



Disclosure Team
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

Brian Hudson
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data.access@justice.gov.uk

8 October 2020

Dear Mr Hudson

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – 200927003

Thank you for your request dated 27 September 2020 in which you asked for the following information from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ):

Please provide a data export containing the following information, ideally stretching back to 1990, but if that is not possible then to the earliest reasonable date and up to the most recent records. By date year:

- 1. Total divorces**
- 2. Total dependent children age 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16 total for each age year**

Your request has been handled under the FOIA.

I can confirm the MoJ holds all of the information you have requested. However, to provide as the request currently stands would exceed the cost limit set out in the FOIA.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA means public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Information collated centrally by the MoJ does not include data on divorce prior to 2003, nor does it include data on children involved in divorce cases from 2014 onwards, as there was no longer a requirement to collect it.

We believe that the cost of locating, retrieving and extracting the requested information in the time periods where we have specified it is not collated centrally from individual case files at the courts in England and Wales would exceed the appropriate limit. Consequently, we are not obliged to comply with your request.

Although we cannot answer your request at the moment, we may be able to answer a refined request within the cost limit. You may wish to consider, for example, reducing the scope of your request to cover the period from 2003 to 2014 only. Please be aware that we cannot guarantee at this stage that a refined request will fall within the FOIA cost limit, or that other exemptions will not apply

For guidance on how to structure successful requests please refer to the ICO website on the following link: http://ico.org.uk/for_the_public/official_information

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/3244/pdfs/ukxi_20043244_en.pdf

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to request an internal review by responding in writing to one of the addresses below within two months of the date of this response.

data.access@justice.gov.uk

Disclosure Team, Ministry of Justice

You do have the right to ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. However, please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning their investigation.

Yours sincerely

David Carmichael
Justice Statistics Analytical Services