

Freedom of Information request 2013-788

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Information request

- 1) How many Jobseeker's claimants did you sanction from the 1st of November 2011 to 15th February 2012?
- 2) How many Jobseeker's claimants did you sanction from the 1st of November 2012 to 15th February 2013?

DWP response

In response to question 1 the information requested can be found in the table below.

Number of individuals with a Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) sanction applied² in Great Britain: 1st November 2011 - 15th February 2012

	Total
Number of individuals with a JSA sanction applied	153,980

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

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten.
2. The number of sanctions applied is the number of Varied³, Fixed length⁴ and Entitlement Decision⁵ referrals where there has been an adverse decision.
3. **Varied Length sanctions:** A sanction of between 1 week and 26 weeks is imposed for leaving employment voluntarily without just cause, refusing employment without good cause, or losing employment through misconduct. The actual period in each case is at the discretion of the Adjudication Officer who makes the decision.
4. **Fixed Length sanctions:** A sanction of between 1 week and 26 weeks is imposed for refusal, without good cause, to attend an employment programme or carry out a Jobseeker's Direction. Payment of benefit continues in full pending the Adjudication Officer's decision on a sanction question.
5. **Entitlement decision:** These are questions on which entitlement to JSA depends. For example, if there is doubt around whether the Jobseeker's agreement (JSAg) is suitable, whether they are actively looking for work or making themselves available for work. In most

cases payment of JSA will be suspended by benefit processing until the doubt is resolved.

In response to question 2;

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 explained above, statistics will be published in due course. Information on this publication will be provided on news and announcements link here: <http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=news>