



# Civil Justice Statistics Quarterly, England and Wales, January to March 2017 (provisional) and Royal Courts of Justice 2016

## Main points

In January to March 2017, increases can be seen across all stages of county court activity (claims, defences, allocations, trial and judgments). Although driven by the increases in specified money claims, increases have also been seen in other types of claim.

**County court claims up 18%, driven by specified money claims**



In January to March 2017, the highest quarterly number of County Court claims were lodged since 2009, at 508,700. Of these, 392,800 were specified money claims (up 22% on January to March 2016).

**Unspecified money and non-money claims up 9% and 5% respectively**



The unspecified money claims increased to 37,700 in January to March 2017 (up 3,200) and was driven by a 10% increase in Personal Injury claims.

**Increase in claims allocated to track due to small money claims**



Overall claims allocated to track increased by 5% to 41,000. Small claim allocations increased by 18%, while fast and multi-track dropped by 4% and 9% respectively, from January to March 2016.

**Claims gone to trial up 20% and driven by small claims**



There were 15,800 claims that had gone to trial, the highest quarterly figures since January to March 2010.

**Judgments increased by a third, compared to same quarter in 2016**



There were 336,900 judgements made in January to March 2017, of which 87% were default judgements (with 292,200 in January to March 2017, up 35%).

**The Home Office had the largest number of Judicial Reviews lodged against them in 2016**



The Home Office had 1,832 Judicial Reviews against them in 2016, up 18% on 2015. MoJ had the second largest with 1,152 JRs in 2016 (a 32% decrease on 2015).

This publication gives civil county court statistics for the latest quarter (January to March 2017), compared to the same quarter the previous year. The Royal Courts of Justice statistics (published annually) cover January to December 2016. For more details, please see the supporting document.

We would welcome any feedback on either the layout or content of this publication, please let us know at [cajs@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cajs@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

# 1. Claims summary

## County court claims up 40%, driven by specified money claims

The highest quarterly number of County Court claims lodged in April to June 2017, at 565,270. Of these, 457,480 were specified money claims (up 54% on April to June 2016).

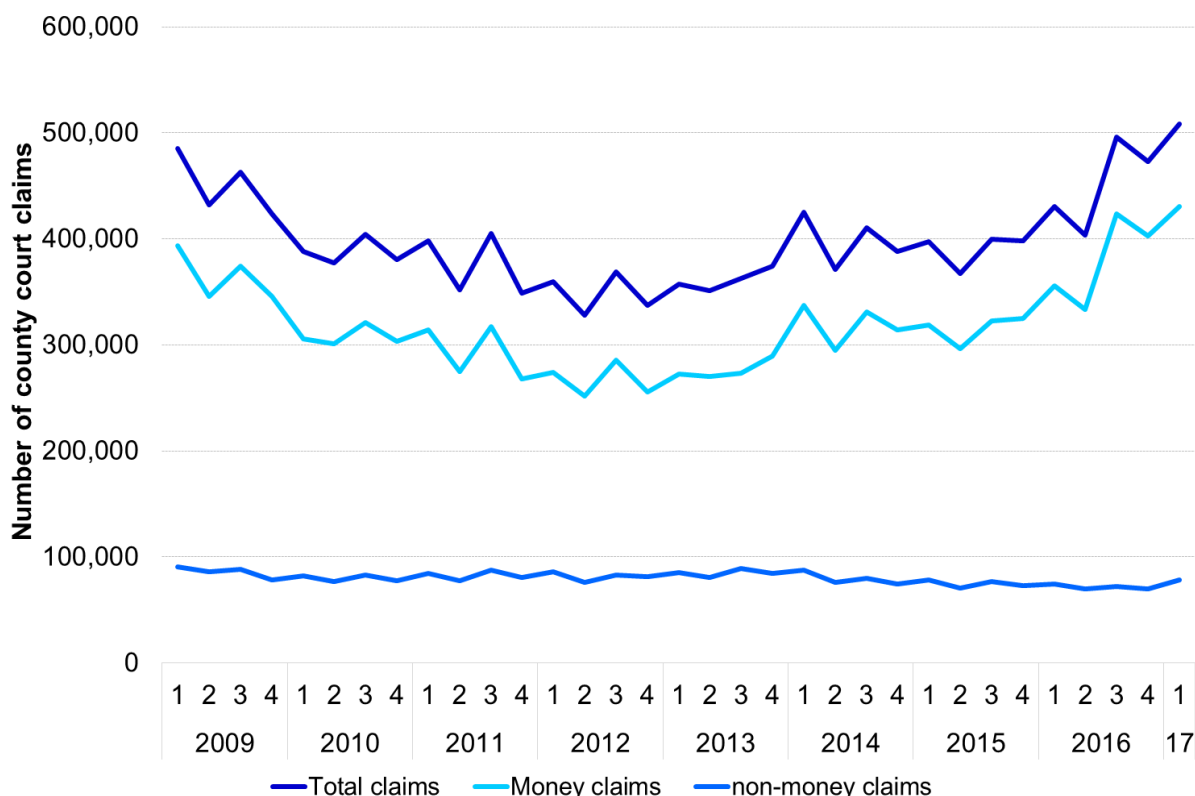


## Non-money claims at 78,200, up 5% on the same quarter last year

'Other non-money' claims and return of goods increased by 16% and 86%, to 35,100 and 2,400 respectively. Mortgage and Landlord Possession claims over the same period decreased by 5%, to 40,700.



**Figure 1: County Court Claims by type, Q1 (Jan-Mar) 2009 to Q1 (Jan-Mar) 2017 (source: table 1.2)**



County Court claims have been generally increasing since a low of 328,188 in April to June 2012, to the peak seen in this most recent quarter, at 508,711. This increase is driven by money claims, which make up the majority of claims received (85%).


Non-money claims had been generally declining since the peak of 89,309 claims in Q3 2013. However, in January to March 2017, it increased by 5% to 78,246.

Of the non-money claims, return of goods increase by 86% to 2,384 in January to March 2017, and has been increasing quarter on quarter since July to September 2015. Other non-money claims increased by 16% to 35,132, and has generally been increasing since April to June 2014.

Mortgage and Landlord Possession was the only non-money claim group which saw a decrease in the year to January to March 2017, dropping to 40,730 (down 5%).

# 1. Money Claims

## Increase in specified money claims driven by claims issued at the CCBC

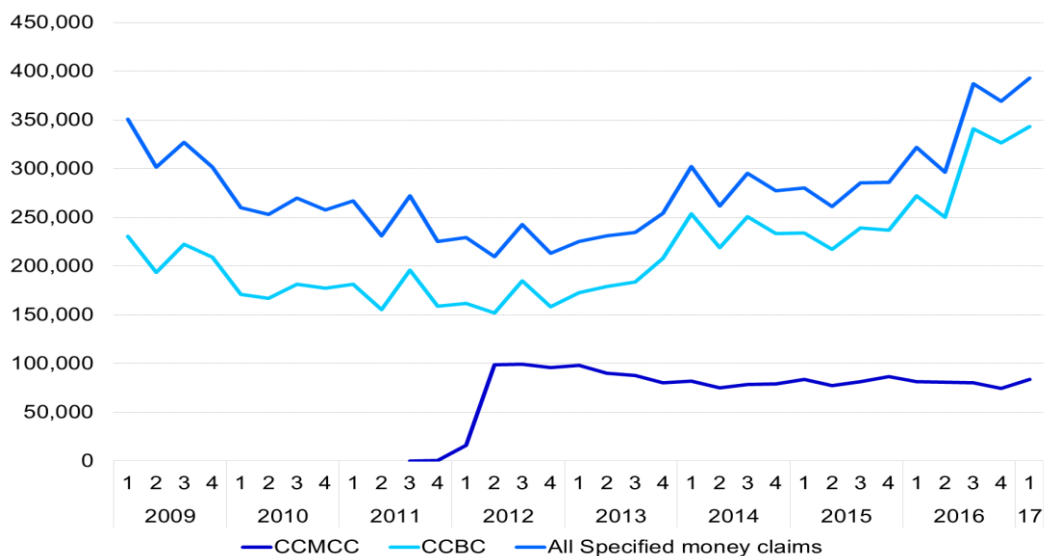
The 22% increase in specified money claims was driven by claims issued at the County Court Business Centre (CCBC). The CCBC had 70,965 more claims (up 26%) when compared with the same quarter last year. 

## Unspecified claims up 9% on same quarter in 2016, driven by personal injury claims

Unspecified money claims stood at 37,700 in January to March 2017 (up 3,200 on last year), driven by a 10% increase in Personal Injury claims.

The majority (87%) of specified money claims are processed and issued at the CCBC, followed by the County Court Money Claims Centre (CCMCC). There were 342,868 such claims at the CCBC in January to March 2017 (up 26% on the same quarter in the previous year) and 47,173 specified money claims at the CCMCC (down 1% on January to March 2016).

**Figure 2: Specified money claims by issuing centre, Jan-Mar 2009 to Jan-Mar 2017 (source: table 1.2 and civil workload CSV)**



Unspecified money claims had been generally declining since a peak of 46,674 in January to March 2013, however in the most recent quarter, they increased by 9% when compared to January to March 2016, to 37,698. Personal injury claims account for almost all (95%) of unspecified money claims.

In January to March 2017, 41,037 money claims were allocated to track, 5% more than the same period in 2016. Of these allocations;

- 20,759 were allocated to small claims, an increase of 18% on the same quarter in 2016, accounting for 51% of all allocations;
- 16,796 were allocated fast track, a decrease of 4% on the same quarter in 2016, accounting for 41% of all allocations;
- 3,482 were allocated multi-track, a decrease of 9% 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 8% to 76,200



Of these claims defended, 56% had legal representation for both claimant and defendant and 3% where only the defendant had legal representation (both down 1 percentage point from January to March 2016)

### Claims gone to trial up 20% and driven by small claims



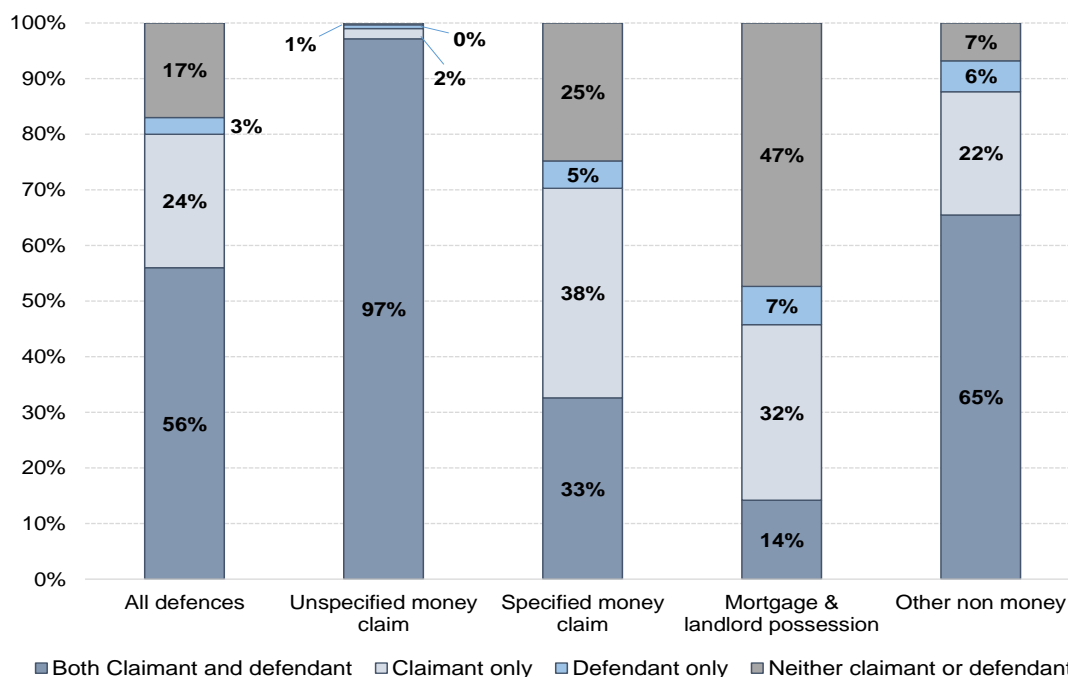
There were 15,800 claims that had gone to trial, the highest quarterly figures since January to March 2010.

The increase in the number of defences was due to specified money claim cases - 43,163 specified money claims were defended, up 23% on the same quarter in 2016.

Over the same period unspecified money claims, mortgage and landlord possession and non-money claim defences all decreased, by 5%, 16% and 3% respectively.

Both sides had legal representation in 56% of defences (down 1 percentage point on the same quarter last year) and in 24% of defences, only the claimant had representation (2 percentage point increase over the same period). This shift in proportion is driven in part by the reduction in 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 January to March 2017, almost all (97%) unspecified money defences had legal representation for both the respondent and claimant, compared with only a third of specified money defences.

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



Defended cases which are not settled or withdrawn generally result in a trial. In total, there were 15,846 trials in January to March 2017, up 20% on the same quarter in 2016. Of the claims that went to trial 11,153 (70%) were small claims trials (up 21% on the same quarter in 2016) and 4,693 were fast and multi-track trials (up 18% on the same quarter in 2016).

### 3. Judgements and Enforcements

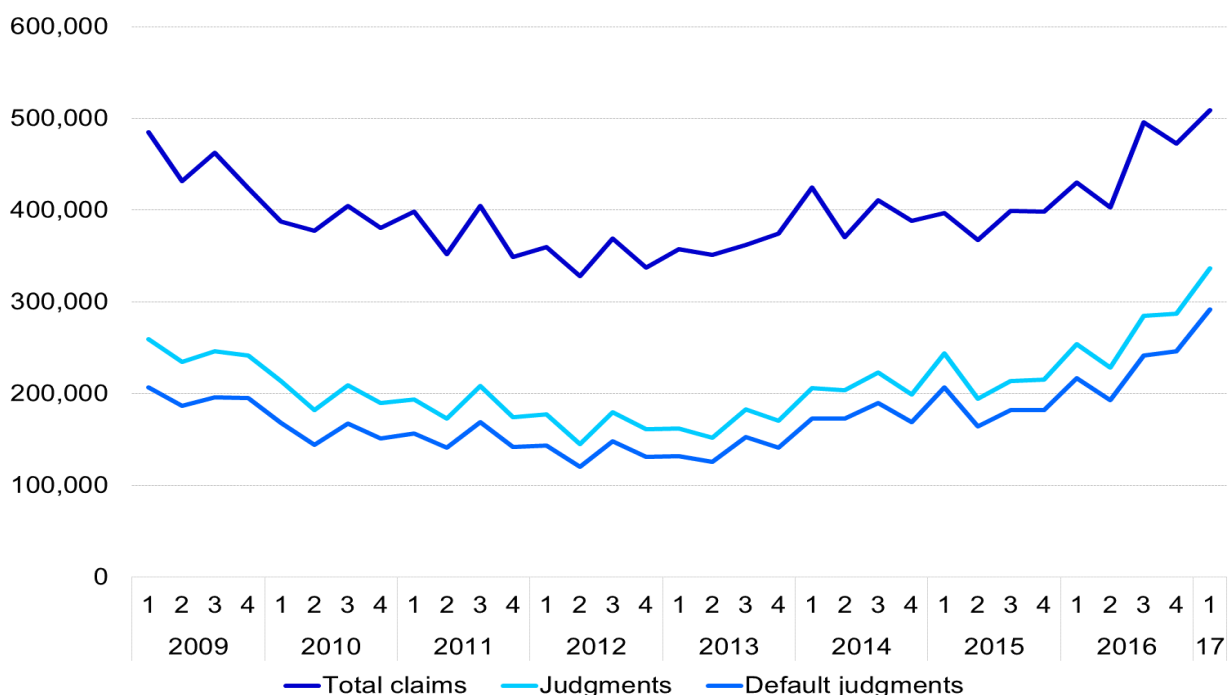
#### Judgments increased by a third, compared to same quarter in 2016

There were 336,900 judgements made in January to March 2017, of which 87% were default judgements (with 292,200 in January to March 2017, up 35%).

#### Warrants issued increased by 67%, driven by warrants of execution

In January to March 2017, 97,600 warrants were issued, more than three quarters (76%) of which were warrants of execution, up 20 percentage points on the same quarter in 2016

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



Of the 336,934 judgements that were made in January to March 2017, 292,151 (87%) were a judgment in default, an increase of 33% and 35% respectively on the same quarter in 2016. The second largest type of judgment were ‘admissions’, of which there were 28,745 (9% of all judgments) in January to March 2017, up 34% on the same quarter in 2016.

#### Enforcements

There were 97,555 warrants issued in January to March 2017, an increase of 67% on the same quarter in 2016. Annually, over the longer term, warrants issued steadily decreased from 615,761 in 2000, to a low of 219,807 in 2013. They have since been on a gradual increasing trend, to 282,120 in the most recent year (2016)

There were 31,965 enforcement-related order applications (which include attachment of earnings orders, charging orders, third party orders, and orders to obtain information) in January to March 2017 and 21,530 actual enforcement related orders made (down 18% and 13% respectively compared to the same period last year).

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

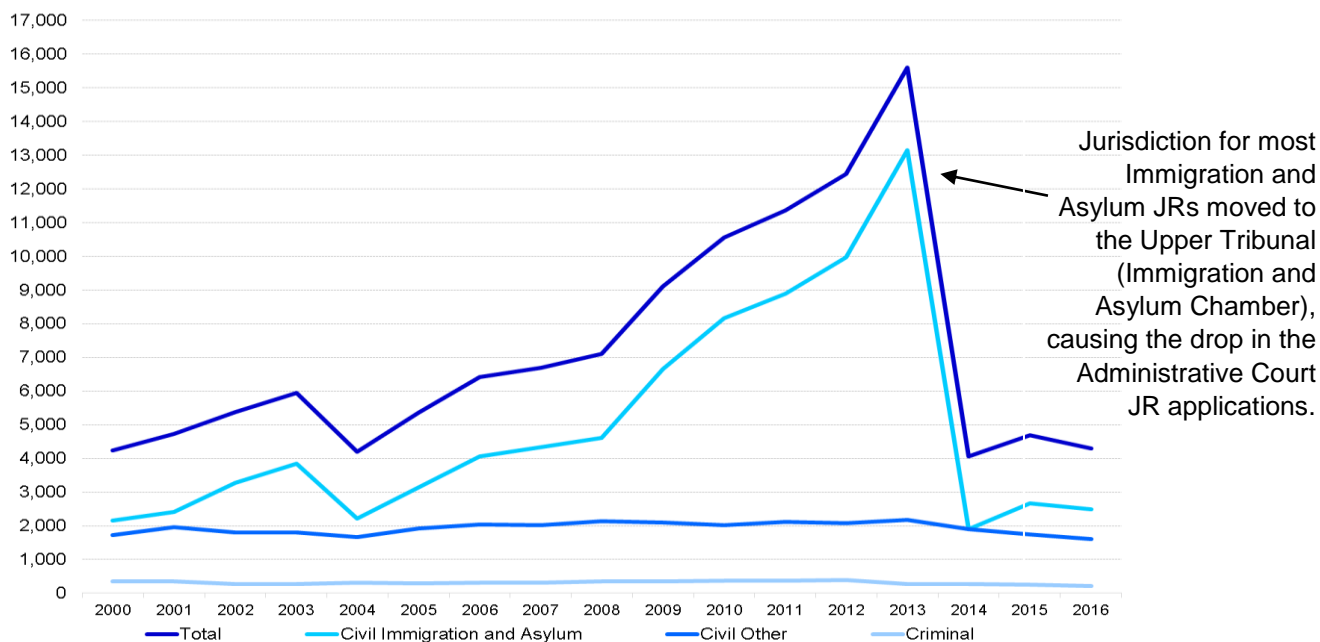
### The Home Office had the largest number of Judicial Reviews against them in 2016



The Home Office had 1,832 Judicial Reviews against them in 2016, up 18% on 2015. MoJ had the second largest with 1,152 JRs in 2016 (a 32% decrease on 2015).

There were 1,100 judicial review applications received so far in 2017, down 3% on the same period in 2016.

**Figure 5: Annual Judicial Review Application, by type calendar year 2000-2016**  
(Source: table 2.1)



Judicial review figures broken down by defendant type (i.e. individual government department or public body) are published annually. This information is derived from the 'defendant name' free text field, which is then grouped by defendant type. As this is a manually typed field, it is open to inputting errors and therefore should be used with caution.

The key findings from the 2016 figures are:

- The Home Office was the department/body with the largest number of JR applications lodged against them, with 1,832 (up 18% on last year). 226 applications were granted permission to proceed to the final hearing stage (12% of applications) and 12 were found in favour of the claimant.
- The second largest recipient of JR cases was the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), with 1,152 cases received (32% decrease on the previous year) and of these, 749 were specifically against Tribunals (65% of all MoJ JRs). The number of JR cases against tribunals decreased by 38% when compared to the number of applications lodged in 2015.
- Local Authorities had 762 applications lodged against them (third largest recipient), down 4% on the previous year. Of these cases, 228 were granted permission to proceed to final hearing (30% of applications), and of these, 33 were found in favour of the claimant.

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

## 5. Royal Courts of Justice<sup>2</sup>

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**Annual court activity statistics for the various appeal courts that are administered by HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)** - key findings are summarised below:

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**The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council** - the final Court of Appeal for 23 Commonwealth territories and four independent Republics within the Commonwealth has seen an increase in the number of appeals entered, to 75 in 2016 (23 more than 2015). Mauritius put in the most appeals in 2016, with 11.

**The Supreme Court** - the Supreme Court in the United Kingdom saw a decrease in the number of applications presented, to 210 in 2016 (32 fewer than 2015). This was driven by a reduction in applications to the Civil Court of Appeal. There were 200 appeals disposed of in 2016, of which 38% were allowed (75 cases), compared with 233 being disposed of in 2015, and 33% (76) being allowed.

**The Court of Appeal Criminal Division** saw a 9% decrease over the year in the number of applications received, to 5,726 in 2016. A 10% decrease was recorded in both conviction and sentence appeal applications. However, other receipts<sup>3</sup> did increase over this time period, by 24% to 378 applications received.

**Court of Appeal Civil Division** had 1,012 appeals filed in 2016, down 19% on 2015. Of the appeals filed in 2016, the largest number came from the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal (26% of all appeals filed).

**The High Court – The Queen’s Bench** had 4,123 proceedings started in 2016, 746 (15%) fewer than 2015. Of these proceedings, 71% were for money claims over £50,000 (compared to 54% in 2015). The most common type of claim was personal injury actions, which accounted for 38% of all proceedings stated in 2016.

**Days sat by Judge** – There were 276,928 days sat by judges in 2016, down 1,963 (1%) compared to 2015. This decrease was seen across all court types, except for Public Family Law in the County Court (which increased by 9% to 37,354 days sat) and The Technology and Construction court (which increased by 18% to 719 days sat).

**The Magistracy** – The number of Justices of the Peace reduced to 16,380 in 2016/17, 2,958 less than 2015/16. Of the 2016/17 workforce, 54% were women, 1 percentage point higher than 2015/16. Over the same period, 728 Justices of the Peace were appointed, of which 55% were woman (two percentage points higher than 2015/16).

For further information on these summarised figures or on the statistics available in relation to the appeals courts', please see the accompanying tables named 'Royal Courts of Justice, 2016'.

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<sup>2</sup> Royal Courts of Justice statistics are Official Statistics

<sup>3</sup> See footnote on the Royal Courts of Justice table 3.7 for the full list of other receipt applications



## 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

Within the 'Key Findings' section, figures greater than 1,000 are rounded to the nearest 100.

## Accompanying files

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

- A technical guide 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.

## Contact

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