

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: 2015-329

18 February 2015

Dear Anna Smith,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 23 December 2014.
You asked:

**"I refer to the dataset "Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance sanctions: decisions made to June 2014" which can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/jobseekers-allowance-and-employment-and-support-allowance-sanctions-decisions-made-to-june-2014> (Table 1.3)**

These figures are of little value unless scaled by the number of JSA claimants in each Jobcentre office. I have obtained these claimant figures from Nomis, but it quickly became apparent that Nomis is using a different set of Jobcentre office IDs (compare the offices named for Birmingham, for example). With no common ID, it is not possible to match the numbers together.

Data on JSA claimants are not available by Jobcentre from the DWP Tabtool. I would therefore be grateful if you would supply me with the figures for total JSA claimants by Jobcentre, using the same Jobcentre IDs as in the sanctions release of November 2014. Preferably this would be month-by-month for the whole period Oct 2014 - Nov 2014.

Please note that you granted an identical request in 2012:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobseekers-allowance-claimants-by-jobcentre-plus-district-from-march-2008-to-october-2012-20132296>"

You clarified your request on 26 January 2015.

"If you could send me statistics for each month from October 2012 to December 2014 (or as late as is available) that would be ideal."

In response to your question the available information can be found in the attached document (FOI 2015-329 Response.xls) which gives the number of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants by Jobcentre Plus Group, district and office and caseload month for the period October 2012 to August 2014.

Please ensure you read the notes before using and interpreting this data.

The figures supplied are derived from unpublished information and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Source: DWP 100% WPLS, LMS Client data

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten. "-" denotes nil or negligible.
2. Caseload Month: Caseloads are taken on the last day of each month.
3. * denotes dormant offices.
4. Figures have been created by matching data derived from the Jobseeker's Allowance Payment System (JSAPS) and the Labour Market System (LMS). These systems are used to administer the claim process and are subject to user imputation errors. Therefore matching between these two data sources can result in incorrect or non-matches.
5. Figures in later revisions may be subject to change due to retrospection.
6. Data is shown to August 2014 which is the latest data available at the time of the request.

The following should also be noted if a comparison is made between these figures and published figures on the number of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) sanctions and disallowances. The number of sanctions and disallowance referrals in each month is taken from the date on which the decision was made. For a number of reasons the claimant may no longer be claiming JSA at this point therefore a direct comparison may not be valid.

There will also be differences between the caseload figures provided and those produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) from the claimant count. This is for the following reasons:

- The claimant count includes claims which are processed clerically, whereas the DWP JSA statistics only include computer processed claims.
- Claimant count statistics allow approximately 3 weeks for late processed claims to be input onto the DWP computer systems, whereas DWP JSA statistics allow at least 9 weeks.
- The claimant count measures 'live' claimants on the second Thursday of the month, whereas DWP JSA statistics measures 'live' claimants on the last day of the month.

On the 1 April 2013, the following changes occurred:

- The number of districts in Southern England Group reduced from 6 to 5.
- Hampshire & the Isle of Wight and Wessex districts merged to become a new district called Greater Wessex.
- Devon and Cornwall district has been renamed Devon, Cornwall and Somerset district.
- Swindon has moved from Wessex district to Thames Valley district.

However, the office structure will still sit under the pre-2011 districts. There are no changes to Surrey and Sussex district and Gloucestershire and West of England district. **Please note the figures provided are based on the pre-April 2013 Jobcentre Plus geographies.**

If you have any queries about this letter please contact us quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FoI Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central FoI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk