## Freedom of Information request 2013-1773

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## Information request

- 1. Please provide figures for Jobseeker's Directions issued in each of the first three months of 2013.
- 2. Please provide figures for Jobseeker's Directions issued in March concerning Universal Jobmatch.
- 3. Please provide figures for Jobseeker's Directions issued in March that required claimants to register with Universal Jobmatch.
- 4. For each of the three categories of figures referred to above please provide figures for referrals to a Labour Market Decision Maker for a "good cause" decision.
- 5. Of the referrals to a Labour Market Decision Maker for a "good cause" decision how many claimants in each of the categories identified was found to have good cause for not complying with the Jobseeker's Direction?

#### On an unrelated note:

"The proportion of Jobseeker's Allowance applications submitted online increased from 10.4 per cent in March 2011 to 19.6 per cent in March 2012." http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2011-2012.pdf

6. What was the proportional increase from March 2012 to March 2013?

For clarification: this request relates to national figures.

If my request cannot be processed for cost reasons please provide the information for Ashton-under-Lyne Jobcentre Plus. If possible, please also provide the figures for Wigan, Warrington and Oldham Jobcentre Plus offices.

## **DWP** response

Please note that the figures supplied in response to questions 1 and 6 are derived from unpublished management information which was collected for internal Departmental use only, and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.

In response to question 1 the information requested is shown in the table below.

Number of Jobseeker's Directions issued by month: January 2013 – March 2013

Month	Number of Jobseeker's Directions issued		
January	77,390		
February	61,270		
March	47,690		

**Source:** Labour Market System (LMS): Management Information System Portal (MISP) Report

### Notes:

- 1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten.
- Please note that the figures supplied are derived from unpublished management information which was collected for internal Departmental use only, and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.

In response to questions 2 and 3 I can confirm that the Department may hold some information falling within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the cost of complying with your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600. Please note even with your suggested reduced requirements this limit would still be exceeded.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your request further.

In response to questions 4 and 5; The first part of your questions are requesting information on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) sanctions, specifically for refusing to carry out a Jobseeker's Direction, in the first three months of 2013.

The latest published information on JSA sanctions is up to the 21st October 2012 (the last date covered by the old sanctions regime). The first set of statistics on the new sanctions regime, are due to be published in the summer of 2013. More information on the new sanctions regime, introduced on the 22nd of October 2012, can be found at:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/adviser/updates/jsa-sanction-changes/

As the statistics requested are intended for future publication this information is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 22 (Information intended for future publication) of the FOIA. This exemption is qualified, and is therefore subject to a public interest test. The public interest test is where the Department considers whether the balance of the public interest falls in favour of withholding or disclosing the information requested.

Arguments in favour of disclosure: There are public interest arguments in favour of disclosure of this information at the present time. Disclosure would for example improve transparency in the operations of the Department.

Arguments against disclosure: There are public interest arguments against disclosure of this information at the present time. These arguments include that it is in the public interest to adhere to the existing publication process for official statistics, which includes time for the data to be collated and properly verified.

It is also in the public interest to ensure that the publication of official information is a properly planned and managed process, to ensure that the data are accurate once placed into the public domain. It is also in the public interest to ensure that the information is available to all members of the public at the same time, and premature publication could undermine the principle of making the information available to all at the same time through the official publication process.

On this occasion, the balance of the public interest test falls in favour of withholding this information. As I have explained above, statistics on this issue will be published in due course.

Information on this publication will be provided on news and announcements link here: <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=news">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=news</a>

You may however be interested to view the following tables which show the number of JSA sanction referrals, where a decision has been made, for refusing to carry out a Jobseeker's Direction in each month from April 2000 to October 2012.

Referrals where the decision was found against the claimant:

http://83.244.183.180/sanction/sanction/LIVE/dec\_fix\_dec/d\_indate/q\_2gp/dct gp/a stock r d indate c g 2gp p dct gp adverse oct12.html

Referrals where the decision was found in favour of the claimant:

http://83.244.183.180/sanction/sanction/LIVE/dec\_fix\_dec/d\_indate/q\_2gp/dct\_qp/a\_stock\_r\_d\_indate\_c\_q\_2qp\_p\_dct\_qp\_non\_adverse\_oct12.html

Referrals where the original decision has been reconsidered and the decision was upheld against the claimant:

http://83.244.183.180/sanction/sanction/LIVE/dec fix dec/d indate/qr 2gp/dc t gp/a stock r d indate c qr 2gp p dct gp adverse oct12.html

Referrals where the original decision has been reconsidered and the decision was overturned in favour of the claimant:

http://83.244.183.180/sanction/sanction/LIVE/dec\_fix\_dec/d\_indate/qr\_2gp/dct\_gp/a\_stock\_r\_d\_indate\_c\_qr\_2gp\_p\_dct\_gp\_non\_adverse\_oct12.html

Referrals where the original decision has been appealed and the decision was upheld against the claimant:

http://83.244.183.180/sanction/sanction/LIVE/dec\_fix\_dec/d\_indate/qa\_2gp/dct\_gp/a\_stock\_r\_d\_indate\_c\_qa\_2gp\_p\_dct\_gp\_adverse\_oct12.html

Referrals where the original decision has been appealed and the decision was overturned in favour of the claimant:

http://83.244.183.180/sanction/sanction/LIVE/dec fix dec/d indate/qa 2gp/dc t gp/a stock r d indate c qa 2gp p dct gp non adverse oct12.html

In response to the rest of questions 4 and 5, as stated above, information relating to Universal Jobmatch is not available within the appropriate cost limit.

In response to question 6 the information requested is shown in the table below.

# Number of JSA claims received, of which the number and percentage of those received online: March 2012 and March 2013

Month	Number of claims received	Of which those received online	Percentage of those received
		10001100 01111110	online
March 2012	268,590	52,560	19.6%
March 2013	232,820	128,610	55.2%

**Source:** Labour Market System (LMS): Management Information System Portal (MISP) Report

#### Notes:

- 1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten. Percentages are shown to one decimal place.
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