



Ministry
of Justice

Family Justice

**Guide to national and court-level
information**

Background

The Family courts csv files provide the user with lower level breakdowns of a selection of family court activities.

The data is provided in a comma separated value (CSV) machine-readable format so that it can easily be imported into analytical software packages. These packages include R, Access, SQL, SAS, up-to-date versions of Excel but not versions of Excel prior to 2010 (because of insufficient number of rows). This format enables the user to manipulate and aggregate the published data in different ways.

Variable description

There are six Family matters CSV files:

General Courts and regions

Adoptions National

Ancillary relief National

Children's Act National

Divorce National

Domestic Violence National

Court level transparency

Court level breakdown of selected figures presented in Court Statistics Quarterly. This data-set consists of four 'type' variables and eight 'value' variables. Additionally three 'extra' variables showing mediation data for the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) regions are included.

Type variables:

quarter: the three month period to which the data relate.

court_type: indicates whether the application/petition was made in a county court (also including High Court) or in a Family Proceedings Court (FPC)

court_name: the name of the court

region: the region in which the court is located, or LSC region to which mediation figures relate.

Please note that the court shown refers to the court processing the application. In some cases individuals may apply through an internet agency that then submits the applications in bulk to a certain court that would otherwise have spare capacity. For example, Weston-super-Mare court processes a large number of divorce petitions submitted by a divorce internet agency. In these cases, the court processing the application has no relation to the geographical location of the individuals making the application.

Value variables:

Seven of these provide a count for each court and quarter. The eighth variable shows an average duration for each court and quarter, in weeks.

adoption_applications: this provides the total number of applications for adoption, both standard and other (Convention, foreign) made in that quarter.

divorce_petitions: this provides the total number of petitions filed for dissolution of marriage (divorce) made in that quarter

ancillary_relief_applications: this provides the total number of ancillary relief applications made in that quarter.

domestic_violence_applications: this provides the total number of applications for domestic violence remedies made in that quarter.

children_subject_to_public_law_applications: this provides the total number of children involved in public law applications made in that quarter

children_subject_to_private_law_applications: this provides the total number of children involved in private law applications made in that quarter

care_proceedings_number_of_cases_disposed: this provides the total number of care and supervision applications that were disposed in that quarter

care_proceedings_average_case_duration_(wks): this provides the average duration (in weeks) of care and supervision applications that were disposed in that quarter. Duration is measured from the date of application to the first disposal that was one of the following seven types - care order, supervision order, residence order, special guardianship order, application withdrawn, order refused or order of no order.

Extra variables

These data are provided by the Legal Aid Agency and present the following three variables for the 12 LAA regional offices.

publicly_funded_assessment_meetings: this provides the number of couples attending a Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting (MIAM).

mediation_starts: this provides the number of mediation starts.

conversion_rate_between_assessment_meetings_and_mediation: this provides the proportion of MIAMS that result in the start of mediation.

Please note that further information and qualifications concerning the data are contained in the footnotes to the relevant CSQ tables. In addition, the Guide to Court and Administrative Justice Statistics contains information on data sources and data quality.

Ancillary relief

Ancillary relief applications and disposals in England and Wales only, which consists of the following 13 variables:

type: This indicates what the value relates to – whether application events or disposal events.

year: This is the year to which the data relates. The earliest year from which the data is available on this dataset is 2006. The latest year for which some data is available is 2013.

quarter: Each year is divided into four quarters and this is the quarter to which the data relates, where Q1 = 1 January to 31 March, Q2 = 1 April to 30 June, Q3 = 1 July to 30 September and Q4 = 1 October to 31 December.

contested: This field describes whether the application was either 'Not contested' (consented) or 'Contested'. For disposals, there is an additional value of 'Initially contested' which relates to those disposals which were initially contested but were subsequently consented.

children_involved: The variable is only valid for disposals which were either 'Initially contested' or 'Contested', and indicates whether children were involved in the order made or not.

lump_sum_order: Indicating whether a Lump sum order application or order was made.

maintenance_pending_suit: Indicating whether a Maintenance pending suit application or order was made.

property_adjustment_order: Indicating whether a Property adjustment order application or order was made.

periodical_payment: Indicating whether a Periodical payment application or order was made.

pension_sharing_or_adjustment_order: Indicating whether a Pension sharing or attachment order application or order was made.

secure_provision_order: Indicating whether a Secure provision order application or order was made.

application_dismissed: Indicating whether an Application was dismissed. This is only available for disposals.

value: This provides the number e.g. the number of contested applications made in that quarter.

Adoptions

Adoption applications and disposals in England and Wales only, which considers all applications and disposals made under the Adoption and Children Act 2002, and which consists of the following nine variables:

type: This indicates what the value relates to – whether application events or orders made events.

year: This is the year to which the data relates. The earliest year from which the data is available on this dataset is 2011. The latest year for which some data is available is 2013.

quarter: Each year is divided into four quarters and this is the quarter to which the data relates, where Q1 = 1 January to 31 March, Q2 = 1 April to 30 June, Q3 = 1 July to 30 September and Q4 = 1 October to 31 December.

adoption: This field describes whether the application or order made relates to an adoption or another, non-adoption order type that can be applied for or made under the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

order_type: For adoptions there are three adoption types: standard, convention and foreign. See the glossary for further details. For non-adoption order types, seven options are indicated: placement, revocation or variation of a placement order, contact (section 26), revocation or variation of a contact (section 26) order, change of child's surname, removal of child from the UK and other, which includes a small number of uncommon application and order types.

adopter: In adoption cases only, this indicates the status of the (prospective) adopter; five options are available: step parent, male/female couple, same sex couple, sole applicant and other or not stated.

adopted_child_sex: For adoption orders made only, this indicates whether the adopted child was male or female. There are a very few cases where this information is not stated in the data.

adopted_child_age: For adoption orders made only, this indicates the age band of the adopted child. Six categories are shown: under 1 year, 1-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, 15-17 years, and other which includes cases where age is not stated in the data or the child was over 17 by the time the order was made.

count: This provides the number e.g. the number of adoption applications by male/female couples, in that quarter.

Please note that further information and qualifications concerning the data are contained in the footnotes to the relevant CSQ tables. In addition, the Guide to Court and Administrative Justice Statistics contains information on data sources and data quality.

Children's Act

Children's Act (public and private law) applications and disposals in England and Wales only, which consists of the following seven variables:

type: This indicates what the value relates to – whether application events or disposal events.

year: This is the year to which the data relates. The earliest year from which the data is available on this dataset is 2011. The latest year for which some data is available is 2013.

quarter: Each year is divided into four quarters and this is the quarter to which the data relates, where Q1 = 1 January to 31 March, Q2 = 1 April to 30 June, Q3 = 1 July to 30 September and Q4 = 1 October to 31 December.

public_private: This field describes whether the case was a public law or a private law case.

disposal_type: For disposals only, this variable indicates whether was disposal type was an order made, an application withdrawn, an order of no order, an order refused or an interim order.

order_type: This shows the specific type of order applied for or made.

count: This provides the number e.g. the number of applications for a care order made, in that quarter.

Divorce

Divorce petitions and decrees made in England and Wales only, which consists of the following nine variables:

type: This indicates what the value relates to – whether petition events or orders made events.

year: This is the year to which the data relates. The earliest year from which the data is available on this dataset is 2003. The latest year for which some data is available is 2013.

quarter: Each year is divided into four quarters and this is the quarter to which the data relates, where Q1 = 1 January to 31 March, Q2 = 1 April to 30 June, Q3 = 1 July to 30 September and Q4 = 1 October to 31 December.

order_type: For orders made only, this variable indicates whether the order was a decree nisi, a decree absolute, or for judicial separation cases, the granting of a judicial separation.

proceeding_type: Indicating whether the count refers to the dissolution of marriage, nullity of marriage or a judicial separation.

petitioners_gender: For petitions only, this indicates whether the gender of the petitioner in the case was male, female or unknown/unspecified.

children_involved: For petitions only, this variable indicates whether children were involved on the petition.

contested: For orders made only, this field indicates whether the petition to end the marriage was contested, uncontested or unknown.

count: This provides the number e.g. the number of petitions made by a female where children were involved, in that quarter.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence applications and disposals in England and Wales only, which consists of the following seven variables:

type: This indicates what the value relates to – whether application events or orders made events.

year: This is the year to which the data relates. The earliest year from which the data is available on this dataset is 2009. The latest year for which some data is available is 2013.

quarter: Each year is divided into four quarters and this is the quarter to which the data relates, where Q1 = 1 January to 31 March, Q2 = 1 April to 30 June, Q3 = 1 July to 30 September and Q4 = 1 October to 31 December.

order_type: Indicating whether a Non-molestation or an Occupation order was applied for or made.

ex-parte_or_notice: Indicating whether the application or order was made ex-parte (without notifying the respondent/s in the case) or following notice being given to the respondent/s (on notice).

power_of_arrest: For orders made only, indicates whether a power of arrest (POA) was attached to the order made. N.B. Since July 2007 breach of a non-molestation order has been a criminal and arrestable offence, so it is no longer necessary for courts to attach a power of arrest to non-molestation orders.

count: This provides the number e.g. the number of applications made on notice for a non-molestation order, in that quarter.