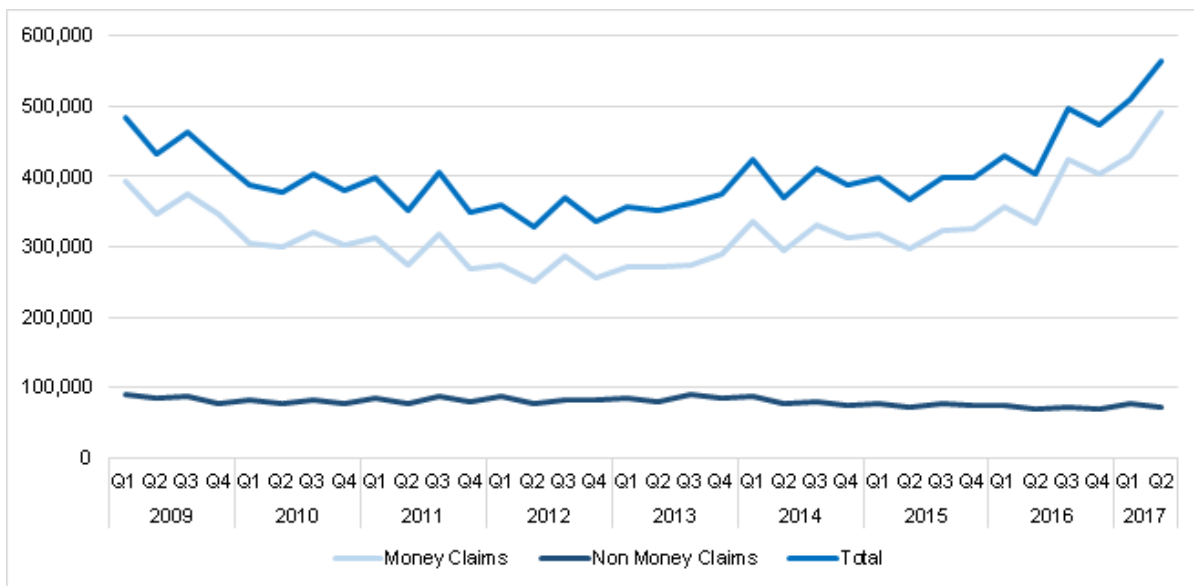


## Non-money claims at 73,000, up 4% on the same quarter last year

'Other non-money' claims and return of goods increased by 10% and 53%, to 33,000 and 2,300 respectively. Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims over the same period decreased by 3%, to 37,000.



**Figure 1: County Court Claims by type, Q2 (April to June) 2009 to Q2 (April to June) 2017 (source: table 1.2)**



County Court claims have been generally increasing since a low of 328,000 in April to June 2012, to the peak seen in this most recent quarter, at 565,000. This increase is driven by a rise in money claims (up 48% since April to June 2016), which make up the majority of claims received.

Non-money claims had been generally declining since the peak of 89,000 claims in Q3 2013. However in the most recent two quarters it has increased when compared to the same period in 2016. In April to June 2017 it had increased by 4% to 73,000.

Of the non-money claims, return of goods have been increasing quarter on quarter since July to September 2015. Since April to June 2016, these have increased by 53% to 2,300 at April to June 2017. Other non-money claims increased by 10% across the same period to 33,000, and have generally been increasing since a low of 26,000 in April to June 2014.

Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims has been declining since a peak of 60,000 in January to March 2014. It was the only non-money claim group which saw a decrease in the year to April to June 2017, dropping to 37,000 (down 3%).

## 2. Money Claims

The increase in civil claims was driven by specified money claims. There were 457,000 specified money claims in April to June 2017, up 54% on the same period of 2016.

Low value monetary claims (£500 or less) have been driving the increase in specified money claims, with an increase of 63% to 194,000 claims in April to June 2017.



Unspecified claims have decreased 5% to 35,000 when compared to the same quarter in 2016

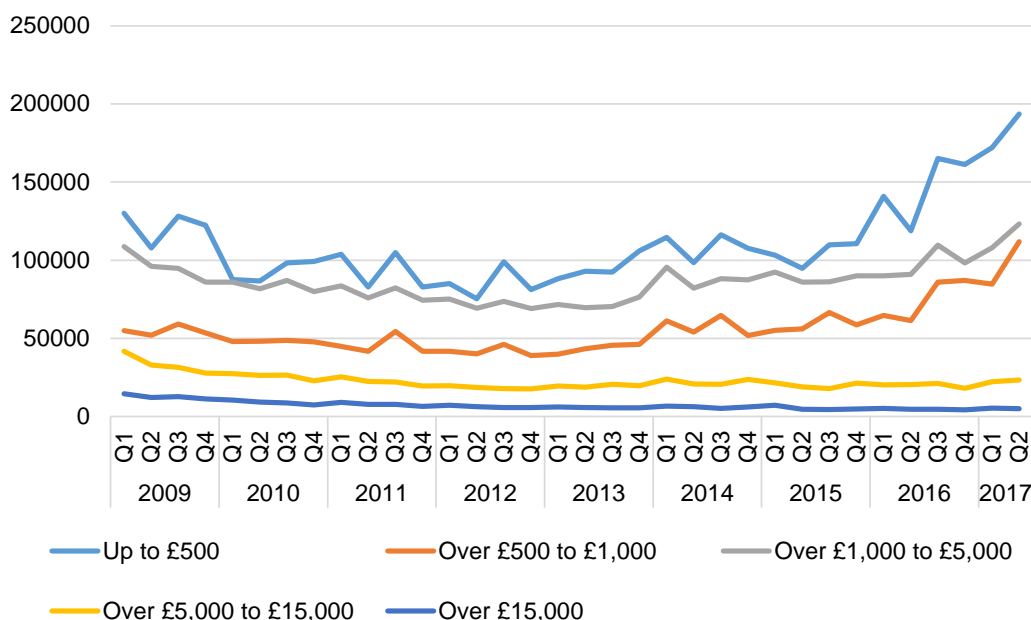
Unspecified money claims have decreased for both Personal Injury (down 4% to 33,000) and other unspecified money claims (down 19% to 1,800)



The majority (90%) of specified money claims are processed and issued at the County Court Business Centre (CCBC). There were 413,000 such claims at the CCBC in April to June 2017 (up 65% on the same quarter in the previous year).

After reaching their lowest point at April to June 2012 (210,000 claims), the total number of specified money claims has continuously increased (118% since this period). This total has been driven by an increase in lower value monetary claims (£15,000 and more), with the greatest increases in the lowest claim group (up to and including £500, up by 157%), which makes up 42% of the total specified claim proportion in the most recent quarter. However, higher value claims (>£15,000) have decreased when compared the same period (April to June 2012), as shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Specified money claims by monetary value, Jan-Mar 2009 to Apr-Jun 2017 (source: civil workload CSV)**



Unspecified money claims have generally been decreasing since a peak of 47,000 in January to March 2013. In the most recent quarter, they fell by 5% compared to April to June 2016, to 35,000. Personal injury claims account for almost all (95%) of unspecified money claims.

In April to June 2017, 38,000 money claims were allocated to track, 3% less than the same period in 2016. Of these allocations;

- 21,000 were allocated to small claims, an increase of 17% on the same quarter in 2016, accounting for 55% of all allocations;
- 14,000 were allocated to fast track, a decrease of 20% on the same quarter in 2016, accounting for 37% of all allocations;
- 3,100 were allocated to multi-track, a decrease of 15% on the same quarter of 2016, accounting for 8% of all allocations.

## 2. Defences (including legal representation) and Trials

### The number of claims defended increased by 2% to 72,000

Of those claims defended, 55% had legal representation for both claimant and defendant (down four percentage points from April to June 2016), 25% had representation for claimant only (up five percentage points over the same period), and 3% for defendant only.



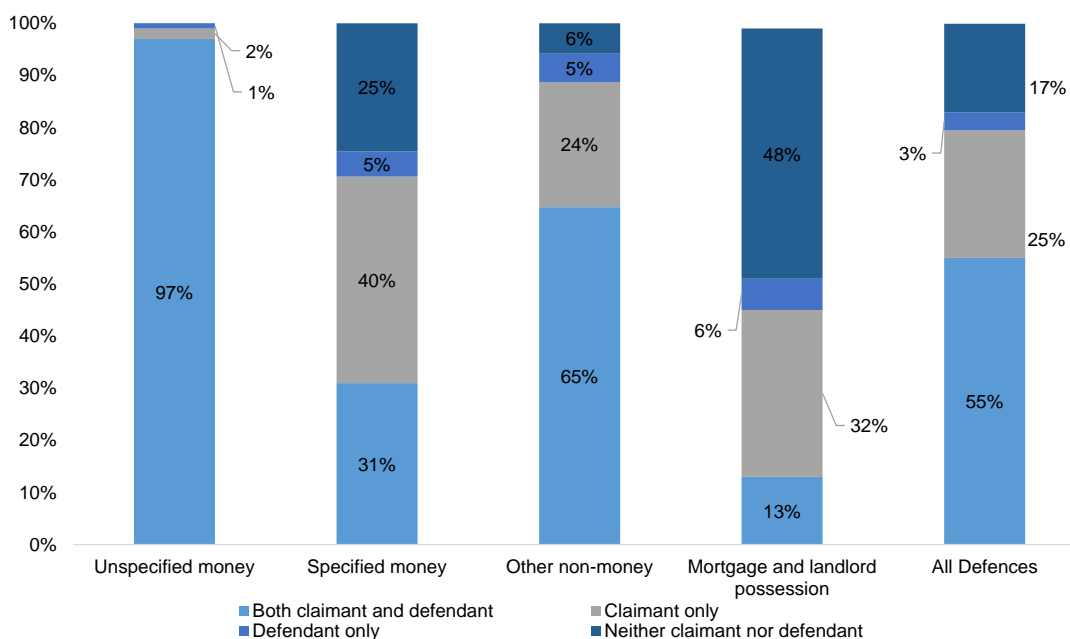
### The number of trials and average time taken from claim to trial have increased

Average time taken for small claims has increased to 37.8 weeks and for multi and fast track claims to 56.6 weeks (over six weeks and three weeks longer respectively)



The shift in proportion from claimant and defendant representation to claimant only is driven in part by the reduction in the number of unspecified 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). In April to June 2017, almost all (97%) unspecified money defences had legal representation for both the respondent and claimant, compared with less than a third (31%) of specified money defences.

**Figure 3: Proportion of civil defences and legal representation status, April to June 2017 (Source: table 1.6)**



### Trials and Time Taken to Reach Trial

Defended cases which are not settled or withdrawn generally result in a trial. In total, there were 14,000 trials in April to June 2017, up 10% on the same quarter in 2016. Of the claims that went to trial, 10,000 (70%) were small claims trials (up 12% on the same quarter in 2016) and 4,300 were fast and multi-track trials (up 6% on the same quarter in 2016).

There was an average of 37.8 weeks between a small claim being issued and the claim going to trial in April to June 2017, just over six weeks longer than the same period in the previous year. For multi/fast track claims the average was 56.6 weeks over the same period, three weeks longer than in April to June 2016. This is the first quarter the timeliness has increased to this extent. Further quarterly data will give us more of an understanding on whether this is a short term spike or if it is a longer term increasing trend.

### 3. Judgments and Enforcements

#### Judgments increased by 43%, compared to same quarter in 2016

There were 327,000 judgments made in April to June 2017, of which 87% were default judgments (with 285,000 in April to June 2016, up 48%).

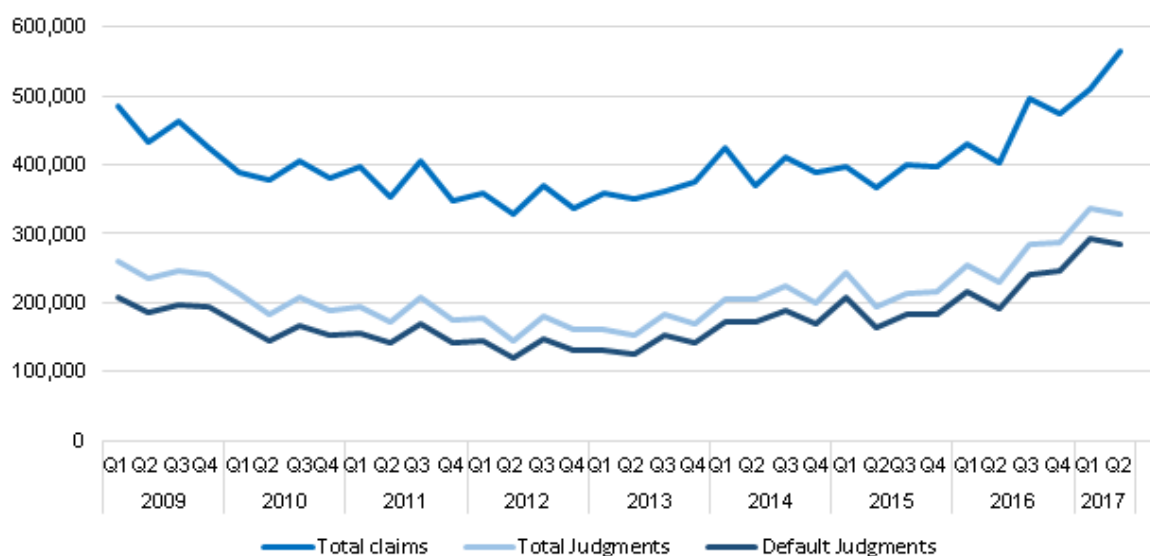


#### Warrants issued increased by 5%, driven by warrants of execution

In April to June 2017, 82,000 warrants were issued, almost three quarters (74%) of which were warrants of execution, which have increased 14% on the same quarter in 2016.



**Figure 4: All claims, judgments and default judgments, Jan-Mar 2009 to Apr-Jun 2017 (Source: table 1.2 and 1.4)**



Annually the proportion of judgments made that were default judgments has remained stable at 85% in the most recent three years, however in the most recent three quarters this proportion has been increasing, to 87% in April to June 2017.

The second largest type of judgment were ‘admissions’, of which there were 27,000 (8% of all judgments) in April to June 2017, up 18% on the same quarter in 2016.

#### Enforcements

There were 82,000 warrants issued in April to June 2017, an increase of 5% on the same quarter in 2016. Annually, over the longer term, warrants issued steadily decreased from 616,000 in 2000, to a low of 220,000 in 2013. They have since been on a gradual increasing trend, to 282,120 in the most recent year (2016)

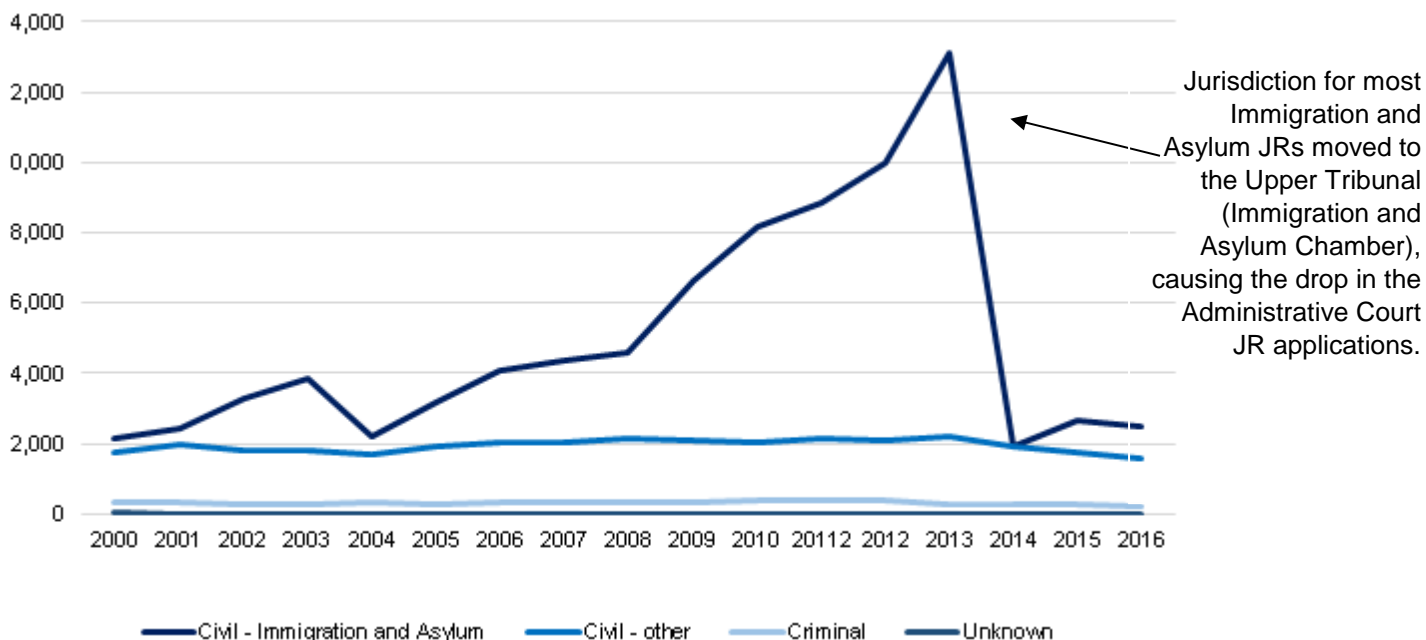
There were 33,000 enforcement-related order applications (which include attachment of earnings orders, charging orders, third party orders, and orders to obtain information) in April to June 2017 and 23,000 actual enforcement related orders made (up 21% and down 9% respectively compared to the same period last year).

## 4. Judicial Reviews<sup>1</sup>

**Of the 2017 applications received, 50% have already closed, and 225 were found to be 'Totally Without Merit' (18% of cases that reached the permission stage).**

There were 2,200 judicial review applications received in the first half of 2017, down 2% from the same period in 2016.

**Figure 5: Annual Judicial Review Application, by type calendar year 2000-2017 Q1-Q2 (Source: table 2.1)**



Of the 2,200 judicial review applications received in 2017, 1,100 were Civil Immigration and Asylum applications, 900 were civil (other) and 118 were criminal, up 11%, down 7% and down 8% respectively on 2016. Nineteen of the civil Immigration and Asylum cases have since been transferred to the UTIAC.

In the first half of 2017, 50% of the applications made have progressed and are now closed. Of the total applications, 1,300 reached the permission stage within the first half of 2017, and of these:

- 18% (200) were found to be totally without merit (TWM), a 2% decrease with the proportion in the previous year.
- 227 cases were granted permission to proceed and 984 were refused at the permission stage. However, 40 of cases refused at permission stage went on to be granted permission at the renewal stage.
- 263 of the 2017 cases have been assessed to be eligible for a final hearing and of these, 20 have since been heard.
- For the 2017 cases, the mean time from a case being lodged to the permission decision was 51 days, down from 49 days and 46 days across the same periods of 2016 and 2015, respectively.

Future quarterly bulletins will give more insight into the 2017 cases, as the work their way through the system.

<sup>1</sup> The judicial review data are Official Statistics

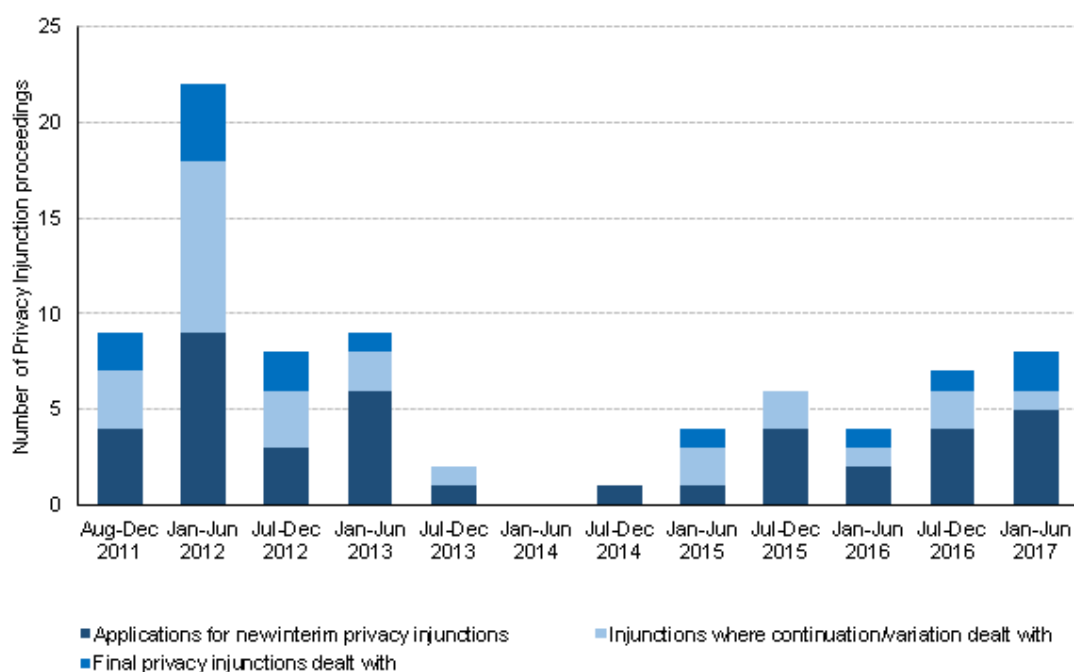
## 5. Privacy Injunctions<sup>2</sup>

**We've undertaken a data improvement exercise where we have identified a number of missing cases and so a number of figures have been revised in the January to June 2016 and July to December 2016 time periods**

The revisions show there were four interim privacy injunctions, two continuation injunctions and one final in July to December 2016 injunction (where it was previously stated as one, none and none respectively). For January to June 2016, where originally stated there were no final injunctions, there was one.

In the first six months of 2017, there were five proceedings where the High Court considered an application for a new interim privacy injunction, one proceeding was considered at the High Court on whether to continue or amend an interim injunction and two proceedings were considered to issue a final permanent injunction.

**Figure 6: Revised number of privacy injunction proceedings, by type of proceeding, from Aug-Dec 2011 to Jan-Jun 2017 (Source: tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3)**



### **New interim privacy injunctions (Table 3.1)**

Of the five proceedings at the High Court that took place in January to June 2017, two were granted and three were refused. In the previous 6 months (July to December 2016) four new interim privacy injunction proceedings took place and all of these were granted.

### **Continuation of existing interim injunctions (Table 3.2)**

For the continuation of an existing interim injunction proceeding that took place in January to June 2017, it was granted/varied, as were the two in July to December 2016.

### **Final privacy injunctions (Table 3.3)**

Of the two final privacy injunction proceedings in the first six months of 2017, both were granted, as was the one proceeding that took place in July to December 2016.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## Rounding convention

Figures greater than 10,000 are rounded to the nearest 1,000 and those between 1,000 and 10,000 are rounded to the nearest 100.

## Accompanying files

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

- A supporting document 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.

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