

Freedom of Information request 2014-80

Date received 8th January 2014

Date of response 4th February 2014

Information request

A recent DWP publication quoted ESA sanction statistics for GB: *JSA and ESA Sanctions – decisions made, data to June 2013, GB (DWP, publication date November 2013)*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255176/sanctions-nov-2013.pdf

We would like to request the same statistics, as highlighted below for GB, for the same time periods, for the following two geographical areas:

- Tower Hamlets
- Greater London

For Employment and Support Allowance:

- A total of 173 thousand sanctions decisions have been made between October 2008 and June 2013, of which, 76 thousand were adverse decisions.
- Under the new sanctions regime, introduced on 3rd December 2012, over 45 thousand sanctions decisions have been made up to June 2013, of which, just over 11 thousand were adverse decisions.
- 71 per cent of adverse decisions were made because of a failure to participate in work related activity (this includes failure to participate in the Work Programme), with the remaining due to a failure to attend a mandatory interview.
- Just over 9 thousand individuals received an adverse sanction decision under the new regime, with over 85 per cent receiving their first adverse sanction

DWP response

In response to your query, the tables below show the number of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) sanction decisions for both the new and old sanctions regimes, and the number of individuals sanctioned and the percent of those who were receiving their first sanction.

**Number of ESA sanction decisions and those that are adverse, by area:
October 2008 to 30th June 2013**

| | | |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| | Number of sanction | of which adverse |
|--|--------------------|------------------|

| | decisions | |
|----------------|-----------|--------|
| Great Britain | 172,750 | 76,300 |
| Greater London | 21,240 | 11,600 |
| Tower Hamlets | 990 | 570 |

Number of ESA sanction decisions and those that are adverse, by area for the new sanctions regime: 3rd December 2012 to 30th June 2013

| | Number of sanction decisions | of which adverse |
|----------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Great Britain | 45,480 | 11,400 |
| Greater London | 5,850 | 2,130 |
| Tower Hamlets | 160 | 50 |

Number of individuals with an adverse ESA sanction decision and the percentage receiving their first sanction, by area for the new sanctions regime: 3rd December 2012 to 30th June 2013

| | Number of individuals sanctioned | % receiving first sanction |
|----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Great Britain | 9,250 | 85% |
| Greater London | 1,860 | 89% |
| Tower Hamlets | 40 | 82% |

Source: DWP Information, Governance and Security Directorate: Sanctions and Disallowance Decisions Statistics Database.

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten and totals may not sum due to the rounding method used.
2. The number of benefit sanctions applied is the number of sanction or disallowance referrals where the decision was adverse i.e. found against the claimant.
3. New regulations introduced a new revised sanctions regime for ESA claimants from 3rd December 2012. Details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobseekers-allowance-overview-of-sanctions-rules>
4. Greater London is made up of 33 Local Authorities and reflects the Office for National Statistics (ONS) definition found here: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/beginner-s-guide/administrative/england/greater-london-and-the-london-boroughs/index.html>