

Trends in the Solicitors' Profession

Annual Statistical Report 2003

Prepared by Bill Cole, Strategic Research Unit



The Law Society

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Introduction

This is the twentieth Annual Statistical Report of the Law Society. It contains the most recent statistics available on the solicitors' branch of the legal profession.

The Strategic Research Unit

This report was produced by Bill Cole of the Law Society's Strategic Research Unit. The Unit helps the Council of the Law Society to assess the changing nature of the profession, and to respond to those changes in an informed way. In doing so the unit designs, conducts and commissions research studies on a number of issues of relevance to the profession. It has published reports on the public perceptions of solicitors, the work and organisation of the solicitors' profession, entry to the profession, how solicitors manage their practices, research into legal markets, and comparisons with legal professions based in other jurisdictions. A full list of publications linked to a summary or the full text version can be viewed at www.research.lawsociety.org.uk. Further information on the work of the unit can be obtained from members of the Strategic Research Unit.

Sources of data

The main source used for this report was:

- The Law Society's REGIS database, which is maintained by the Society at its offices in Redditch. This contains records of all solicitors at all stages in their career, from their initial enrolment as a student through to their admission to the Roll on qualification and thereafter.

The report also draws on the clearing house admission systems (UCAS) used by universities to provide information on applications and acceptances for law degrees in England and Wales; and data from the Higher Educational Statistical Agency for information on the number of law graduates and their achieved grades. Detailed references to all of the sources used are given throughout the report.

Summary

Key facts about the solicitors' profession

This report describes the size and composition of the solicitors' profession and describes trends in the entry of solicitors to the profession.

The size of the profession

- As at 31 July 2003, there were 116,110 solicitors on the Roll, an increase of 2.4% on the year before.
- At the same date, 92,752 solicitors held practising certificates, an increase of 4.2% on the previous year.
- The growth rate in the number of practising certificate holders has returned this year to the long run growth rate.
- Since 1973, the total number of solicitors holding practising certificates has grown by 238.8% at an average annual rate of 4.2%.
- 72,545, or 78.2%, of solicitors holding practising certificates work in private practice; the remainder work mainly in commerce and industry and the public sector.
- Since 1993, the proportion of practising certificate holders not employed in private practice has increased from 17.6% to 21.8%.
- Just over one-half, 54.5%, of current practising solicitors have been qualified for 10 years or less.
- In the year to 31 July 2003, admissions to the Roll, *ie* newly qualified solicitors and transfers from other legal professions, were 6,924, an increase of 4.2% on admissions in the year before.
- Of these new admissions 56.8% were women, and admissions from the ethnic minorities represented 17.3% of all admissions with known ethnicity.

A descriptive profile

- In 2002–03, solicitors drawn from the ethnic minorities accounted for 8.8% of solicitors on the Roll, 7.9% of solicitors with practising certificates, and 7.5% of solicitors in private practice.
- Women now account for 39.7% of solicitors with practising certificates. Whereas since 1993 the total number of solicitors holding practising certificates has grown by 51.2%, the number of women holding practising certificates more than doubled, having increased by 117.5%.

- 81.5% of men holding practising certificates work within private practice, compared to 73.2% of women.
- Of those solicitors with 10–19 years' experience in private practice, 78.7% of men were partners or sole practitioners compared with only 52.1% of women.
- In 2003, the average age of a female solicitor in private practice was 36.3 years compared with 43.2 years for men. The average age of a sole practitioner was 50.3 years compared with 45.4 years for partners and 40.6 years for all solicitors in private practice.
- Just over one-third of practising certificate holders in 2003 (37.4%) were employed by organisations based in London. These organisations were responsible for the employment of 54.3% of ethnic minority practising certificate holders.

Trends in private practice

- In 2003 there were 15,212 separate organisations employing solicitors of which 13,893 were based in England and Wales.
- In 2003, there were 9,198 solicitors' firms in England and Wales listed in the Society's database, a small decrease of 0.4% on 2002.
- The vast majority of law firms are relatively small with 84.7% of them having four or fewer partners.
- In 2003 42.1%, of private practice firms were located in London and the South East.
- Just over one-quarter of private practice firms, 27.0%, were recorded as being located in London in 2003. These firms employed well over one-third (38.0%) of all private practitioners.
- In 2003, the 1.6% of firms with 26 or more partners employed over one-third (37.3%) of all solicitors in private practice. Sole practices accounted for 44.8% of firms, and employed 8.5% of all solicitors.
- On average, the very largest firms, with 81 or more partners, had 2.1 assistant/associate solicitors per partner compared with between 0.4 and 1.6 in the smaller and medium-sized firms.

Trends in post-graduate education

- In 2002 there were 18,600 applicants to study first degree courses in law in England and Wales, of whom 11,848 (63.7%) were accepted.
- Of the 9,204 graduates in the summer of 2002, over half (54.8%) achieved firsts or upper second classifications. More women graduated with firsts and upper seconds than men, 56.4% as opposed to 52.3%.

- In the year ending 31 July 2003, 9,195 students enrolled with the Law Society. Of these students 62.4% were women and 22.1% were drawn from the ethnic minorities.
- In July 2003, 7,377 LPC students were eligible to sit the examination. This represented an increase (3.3%) on the 7,141 who were eligible in 2002. Of those who actually sat the examination in 2003, 79.4% passed, almost no change on the 2002 pass rate of 79.3%.
- There were 7,695 full time and 1,486 part-time LPC places available in 2002–03. In 2003–04 there will be 7,859 full-time and 1,700 part-time places available.
- There were 5,650 new traineeships registered in the year 1 August 2002 to 31 July 2003. This is an increase of 4.9% on the level recorded last year.
- Of the new trainees registered, 62.7% were women and 17.9% of trainees with known ethnicity were drawn from the ethnic minorities.



Part I

Qualified solicitors

Chapters 1 and 2 of the report contain details of the numbers of solicitors on the Roll, and of those with practising certificates, analysed by gender, age, ethnicity, experience, employment sector and, where appropriate, position in private practice. Chapter 3 looks at the organisations that employ solicitors and chapter 4 examines the staffing of firms in private practice.

1. Solicitors on the Roll

- 1.1 Under the Solicitors Act 1974, the Law Society is required to maintain records of all qualified solicitors on the Roll. All practising solicitors are obliged to keep the Society informed of their whereabouts and any changes in the circumstances of their employment. The annual renewal of practising certificates produces up-to-date information about all practising solicitors. In addition, the Society now operates a scheme of annual enrolment for all solicitors on the Roll in order to be able to gain up-to-date information about those solicitors who do not hold practising certificates.
- 1.2 As at 31 July 2003, there were 116,110 solicitors on the Roll, an increase of 2.4% over the previous year. Of these, 68,966 (59.4%) were men and 47,144 (40.6%) were women. Last year 60.5% of solicitors on the Roll were men and 39.5% were women.
- 1.3 Table 1.3 shows that of those solicitors on the Roll at 31 July 2003, 92,752, or 79.9% of them, held a current practising certificate entitling them to act as a solicitor within the definition of the Solicitors Act 1974. The remaining 23,358 include solicitors working in jobs in which they are not required to hold a practising certificate, retired solicitors, and those no longer pursuing a career in the legal profession. Some of the employed solicitors without a practising certificate work in local government or commerce and industry and do not provide legal advice to those outside the organisation, or undertake litigation on behalf of their employer.

Table 1.3 Solicitors on the Roll with and without practising certificates by gender as at 31 July 2003

| | No. | % |
|--|---------|-------|
| With practising certificates | | |
| Men | 55,933 | 60.3 |
| Women | 36,819 | 39.7 |
| Sub-total | 92,752 | 100.0 |
| Without practising certificates | | |
| Men | 13,033 | 55.8 |
| Women | 10,325 | 44.2 |
| Sub-total | 23,358 | 100.0 |
| Total solicitors on the Roll | | |
| Men | 68,966 | 59.4 |
| Women | 47,144 | 40.6 |
| Total | 116,110 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Ethnic groups

- 1.4 Ethnic minority solicitors make up 8.8% of solicitors on the Roll, of whom 24.3% are resident abroad. In England and Wales the greatest concentration of ethnic minority solicitors on the Roll is found in the Central and South Middlesex constituency, where over a quarter of solicitors are drawn from the ethnic minorities.
- 1.5 Table 1.5 shows that 71.9% of the 10,234 ethnic minority solicitors on the Roll hold practising certificates. This is a noticeably lower participation rate than for all solicitors where the rate was as we have seen 79.9%. Chinese solicitors, the majority of whom work overseas, have the lowest ethnic minority participation rate. Only one-third (32.4%) of ethnic Chinese solicitors on the Roll hold practising certificates.

Table 1.5 Ethnic minority solicitors on the Roll and with practising certificates as at 31 July 2003

| Ethnic origin | Ethnic minority solicitors | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|---|
| | 1 On the Roll | 2 With practising certificate | 3 Participation rate (2 as a % of 1) |
| African-Caribbean | 680 | 582 | 85.6% |
| Asian | 4,810 | 4,116 | 85.6% |
| Chinese | 2,509 | 831 | 32.4% |
| African | 775 | 676 | 87.2% |
| Other ethnic origin | 1,460 | 1,169 | 80.1% |
| All ethnic minority solicitors | 10,234 | 7,356 | 71.9% |
| White European | 91,830 | 75,298 | 82.0% |
| Unknown | 14,046 | 10,098 | 71.9% |
| All solicitors | 116,110 | 92,752 | 79.9% |
| Ethnic minority solicitors as a % of all solicitors | 8.8% | 7.9% | |
| Ethnic minority solicitors as a % of solicitors with known ethnicity | 10.0% | 8.9% | |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2. Practising certificate holders

2.1 In order to act as a solicitor, the Solicitors Act 1974 requires that the solicitor's name appears on the Roll and that a current practising certificate is held. Practising certificates are issued by the Law Society and are valid from 1 November to 31 October each year.

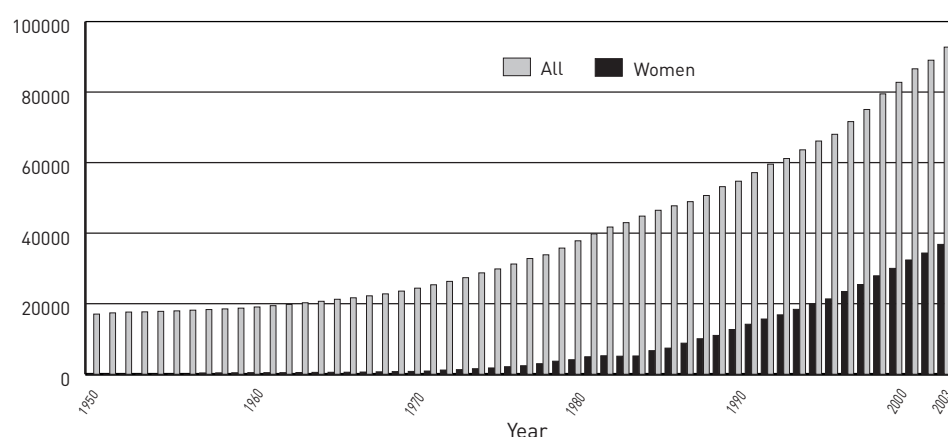
2.2 At 31 July 2003, there were 92,752 solicitors holding current practising certificates. This represents an increase of 4.2% on the number for the previous year. This growth rate is close to the long run rate of growth, and exceeds growth in the number of solicitors on the Roll by an amount accounted for by increases in the participation rate. The participation rate, which is the percentage of solicitors on the Roll holding practising certificates, increased from 76.6% to 78.1% for women solicitors, and from 80.1% to 81.1% for male solicitors. Table 2.2 below shows how the total number of solicitors with practising certificates has grown over the past three decades, with the comparable figures for solicitors working within private practice. Since 1973, the total number of practising certificate holders has grown by 238.8% at an average annual rate of 4.2%. Comparable figures for those in private practice are a total growth over the period of 204.5% at an average rate of 3.8%. From table 2.2 it can be seen that the fastest growth in practising certificate and private practitioner numbers over this period occurred between 1973 and 1983 (57.0% and 52.6% respectively). Chart 1 shows the growth in the number of solicitors with practising certificates since 1950, and compares the growth rate for women holders with that of the profession as a whole.

Table 2.2 Solicitors holding practising certificates 1973 to 2003

| Year | Practising solicitors | % change | Solicitors in private practice | % change |
|------|-----------------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|
| 1973 | 27,379 | - | 23,821 | - |
| 1983 | 42,984 | 57.0 | 36,340 | 52.6 |
| 1993 | 61,329 | 42.7 | 50,538 | 39.1 |
| 2003 | 92,752 | 51.2 | 72,545 | 43.5 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Chart 1 Growth in the number of solicitors with practising certificates 1950–2003



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

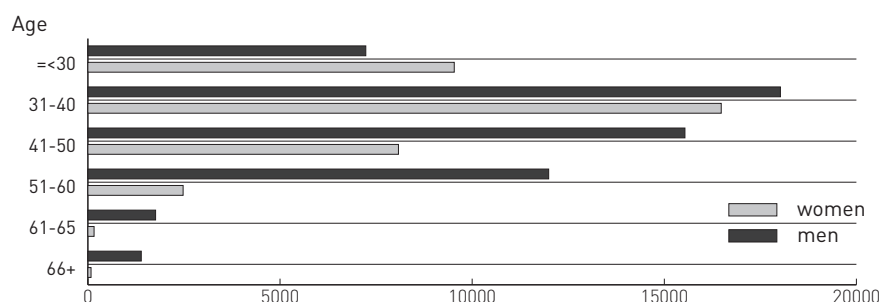
- 2.3 Since 1993, the total number of solicitors with practising certificates has grown by 51.2%; however, over this period the number of women solicitors with practising certificates has increased by 117.5% whilst the number of men increased by only 26.0%. The proportion of solicitors holding practising certificates who are women was 39.7% at 31 July 2003, compared with 27.6% in 1993. For the past ten years, women have accounted for over one-half of new entrants to the profession, so this proportion is set to increase at least for the foreseeable future.
- 2.4 Table 2.4 shows the age distribution of solicitors in five-year groups, and also participation rates by age. The comparison between the participation rates for men and women shows that participation rates are lower among female than male solicitors for all age groups including the very youngest aged 25 and under.
- 2.5 Table 2.4 and Chart 2 also show that there are more female than male practising certificate holders aged 30 or less, but that the majority of those in the older age groups are men. Over one-half, 55.3%, of solicitors with a practising certificate are aged 40 or less. The average age of a female solicitor with a practising certificate is 36.8 years compared with 43.1 for men. The median values show that one-half of women solicitors with practising certificates are aged 34 or less, whilst one half of men with practising certificates are aged 42 or less.

Table 2.4 The age distribution of solicitors and participation rates as at 31 July 2003

| Age | Number of men with PCs | Part. rate [% on Roll holding PCs] | Number of women with PCs | Part. rate [% on Roll holding PCs] |
|----------------|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| 25 and under | 392 | 96.8 | 719 | 94.6 |
| 26-30 | 6,759 | 92.8 | 8,767 | 91.2 |
| 31-35 | 9,428 | 88.3 | 9,427 | 81.5 |
| 36-40 | 8,392 | 85.1 | 6,971 | 73.0 |
| 41-45 | 7,762 | 85.6 | 4,824 | 71.5 |
| 46-50 | 7,601 | 85.1 | 3,217 | 72.5 |
| 51-55 | 6,867 | 82.5 | 1,738 | 69.6 |
| 56-60 | 4,990 | 77.7 | 727 | 64.7 |
| 61-65 | 1,742 | 63.1 | 160 | 53.9 |
| 66-70 | 823 | 44.6 | 56 | 36.8 |
| 71 and over | 550 | 22.3 | 26 | 24.3 |
| Unknown | 627 | 68.0 | 187 | 62.1 |
| All ages known | 55,306 | 81.3 | 36,632 | 78.2 |
| % ages known | 99.0 | | 99.0 | |
| Total | 55,933 | 81.1 | 36,819 | 78.1 |
| Average age | 43.1 | | 36.8 | |
| Median age | 42 | | 34 | |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Chart 2 The age of solicitors with practising certificates — 31 July 2003



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.6 Table 2.6 shows the numbers of solicitors holding practising certificates as at 31 July 2003, analysed by the number of years they have been qualified as solicitors. Over one-third, 38.3%, of male solicitors with current practising certificates in private practice have been qualified for less than 10 years, and 62.0% have been qualified for less than 20 years. This compares with 89.7% of women solicitors in private practice who have been qualified for less than 20 years. A similar age distribution pattern to that found in private practice was found amongst those solicitors working in the employed and other sectors.

Table 2.6 Experience of solicitors with practising certificates, measured by number of years qualified, as at 31 July 2003

| Years since admission | All solicitors | | Men | | Women | |
|---|----------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Solicitors in private practice | | | | | | |
| 0–9 years | 35,407 | 48.8 | 17,455 | 38.3 | 17,952 | 66.6 |
| 10–19 years | 17,023 | 23.5 | 10,794 | 23.7 | 6,229 | 23.1 |
| 20–29 years | 13,400 | 18.5 | 10,998 | 24.1 | 2,402 | 8.9 |
| 30–39 years | 5,500 | 7.6 | 5,164 | 11.3 | 336 | 1.2 |
| 40–49 years | 1,043 | 1.4 | 1,005 | 2.2 | 38 | 0.1 |
| 50+ years | 172 | 0.2 | 166 | 0.4 | 6 | 0.0 |
| All years | 72,545 | 100.0 | 45,582 | 100.0 | 26,963 | 100.0 |
| Solicitors in employed and other sectors | | | | | | |
| 0–9 years | 12,318 | 61.0 | 5,718 | 55.2 | 6,601 | 67.0 |
| 10–19 years | 4,654 | 23.0 | 2,238 | 21.6 | 2,416 | 24.5 |
| 20–29 years | 2,552 | 12.6 | 1,780 | 17.2 | 772 | 7.8 |
| 30–39 years | 623 | 3.1 | 557 | 5.4 | 66 | 0.7 |
| 40–49 years | 52 | 0.3 | 51 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.0 |
| 50+ years | 7 | 0.0 | 7 | 0.1 | 0 | 0.0 |
| All years | 20,207 | 100.0 | 10,351 | 100.0 | 9,856 | 100.0 |

* less than 0.05%

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.7 Table 2.7 provides a detailed breakdown of the employment of solicitors with practising certificates. It shows that the overwhelming majority of solicitors with practising certificates work in private practice: 78.2% as at 31 July 2003. The second largest category of employment is commerce and industry, 7.1%, followed by local government, which employs 3.5% of practising certificate holders. (It should also be pointed out that the number of solicitors working in the employed sector is likely to be greater than these figures suggest. This is because many, as a consequence of their employed status, will not be required to hold a practising certificate.) A further 7.3% are not attached to any organisation: the majority of these are in the youngest age group which suggests that they are predominantly the most recently qualified. The table also shows that women account for a higher proportion of solicitors in the employed and other sectors than in private practice. In private practice 37.2% of solicitors are women, compared with 48.8% in these other sectors.

Table 2.7 Practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2003

| Category of employment | All | % of PC holders | Men | Women | Women as % of total |
|--------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|--------|---------------------------|
| Private practice | 72,545 | 78.2 | 45,582 | 26,963 | 37.2 |
| Commerce/industry | 6,541 | 7.1 | 3,660 | 2,881 | 44.0 |
| Accountancy practice | 90 | 0.1 | 36 | 54 | 60.0 |
| Nationalised industry | 108 | 0.1 | 42 | 66 | 61.1 |
| Trade union | 45 | 0.0 | 26 | 19 | 42.2 |
| Government department | 131 | 0.1 | 79 | 52 | 39.7 |
| Local government | 3,221 | 3.5 | 1,419 | 1,802 | 55.9 |
| Court | 112 | 0.1 | 59 | 53 | 47.3 |
| Government funded services | 230 | 0.2 | 95 | 135 | 58.7 |
| Crown Prosecution Service | 1,884 | 2.0 | 900 | 984 | 52.2 |
| Advice service | 354 | 0.4 | 118 | 236 | 66.7 |
| Educational establishment | 194 | 0.2 | 67 | 127 | 65.5 |
| Health service | 57 | 0.1 | 13 | 44 | 77.2 |
| Others ¹ | 447 | 0.5 | 170 | 277 | 62.0 |
| Not attached to an organisation | 6,793 | 7.3 | 3,667 | 3,126 | 46.0 |
| All non-private practice | 20,207 | 21.8 | 10,351 | 9,856 | 48.8 |
| Total practising certificate holders | 92,752 | 100.0 | 55,933 | 36,819 | 39.7 |

* less than 0.05%

¹ All other categories, including practising certificate holders in the Armed Forces, churches and other religious bodies and institutes

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 2.8 Overall, 81.5% of male solicitors with practising certificates work in private practice compared to only 73.2% of their female counterparts. This is shown in Table 2.8, which also shows the growing importance of the employed sector. In 2003, just over one-fifth (21.8%) of practising certificate holders worked in the employed sector, compared to 17.6% 10 years ago.

Table 2.8 Distribution of practising certificate holders by category of employment as at 31 July 2003 compared with 1993

| Category of employment | 1993 | Total % | 2003 | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Total % | | Men % | Women % |
| Private practice | 82.4 | 78.2 | 81.5 | 73.2 |
| Other PC holders | 17.6 | 21.8 | 18.5 | 26.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Solicitors in private practice

- 2.9 For the 72,545 solicitors working in private practice, the Law Society records the position or status of the solicitor within the firm. Table 2.9 shows the status of those solicitors holding practising certificates and working in private practice as at 31 July 2003. It shows the number who are partners, sole practitioners, assistant solicitors, associates, consultants, and 'other private practice'. The category of 'other private practice' refers to solicitors with practising certificates, in private practice, but with positions in the firm other than those stated. For example, this category includes solicitors employed in training and managerial capacities. This year there has been a further slight decrease in the proportion of male and female private practitioners who are partners. Table 2.9 shows that 50.1% of men, compared with only 22.9% of women, were partners as at 31 July 2003.

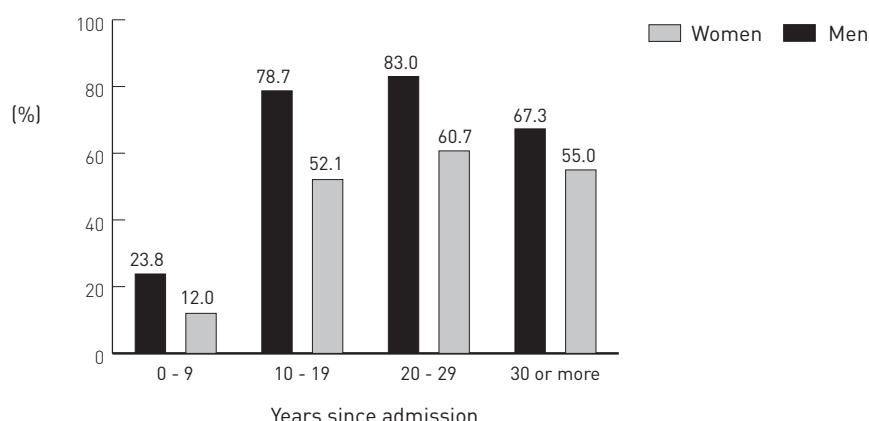
Table 2.9 Position of solicitors working in private practice and holding a practising certificate as at 31 July 2003

| Position in firm | Men | | Women | | Total | |
|------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Partners | 22,859 | 50.1 | 6,182 | 22.9 | 29,041 | 40.0 |
| Sole practitioners | 3,174 | 7.0 | 887 | 3.3 | 4,061 | 5.6 |
| Associate solicitors | 3,838 | 8.4 | 3,477 | 12.9 | 7,315 | 10.1 |
| Assistant solicitors | 11,904 | 26.1 | 15,005 | 55.7 | 26,909 | 37.1 |
| Consultants | 2,467 | 5.4 | 486 | 1.8 | 2,953 | 4.1 |
| Other private practice | 1,340 | 2.9 | 926 | 3.4 | 2,266 | 3.1 |
| All positions | 45,582 | 100.0 | 25,742 | 100.0 | 72,545 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.10 Chart 3 below is an examination of status analysed by experience (as measured by the number of full years since qualifying as a solicitor) for both men and women. Chart 3 shows that, even after equalising the levels of experience, higher proportions of men achieve partnership status than women. In all of the experience bands a lower proportion of women than men are partners or sole practitioners. Of solicitors in private practice with 10–19 years' experience, the band within which most partners and sole practitioners fall, 78.7% of men are partners or sole practitioners compared with only 52.1% of women.

Chart 3 Percentages of men and women in private practice who were either partners or sole practitioners as at 31 July 2003 by years since admission



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.11 In addition to gender differences it is also interesting to compare the age distribution of partners and sole practitioners with those for all solicitors in private practice. Table 2.11 shows that the average age of a sole practitioner is 50.3 years, compared with 45.4 for partners and 40.6 for all solicitors in private practice. Reflecting their younger age profile, women solicitors, at all levels of private practice, are consistently younger on average than their male counterparts.

Table 2.11 The age distribution of sole practitioners and partners as at 31 July 2003

| Age | All in private practice | | | Partners | | | Sole practitioners | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|----------|-------|--------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | Total |
| Total | 45,582 | 26,963 | 72,545 | 22,859 | 6,182 | 29,041 | 3,174 | 887 | 4,061 |
| Average age | 43.2 | 36.3 | 40.6 | 46.4 | 41.8 | 45.4 | 51.3 | 46.6 | 50.3 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Ethnic groups

2.12 Table 2.12 records the number of solicitors with practising certificates who are known to belong to an ethnic minority. The provision of information on ethnicity is entirely optional, though at present it is known for 89.1% of practising certificate holders. Using this we estimate that ethnic minority solicitors accounted for 7.9% of solicitors with practising certificates in 2003, an increase on the 7.0% recorded in 2002.

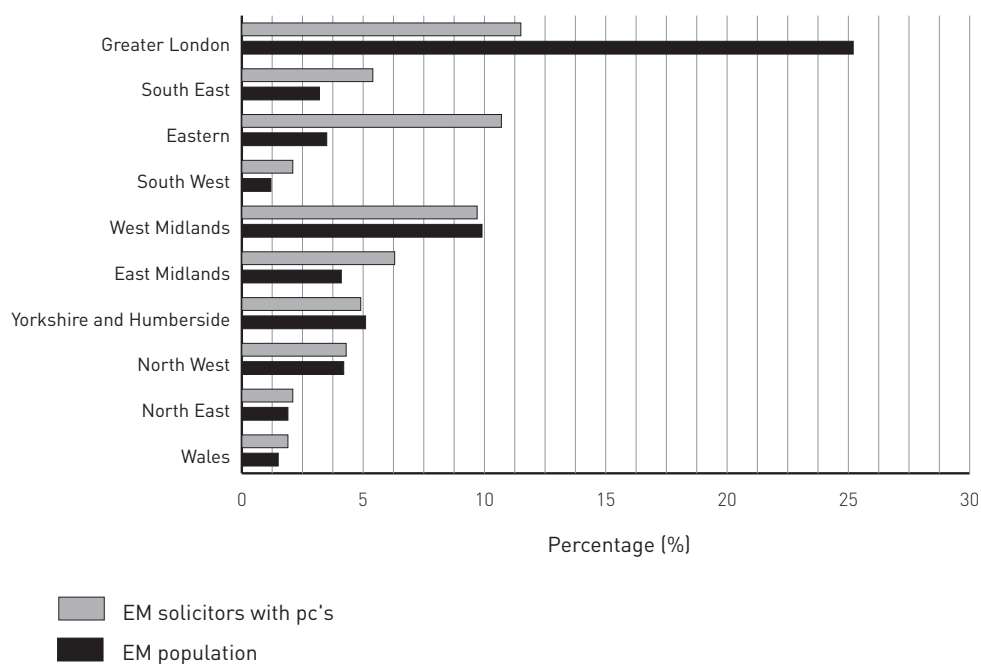
Table 2.12 Ethnic origin of practising certificate holders as at 31 July 2003

| Ethnic origin | Men | Women | Total | % |
|---|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| White/European | 46,024 | 29,274 | 75,298 | 81.2 |
| African-Caribbean | 196 | 386 | 582 | 0.6 |
| Asian | 2,021 | 2,095 | 4,116 | 4.4 |
| Chinese | 322 | 491 | 813 | 0.9 |
| African | 306 | 370 | 676 | 0.7 |
| Other ethnic origin | 563 | 606 | 1,169 | 1.3 |
| All solicitors for whom ethnic origin is known | 49,432 | 33,222 | 82,654 | 89.1 |
| All ethnic minority practising certificate holders known to the Law Society | 3,408 | 3,948 | 7,356 | |
| % of all solicitors with PCs | 6.1 | 10.7 | 7.9 | |
| Unanswered/refused | 1,896 | 451 | 2,347 | 2.5 |
| Unknown | 4,605 | 3,146 | 7,751 | 8.4 |
| All practising certificate holders | 55,933 | 36,819 | 92,752 | 100.0 |
| % of all solicitors with PCs for whom ethnic origin is known | 88.4 | 90.2 | 89.1 | |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.13 Chart 4 shows, for each Government Office Region (see Map 1, Appendix 1), ethnic minority solicitors as a proportion of total solicitors with practising certificates, compared with the proportion of the total population who are drawn from ethnic minorities.

Chart 4 Ethnic minority solicitors as a proportion of total solicitors with practising certificates compared with people from ethnic minorities as a proportion of the total population



2.14 Table 2.14 shows the proportion of ethnic minority solicitors with practising certificates in each Government Office Region and abroad. Greater London (11.5%), Eastern (10.4%) and the West Midlands (9.7%) Government Office Regions have the highest proportion of ethnic minority solicitors, the majority of whom are Asian. Overall, 2.6% of ethnic minority solicitors with practising certificates are resident abroad. It can also be seen from Table 2.14 that over a third of solicitors with practising certificates, 37.4%, are located in London, with this proportion rising to 54.3% for ethnic minority solicitors.

Table 2.14 Proportion of ethnic minority solicitors with practising certificates in standard regions and abroad as at 31 July 2003

| Region | Total no. of PC holders | Ethnic Group (%) | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | | Asian | African- Carib. | Chinese | African | Other ethnic minority | Total ethnic minority | White Euro- pean | Unknown |
| City London ¹ | 16,368 | 3.4 | 0.3 | 1.3 | 0.5 | 1.8 | 7.3 | 78.6 | 14.1 |
| Rest of London | 18,325 | 7.9 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 15.3 | 71.3 | 13.4 |
| Greater London | 34,693 | 5.8 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 11.5 | 74.7 | 13.8 |
| South East | 10,310 | 3.2 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 5.4 | 85.6 | 9.1 |
| Eastern | 6,189 | 6.6 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 10.4 | 79.7 | 9.9 |
| South West | 6,716 | 0.9 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.6 | 2.1 | 89.6 | 8.3 |
| West Midlands | 6,747 | 7.4 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.9 | 9.7 | 81.8 | 8.5 |
| East Midlands | 3,942 | 4.8 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 6.3 | 85.4 | 8.3 |
| Yorkshire & Humberside | 6,269 | 3.7 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.6 | 4.9 | 87.2 | 7.9 |
| North West | 9,802 | 2.7 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 4.3 | 87.0 | 8.7 |
| North East | 2,553 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 2.1 | 89.3 | 8.6 |
| Wales | 3,174 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 1.9 | 89.0 | 9.2 |
| Outside of England and Wales | 1,139 | 3.0 | 0.3 | 11.2 | 0.2 | 2.2 | 16.9 | 59.7 | 23.4 |
| Unknown | 1,217 | 3.8 | 0.6 | 1.1 | 0.3 | 1.2 | 7.0 | 76.4 | 16.6 |
| Total | 92,752 | 4.4 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 1.3 | 7.9 | 81.2 | 10.9 |

¹ Solicitors have been allocated to one of the Government Office Regions on the basis of the local Law Society constituency in which they work. The boundaries match reasonably well but some degree of approximation is required.

* Less than 0.05%.

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

2.15 Finally, table 2.15 analyses the position held by solicitors in private practice by their ethnicity. Table 2.15 shows that, whereas 41.4% of white Europeans in private practice are at partnership level, the corresponding proportion from ethnic minority groups is much lower at 24.3%. This partly reflects the fact that solicitors from the ethnic minorities have only recently been entering the profession in numbers. It is interesting to note though that 7.9% of ethnic minority solicitors are sole practitioners, compared with only 5.4% for all white European solicitors in private practice.

Table 2.15 Status of private practice solicitors by ethnicity as at 31 July 2003

| Ethnic group | All in private practice | Percentage who were: | | | | | Total |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|--------------|
| | | Partners | Sole practs. | Associates | Assists. | Other private practice | |
| African-Caribbean | 375 | 22.7 | 9.9 | 7.5 | 57.3 | 2.7 | 100.0 |
| Asian | 3,165 | 24.3 | 8.8 | 9.4 | 53.3 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| Chinese | 565 | 18.4 | 3.0 | 19.8 | 54.0 | 4.8 | 100.0 |
| African | 463 | 31.1 | 11.4 | 8.2 | 45.8 | 3.5 | 100.0 |
| Other ethnic origin | 874 | 25.1 | 5.0 | 12.5 | 52.4 | 5.0 | 100.0 |
| All ethnic minority | 5,443 | 24.3 | 7.9 | 10.8 | 52.9 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| White European | 59,577 | 41.4 | 5.4 | 9.9 | 35.9 | 7.4 | 100.0 |
| Unknown | 7,526 | 40.3 | 5.7 | 11.4 | 34.1 | 7.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 72,545 | 40.0 | 5.6 | 10.1 | 37.1 | 7.2 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

3. Solicitors' offices and firms

3.1 Information on organisations employing solicitors, and especially on private practice solicitors firms, is now only available from the Law Society records held on its REGIS database. It should be noted that at present the REGIS system cannot differentiate between 'active' and 'inactive' private practice firms but nonetheless it does record the type of business conducted by all organisations in England and Wales that employ solicitors. The main categories of employment are shown in Table 3.1 together with the numbers of head offices and branch offices for each employer in England and Wales and in other jurisdictions.

Table 3.1 Organisations employing solicitors by type of business as at 31 July 2003

| Type of business | Head offices | | Branch offices | | Total offices | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | England & Wales | Elsewhere | England & Wales | Elsewhere | England & Wales | Elsewhere |
| Private practice | | | | | | |
| Partnerships in England and Wales | 9,198 | 187 | 3,510 | 111 | 12,708 | 298 |
| Incorporated firms | 0 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 11 | 1 |
| Multi-national practices | 155 | 92 | 59 | 215 | 214 | 307 |
| Locums services | 312 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 313 | 1 |
| Foreign law practices | 9 | 616 | 9 | 282 | 18 | 898 |
| Other private practice | 550 | 34 | 304 | 22 | 854 | 56 |
| Commerce and industry | 2,397 | 319 | 307 | 64 | 2,704 | 383 |
| Government | | | | | | |
| Government department | 53 | 32 | 59 | 10 | 112 | 42 |
| Local government | 471 | 1 | 38 | 2 | 509 | 3 |
| Court | 108 | 3 | 129 | 2 | 237 | 5 |
| Government funded services | 85 | 10 | 56 | 3 | 141 | 13 |
| Crown Prosecution Service | 47 | 0 | 62 | 0 | 109 | 0 |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Advice service | 150 | 1 | 13 | 0 | 163 | 1 |
| Educational establishment | 135 | 10 | 4 | 0 | 139 | 10 |
| Other | 223 | 13 | 37 | 3 | 260 | 15 |
| Total | 13,893 | 1,319 | 4,599 | 715 | 18,492 | 2,034 |
| | | 15,212 | | | | 20,526 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

3.2 As can be seen from Table 3.1 as at 31 July 2003, there were 15,212 separate organisations employing solicitors, of which 13,893 were based in England and Wales and 1,319 elsewhere (ie Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, Eire and overseas countries). Each firm, company, local authority or other employer may be located in one or more offices. Allowing for this there were 20,526 separate places of work recorded for solicitors, of which 18,492

were in England and Wales and 2,034 elsewhere. These figures represent a slight increase on the numbers recorded for 2002, the number of offices in England and Wales having risen by 0.6% and all offices by 1.8%. In contrast it can also be seen from this table that in 2003 there were 9,198 private practice partnerships, located in 12,708 separate offices in England and Wales, registered with the Society. Over the past year the number of these firms has fallen marginally by 0.4%, whilst the total number of offices has decreased slightly more by 1.0%. These changes may in part reflect the impact of the data cleaning exercises which have taken place recently on the Society's systems.

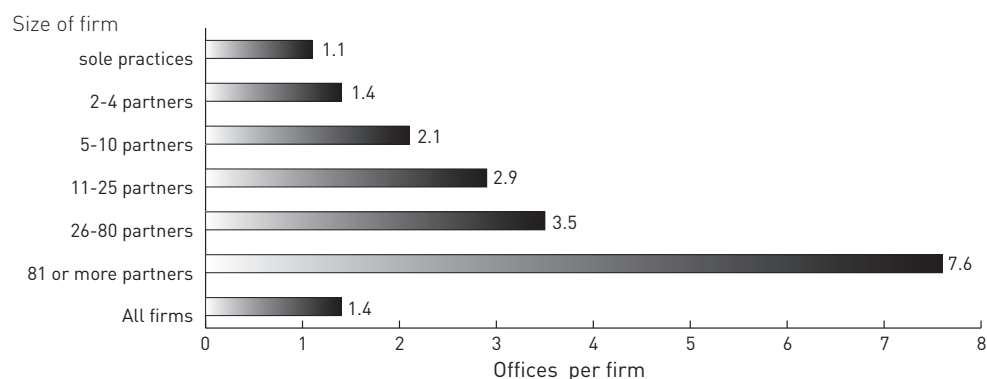
3.3 The trend in the numbers of private practice firms and offices over the five years since 1997-98 is shown in table 3.3. This shows that over the period the number of firms has decreased by 9.1% and the number of offices has decreased by 8.6%. These figures are reflected in the observed 0.6% increase in the ratio of offices to firms over the period. These changes should, though, be treated with caution (see paragraph 3.2 above).

Table 3.3 Trends in the number of private practice firms and offices

| Year | Number of firms | Number of offices |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1997-98 | 10,120 | 13,903 |
| 1998-99 | 9,983 | 13,818 |
| 1999-00 | 9,770 | 13,561 |
| 2000-01 | 9,251 | 12,966 |
| 2001-02 | 9,231 | 12,834 |
| 2002-03 | 9,198 | 12,708 |

3.4 The numbers of offices occupied by different sizes of firms are shown in Chart 5. This shows that the average number of offices per firm in 2003 remained unchanged at 1.4. As one would expect, the number of offices per firm increases with the size of firm: from 1.1 for sole practices through to 7.6 for the 81-or-more partner firms.

Chart 5 Number of offices by size of firm in 2003



3.5 Table 3.5 shows the geographical distribution of the population of England and Wales contrasted with that for private practice firms broken down into Government Office Regions. Just over one-quarter of solicitors' firms, 27.0%, were located in London in 2003 and just under one-half of all solicitors' firms (42.1%) are now based in the South East (including London). This value is distorted by the presence in London of a large number of firms serving predominantly commercial clients. Outside of the South East (including London) there is reasonable correspondence between the proportion of law firms and the population they serve, in the Eastern, South West, North West and Wales regions. The areas of greatest deprivation were the East Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside and North East regions

Table 3.5 Location (standard regions) of population and private practice firms and practitioners in 2003

| Region | Total = | Population ¹ 52,943 million | Firms 9,198 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---|----------------|
| | | % | % |
| City of London | | * | 6.9 |
| Rest of London | | 13.8 | 20.1 |
| Total London | | 13.8 | 27.0 |
| Rest of South East | | 15.4 | 15.1 |
| South West | | 9.5 | 8.2 |
| Wales | | 5.6 | 5.2 |
| West Midlands | | 10.1 | 7.8 |
| East Midlands | | 8.0 | 4.7 |
| Eastern | | 10.4 | 10.0 |
| North West including Merseyside | | 12.9 | 12.1 |
| Yorkshire and Humberside | | 9.5 | 6.6 |
| North East | | 4.8 | 3.3 |
| Total | | 100.0 | 100.0 |

* Less than 0.05%

Sources: ¹ Estimated using Office for National Statistics mid-1999 data;

3.6 Table 3.6 analyses the number of firms in 2003 by the Government Office Region in which the head office is located and the size of firm measured by the partner count. The first thing to notice from this table is that the vast majority of private practices are quite small. Taken overall over five-sixths (84.7%) of law practices in England and Wales have four partners or fewer. At the other end of the spectrum only 1.6% of all firms have 26 or more partners. The second point to note is the concentration of firms in London (see para 3.5). This concentration is particularly noticeable when we look at the disposition of the larger firms where it can be seen that of the 144 firms with 26 or more partners approaching two-thirds (60.0%) were located in the London region.

Table 3.6 Number of firms in 2003, analysed by size and regional location of head office

| Region | Number of firms | | | | | | All firms |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| | Sole Practitioner | 2-4 prttrs | 5-10 prttrs | 11-25 prttrs | 26-80 prttrs | 81+ prttrs | |
| City of London | 210 | 178 | 90 | 76 | 50 | 27 | 631 |
| Rest of Greater London | 961 | 756 | 92 | 31 | 7 | 3 | 1,850 |
| South East | 724 | 491 | 118 | 52 | 7 | 0 | 1,392 |
| Eastern | 428 | 372 | 82 | 37 | 4 | 0 | 923 |
| South West | 353 | 274 | 79 | 32 | 10 | 2 | 750 |
| West Midlands | 288 | 311 | 82 | 29 | 3 | 1 | 713 |
| East Midlands | 174 | 182 | 55 | 21 | 5 | 0 | 436 |
| Yorkshire and the Humber | 230 | 258 | 82 | 27 | 8 | 3 | 608 |
| North West (including Merseyside) | 439 | 482 | 138 | 41 | 9 | 2 | 1,110 |
| North East | 124 | 135 | 38 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 307 |
| Wales | 187 | 229 | 54 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 477 |
| Total | 4,117 | 3,668 | 911 | 358 | 106 | 38 | 9,198 |
| % | 44.8 | 39.9 | 9.9 | 3.9 | 1.2 | 0.4 | 100.0 |

Source: REGIS data

4. Staffing

4.1 This chapter relies entirely on data from the Society's REGIS system for private practice staffing information. The data held by the Society excludes information on non-admitted fee earners, as well as information on the number of administrative and support staff employed in private practice. (This is a serious deterioration in the quality of the data given that it was shown that in 2000 there were almost as many non-admitted fee earners as assistant solicitors in private practice, and slightly more administrative and support staff than fee earners). Table 4.1 breaks down the 72,545 solicitors at 31 July 2003 employed in private practice by their grade and the size of their firm measured by the partner count. It shows that within an overall growth in numbers over the past year of 2.8%, the proportion of partners including sole practitioners has fallen again this year from 47.3% to 45.6%. The table also shows the high degree of solicitor concentration in the largest firms. Firms with 81 or more partners, around 0.4% of the total, employed 14.4% of principals and just over one fifth (21.9%) of all solicitors. At the other end of the spectrum sole practices, 44.8% of firms, employed 12.3% of all principals and only 8.5% of all solicitors.

Table 4.1 Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2003 by size of firm

| | Sole practices | 2-4 ptnrs. | 5-10 ptnrs. | 11-25 ptnrs. | 26-80 ptnrs. | 81+ ptnrs. | All firms |
|------------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| Partners | 0 | 8,882 | 5,992 | 5,426 | 3,986 | 4,754 | 29,041 |
| Sole Practitioners | 4,061 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,061 |
| Associate solicitors | 172 | 606 | 664 | 1,048 | 1,404 | 3,420 | 7,315 |
| Assistant solicitors | 1,472 | 4,913 | 4,333 | 4,807 | 4,775 | 6,610 | 26,909 |
| Consultants | 400 | 1,287 | 994 | 675 | 375 | 440 | 4,171 |
| Other private practice | 48 | 123 | 79 | 54 | 104 | 640 | 1,048 |
| All positions | 6,153 | 15,811 | 12,062 | 12,011 | 10,644 | 15,864 | 72,545 |

4.2 Staffing ratios for admitted staff within solicitors' firms are examined in Table 4.2. The ratios shown are the average numbers of associate, assistant, consultant and 'other' private practitioners per principal. There are a number of features to this table. It shows, for example, that associate solicitors are most likely to be found in the larger firms with 11 or more partners, whilst the other private practice solicitors' who mainly perform specialist roles within firms are found almost exclusively in the largest firms. In contrast to this consultants are found mainly in smaller firms. In terms of the staffing ratios these show that the ratio of assistant/associate solicitors to principals increases from 0.4:1 in sole practices through to 2.1:1 in the 81 or more partner firms. In the intervening size bands the corresponding ratios are 0.62 assistants/associates per principal in 2-4 partner firms, 0.83 per principal in 5-10 partner firms, 1.08 per principal in 11-25 partner firms and 1.55 in 26-80 partner firms.

Table 4.2 Number of admitted staff per principal in private practice firms in 2003 by size of firm

| | Sole practices | 2-4 ptnrs. | 5-10 ptnrs. | 11-25 ptnrs. | 26-80 ptnrs. | 81+ ptnrs. | All firms |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| Principals | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | 1.0000 |
| Associates/principals | 0.0424 | 0.0682 | 0.1109 | 0.1931 | 0.3523 | 0.7194 | 0.2210 |
| Assistant/principal | 0.3624 | 0.5531 | 0.7230 | 0.8859 | 1.1978 | 1.3904 | 0.8129 |
| Consultants/principal | 0.0986 | 0.1449 | 0.1658 | 0.1244 | 0.0942 | 0.0925 | 0.1260 |
| Other private practice/principal | 0.0119 | 0.0138 | 0.0132 | 0.0100 | 0.0260 | 0.1346 | 0.0316 |
| All per principal | 1.5153 | 1.7801 | 2.0129 | 2.2134 | 2.6703 | 3.3369 | 2.1916 |

4.3 Table 4.3 provides a breakdown of the number of solicitors employed in private practice analysed by grade, and the Government Office Region (GOR) in which the firms' head office is located. This table shows that in 2003 38.0% of private practitioners were employed in firms located in London. Using the population data from Table 3.8 this can be recast as a ratio of one private practitioner in London per 260 head of population, compared to an average density in England and Wales of one practitioner per 730 head of population. Excluding the London GOR this figure increases to one practitioner per 1,020 head of population. Overall, this density is lowest in the East Midlands GOR where there is one practitioner per 1,360 head of population.

Table 4.3 Admitted staff in private practice firms in 2003 by Government region

| | Partners | Sole Practitioner | Associate solicitors | Assist. solicitors | Consultants | Other pr. practice | All solicitors |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Greater Ldn. | 9,916 | 1,133 | 3,906 | 10,618 | 1,569 | 459 | 27,600 |
| South East | 3,366 | 716 | 482 | 2,748 | 505 | 77 | 7,894 |
| Eastern | 2,234 | 426 | 189 | 1,778 | 277 | 55 | 4,960 |
| South West | 2,353 | 352 | 552 | 1,930 | 380 | 52 | 5,621 |
| West Midlands | 2,122 | 288 | 627 | 1,871 | 332 | 107 | 5,347 |
| East Midlands | 1,347 | 176 | 243 | 1,115 | 172 | 68 | 3,121 |
| Yorks & Humberside | 2,194 | 227 | 445 | 2,066 | 220 | 73 | 5,226 |
| North West | 3,531 | 430 | 537 | 3,241 | 429 | 71 | 8,240 |
| North East | 848 | 120 | 180 | 698 | 118 | 36 | 1,999 |
| Wales | 1,130 | 193 | 152 | 844 | 169 | 50 | 2,539 |
| All regions | 29,041 | 4,061 | 7,315 | 26,909 | 4,171 | 1,048 | 72,545 |

Part II

The recruitment and training of solicitors

This section of the report provides information on the recruitment and training of solicitors. Chapter 5 provides background information on the routes to admission. Chapter 6 presents statistics on the number of undergraduates and graduates in law from universities in England and Wales. Chapter 7 shows summary statistics related to enrolled students. Chapter 8 examines the numbers embarking on and passing the Legal Practice Course, before moving on to an examination of the personal characteristics and placement of trainees. Chapter 9 gives information on those admitted to the Roll in 2002–03.

5. Routes to admission to the Roll

5.1 There are seven routes to qualification as a solicitor:

- law graduate;
- non-law graduate;
- overseas lawyer (transfer);
- barrister (transfer);
- Scots/Northern Irish lawyers (transfer);
- Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives (FILEX);
- justices' clerk.

5.2 The most frequently used route to qualification as a solicitor is to take a first degree in law and then to spend a year taking the full-time Legal Practice Course (LPC), followed by a two-year traineeship. This route can be completed in six years. Non-law graduates have to undertake a one-year full-time conversion course, the Common Professional Exam (CPE), which is also the legal qualification needed by non-law graduates wishing to train for the Bar. They then proceed to qualification in the same way as a law graduate. This is the second most frequently used route. (Two-year part-time courses are also available for both the LPC and the CPE). Non-graduates enter the profession via transfer after first obtaining a qualification as a Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives (FILEX) and passing the LPC. Members of the Justices' Clerks Association may also enter the profession after passing the LPC, and demonstrating that they have had at least five years' continuous service in the 10 years prior to their application for admission. Other routes involve transfer after qualifying as a barrister, or as a lawyer in another jurisdiction, and meeting the necessary transfer conditions.

6. Undergraduates and graduates in law

- 6.1 This chapter records the numbers of applicants, acceptances and graduations recorded for undergraduate law courses in England and Wales. The statistics for applicants and acceptances to universities have been supplied by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), and statistics on the number and achieved grade of law degree graduates have been supplied by the Higher Educational Statistical Agency (HESA).
- 6.2 Table 6.2 shows the number of applicants and acceptances for undergraduate places at university full-time law degree courses for the academic years 2001 and 2002. The figures relate to individuals: applicants are counted only once irrespective of the number of applications made on the UCAS application form. The table shows that a total of 18,600 people applied to study law at undergraduate level in 2002, which is a reduction of 7.4% on the total recorded last year. Within this total female applications fell faster than male applications, by 9.7% and 3.6% respectively. The total number of acceptances (an acceptance is defined as a formal acceptance of a university place offered through the UCAS scheme) made by universities decreased slightly less than applications, by 6.0%, from 12,606 to 11,848. The pattern in acceptances mirrored that for applications in that female acceptances decreased by 8.1%, while male acceptances fell less quickly by 2.4%.

Table 6.2 Home and overseas applicants and acceptances for university first degree law courses in England and Wales 2001 and 2002

| For entry in: | University applicants | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------|--------|----------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| | UK | | | Overseas | | | Total | | |
| | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| 2001 | 6,312 | 10,973 | 17,285 | 1,206 | 1,603 | 2,809 | 7,518 | 12,576 | 20,094 |
| 2002 | 5,936 | 9,701 | 15,637 | 1,311 | 1,652 | 2,963 | 7,247 | 11,353 | 18,600 |
| % change | -6.0 | -11.6 | -9.5 | 8.7 | 3.1 | 5.5 | -3.6 | -9.7 | -7.4 |

| For entry in: | University acceptances | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|--------|--------|----------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| | UK | | | Overseas | | | Total | | |
| | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| 2001 | 3,979 | 7,096 | 11,075 | 634 | 897 | 1,531 | 4,613 | 7,993 | 12,606 |
| 2002 | 3,818 | 6,454 | 10,272 | 684 | 892 | 1,576 | 4,502 | 7,346 | 11,848 |
| % change | -4.0 | -9.0 | -7.3 | 7.9 | -0.6 | 2.9 | -2.4 | -8.1 | -6.0 |

Source: UCAS

- 6.3 Table 6.3 shows the number of female and overseas students as a proportion of the total acceptances to university law degree courses. In 2002, 62.0% of acceptances were from women, down slightly from the 63.4% recorded in 2001. The proportion of overseas acceptances, 13.3%, was up from 12.1% recorded last year.

Table 6.3 Proportion of law students accepted in 2001 and 2002 who were female or from overseas

| Year | Female students | | Overseas students | |
|------|-----------------|------|-------------------|------|
| | No. | % | No. | % |
| 2001 | 7,993 | 63.4 | 1,531 | 12.1 |
| 2002 | 7,346 | 62.0 | 1,576 | 13.3 |

Source: UCAS

- 6.4 Table 6.4 shows the number of ethnic minority students (excluding overseas students) who gained places on law degree courses for the academic year 2002. In total, ethnic minority law students accounted for 25.5% of students starting a first degree law course in 2002. This represents a slight increase on 2001, when the comparable proportion was 25.0%. Within this total, female acceptances were more likely than males to be drawn from ethnic minorities: 27.0% of acceptances as opposed to 23.0%.

Table 6.4 Ethnic minority students from the UK accepted to first degree law courses at universities and colleges in 2002

| Ethnic group | Acceptances of students from UK | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Male | Female | Total |
| Black Caribbean | 55 | 155 | 210 |
| Black African | 144 | 226 | 370 |
| Black other | 12 | 38 | 50 |
| Indian | 219 | 447 | 666 |
| Pakistani | 191 | 344 | 535 |
| Bangladeshi | 43 | 108 | 151 |
| Chinese | 30 | 74 | 104 |
| Other Asian | 58 | 84 | 142 |
| Mixed race | 27 | 68 | 95 |
| All other ethnicities | 27 | 80 | 107 |
| Unknown | 319 | 374 | 693 |
| All UK-based ethnic minority acceptances | 877 | 1,743 | 2,620 |
| All UK-based acceptances | 3,818 | 6,454 | 10,272 |
| % from ethnic minorities | 23.0 | 27.0 | 25.5 |

Source: UCAS

6.5 Table 6.5 shows recent trends in the number of students graduating in law. It contrasts the number of graduates in 2002 with the position one and five years previously. The table shows that, in 2002, the total number of graduates was 9,204, a decrease of only 0.5% on the previous year. In the five years since 1997 the total number of graduates has increased marginally by 3.5% from a base of 8,892. The table also shows that within this relatively static total the number of male law graduates has fallen by 13.2% over the past 5 years, whereas the number of female law graduates has increased by 17.2% over the same period.

Table 6.5 Number of students graduating in law from universities in England and Wales 1997, 2001 and 2002¹

| Year of graduation | University Graduates in Law | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | Total |
| 1997 | 4,016 | 4,876 | 8,892 |
| 2001 | 3,512 | 5,736 | 9,248 |
| 2002 | 3,487 | 5,717 | 9,204 |
| % change 2002/2001 | -0.7 | -0.3 | -0.5 |
| % change 2002/1997 | -13.2 | 17.2 | 3.5 |

¹ Figures relate to single honours law degrees and do not include modular or joint honour degrees which may also allow graduates to proceed directly to study the Legal Practice Course (para. 7.6)

Sources of data: 1995 and onwards, Higher Educational Statistical Agency

6.6 The HESA statistics do not represent the total numbers of graduates with a qualifying law degree. These are degrees which have covered the General Council of the Bar and the Law Society's seven foundations of legal knowledge which form the academic stage of legal education, and which allow graduates to proceed directly to study the Legal Practice Course. Many institutions now offer modular or joint honours degrees that have a substantial element of law study: depending on the choice of subjects, such degrees may or may not lead to a qualifying degree. The Law Society's Legal Education Department believes it is possible that a further 3,500–4,000 law students with qualifying law degrees from joint honours or modular degrees graduate each year. However, a firm estimate of this figure cannot be made without collecting, on an individual and yearly basis, statistics from every institution offering such degrees.

6.7 Table 6.7 shows that, in 2002, of the 9,204 law graduates over half, 54.8%, achieved a first class or upper second class degree. This proportion represents an increase on the figure of 51.1% recorded for 2001. Overall, a higher proportion of women graduated with firsts or upper seconds than men: 56.4% and 52.3% of graduates respectively. There are no figures showing the classes of degree awarded to ethnic minority law students.

Table 6.7 Class of degrees in law awarded in England and Wales in summer 2002

| Class of degree | All law graduates | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Men | | Women | | Total | |
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| First | 165 | 4.7 | 215 | 3.8 | 380 | 4.1 |
| Upper second | 1,658 | 47.5 | 3,008 | 52.6 | 4,666 | 50.7 |
| Lower second | 1,353 | 38.8 | 2,150 | 37.6 | 3,503 | 38.1 |
| Third/pass | 280 | 8.0 | 305 | 5.3 | 585 | 6.4 |
| Unclassified | 31 | 0.9 | 39 | 0.7 | 70 | 0.8 |
| Total | 3,487 | 100.0 | 5,717 | 100.0 | 9,204 | 100.0 |
| Total: first and upper second | 1,823 | | 3,223 | | 5,046 | |
| Percentage with first or upper second | | 52.3 | | 56.4 | | 54.8 |

Source: Higher Educational Statistical Agency

7. Student enrolments with the Law Society

- 7.1 All students who wish to embark on the Legal Practice Course (LPC), or enter into a training contract, must enrol with the Society as student members. The Society then maintains records of these students at each stage of their training. This includes performance on the LPC, the registration of traineeships, and the admission to the Roll of those who have successfully completed their training. Up until 1992, when an annual enrolment process was introduced, a certificate of enrolment was valid for five years. Annual enrolment allows better monitoring of students who maintain an interest in a career as a solicitor.
- 7.2 Primarily this monitoring consists of examining the proportions of women and ethnic minority students showing an interest in becoming a solicitor. Information on the proportion of enrolled students who were female, or from an ethnic minority, enables the Society to examine the scope for further recruitment to the profession of members of these groups. Neither the number of students enrolling with the Society each year, nor the total number enrolled, can be used to predict the numbers who will subsequently enter the profession. This is because no consistent relationship has ever been identified between enrolments and subsequent admissions.
- 7.3 Details on the ethnic origin of students, as well as other biographic data, are sought at the time of their enrolment. Students are not obliged to complete the question on their ethnicity, but historically a high proportion of students have been prepared to do so. The ethnicity of 91.3% of students enrolling with the Society in 2002–03 was recorded. Table 7.4 shows the fuller breakdown of enrolments by gender and ethnicity, whilst table 7.5 shows the comparative data for one and ten years ago, that is for 1992–93 and 2001–02.
- 7.4 In the year up to 31 July 2003, 9,195 students enrolled with the Law Society, an increase of 8.0% on the previous year. Of these 5,742, or 62.4%, of the total were women. This represents a very slight decrease in the proportion of women students from that recorded in 2001–02 (62.7%) but it is still markedly up on the proportion for 1992–93, when it was 54.0%. The proportion of women amongst ethnic minority students was, at 66.1%, slightly higher than the proportion found amongst all who had enrolled. African-Caribbeans were the ethnic grouping with the highest proportion of women students. For this group of enrolled students, 74.2% were women.
- 7.5 Of those students enrolling with the Society last year, 2,036, or 22.1% of the total, were drawn from ethnic minority groups. This can be compared with the 13.8% from ethnic minority students recorded in 1992–93, and the 22.3% recorded in 2001–02. When one compares 2002–03 with 1992–93, it can be seen that almost the whole of the increase in ethnic minority numbers is accounted for by increases in the number of Asian students (46.4%) and students of 'other' ethnic origin (25.9%).

Table 7.4 The ethnic origin and gender of students enrolling with the Law Society in 2002–03

| Ethnic origin | Male | | Female | | Total |
|---------------------|-------|------|--------|------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. |
| African-Caribbean | 25 | 25.8 | 72 | 74.2 | 97 |
| Asian | 363 | 34.0 | 705 | 66.0 | 1,068 |
| Chinese | 78 | 36.6 | 135 | 63.4 | 213 |
| African | 109 | 35.0 | 202 | 65.0 | 311 |
| Other ethnic origin | 116 | 33.4 | 231 | 66.6 | 347 |
| All ethnic minority | 691 | 33.9 | 1,345 | 66.1 | 2,036 |
| White European | 2,440 | 38.4 | 3,915 | 61.6 | 6,355 |
| Unknown | 322 | 40.0 | 482 | 60.0 | 804 |
| Total | 3,453 | 37.6 | 5,742 | 62.4 | 9,195 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Table 7.5 Trends in the ethnic origin of students enrolling with the Law Society

| | 1992–93 | | 2001–02 | | 2002–03 | |
|----------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Ethnic origin | | | | | | |
| African-Caribbean | 87 | 1.2 | 138 | 1.6 | 97 | 1.1 |
| Asian | 571 | 8.1 | 952 | 11.2 | 1,068 | 11.6 |
| Chinese | 138 | 2.0 | 153 | 1.8 | 213 | 2.3 |
| African | 100 | 1.4 | 308 | 3.6 | 311 | 3.4 |
| Other ethnic origin | 70 | 1.0 | 344 | 4.0 | 347 | 3.8 |
| All ethnic minority | 966 | 13.8 | 1,895 | 22.3 | 2,036 | 22.1 |
| White European | 5,603 | 80.0 | 5,984 | 70.3 | 6,355 | 69.1 |
| Unknown | 438 | 6.3 | 634 | 7.4 | 804 | 8.7 |
| Total | 7,007 | 100.0 | 8,513 | 100.0 | 9,195 | 100.0 |
| Gender | | | | | | |
| Male | 3,224 | 46.0 | 3,179 | 37.3 | 3,453 | 37.6 |
| Female | 3,783 | 54.0 | 5,334 | 62.7 | 5,742 | 62.4 |
| Total | 7,007 | 100.0 | 8,513 | 100.0 | 9,195 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8. Post-graduate education and training

The Legal Practice Course

- 8.1 The LPC is the next stage towards qualification as a solicitor for graduates with a first degree in law, and for graduates in other disciplines who have completed the one-year full-time conversion course, the Common Professional Exam (CPE). It is also a pre-requisite for those individuals who transfer having been Legal Executives or Justices' Clerks.
- 8.2 In 2003, of the 7,377 students who enrolled on the LPC, 7,201, or 97.6%, sat the July examinations. This latter figure is the total number of enrolments less those who were deferred or absent from the examinations. Compared with 2002, total enrolments increased by 3.3%; this increase was reflected in the number taking the examination, where numbers rose by 4.5%. Taken overall, the pass rate was 77.6%, a slight increase on the proportion who passed last year (76.6%). Of those actually taking the examination, the pass rate was 79.4%, which represents almost no change on the 2002 figure of 79.3%. Table 8.2 below shows the full set of results. Candidates who pass with distinction now account for well over one-quarter (29.0%) of total passes.

Table 8.2 Legal Practice Course results of summer examinations — July 2003

| Results | No. of students | 2003 % of those sitting exam | % of all students |
|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Diploma with distinction | 1,657 | 23.0 | 22.5 |
| Diploma with commendation | 2,662 | 37.0 | 36.1 |
| Diploma | 1,402 | 19.5 | 19.0 |
| Total passes | 5,721 | 79.4 | 77.6 |
| Referred | 1,117 | 15.5 | 15.1 |
| Resit | 363 | 5.0 | 4.9 |
| Failed | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total failed | 1,480 | 20.6 | 20.1 |
| Total sitting the examination | 7,201 | 100.0 | 97.6 |
| Deferred | 176 | | 2.4 |
| Absent | 0 | | 0.0 |
| Total not sitting the examination | 176 | | 2.4 |
| Total students enrolled on the LPC | 7,377 | | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society database

Table 8.3 Places on the Legal Practice Course for 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04

| College of Law/universities | Full-time | | | Part-time | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | '01–02 | '02–03 | '03–04 | '01–02 | '02–03 | '03–04 |
| Anglia Polytechnic University | 70 | 70 | 70 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| BPP Law School | 432 | 540 | 756 | 72 | 72 | 144 |
| Bournemouth University | 96 | 96 | 96 | - | - | - |
| Cardiff Law School | 160 | 160 | 160 | - | - | - |
| The College of Law: | | | | | | |
| Store Street | 1,248 | 1,248 | 1,200 | 192 | 192 | 192 |
| Chester | 600 | 600 | 600 | 56 | 56 | 80 |
| Guildford | 720 | 720 | 720 | 80 | 100 | 140 |
| York | 532 | 696 | 504 | 40 | 40 | 80 |
| Birmingham | 336 | 336 | 528 | 40 | 60 | 80 |
| De Montfort University | | | | | | |
| at De Montfort | 130 | 130 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 130 |
| at Birmingham University | 120 | - | - | 100 | - | - |
| at Bristol University | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - |
| Inns of Court School of Law | 100 | 100 | 176 | - | - | - |
| Leeds Metropolitan University | 105 | 105 | 105 | 45 | 45 | 45 |
| Liverpool John Moores University | - | - | - | 72 | 72 | 72 |
| London Metropolitan University | 110 | 110 | 110 | 54 | 54 | 54 |
| Manchester Metropolitan University | 168 | 168 | 168 | 48 | 48 | 48 |
| Nottingham Law School | 648 | 648 | 648 | 90 | 90 | 90 |
| Oxford Institute of Legal Practice | 294 | 345 | 353 | - | - | - |
| Staffordshire University | 125 | 125 | 125 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Thames Valley University | 50 | 50 | 50 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| University of Central England | 120 | 120 | 120 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| University of Central Lancashire | 48 | 48 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 48 |
| University of Exeter | 120 | 120 | 120 | - | - | - |
| University of Glamorgan | 108 | 108 | 108 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| University of Hertfordshire | - | - | - | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| University of Huddersfield | 80 | 80 | 80 | 36 | 36 | 36 |
| University of Northumbria | | | | | | |
| at University of Northumbria | 160 | 160 | 160 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Exempting Law Degree | 110 | 110 | 110 | - | - | - |
| London Metropolitan University and | | | | | | |
| South Bank University | - | - | - | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| University of Sheffield | 120 | 140 | 180 | - | - | - |
| University of the West of England | 256 | 342 | 342 | 44 | 58 | 58 |
| University of Westminster | 120 | 120 | 120 | 64 | 64 | 64 |
| University of Wolverhampton | 100 | 100 | 100 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| Total | 7,486 | 7,695 | 7,859 | 1,632 | 1,486 | 1,700 |

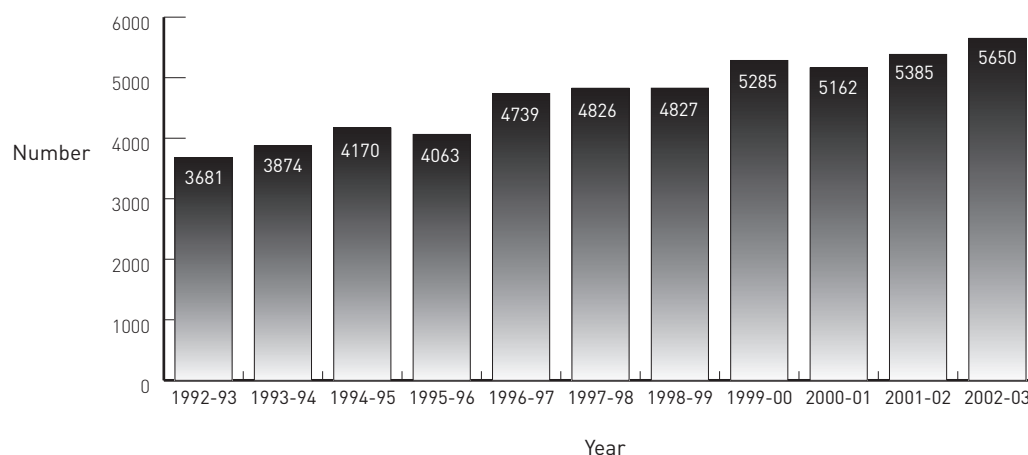
Source: Law Society database

- 8.3 Table 8.3 shows the number of places available at institutions which have been validated to run the LPC. The number of full-time places available in 2003–2004 will be 7,859. This is a slight increase of 2.1% on the number of places which were available in this year. In addition, there will also be 1,700 places available on part-time LPC courses next year — a significant increase (14.4%) on the number of part-time places that were available in 2002–03.
- 8.4 Included in the above are 110 places on law degree courses offered by the University of Northumbria, which carry an exemption from the LPC.

Traineeships

- 8.5 In addition to obtaining pre-vocational qualifications, those embarking on a career as a solicitor who are not transferring in from another profession or jurisdiction also have to undergo a period of training, in most cases for two years, before gaining admission to the Roll. The trainee is assigned to a training establishment, and a training contract is drawn up. Forms covering the registration of trainees are lodged with the Law Society.
- 8.6 Chart 6 below shows the first year registrations of traineeships from 1992–93 to the present. In the year that ended 31 July 2003 there were 5,650 new traineeships registered with the Society. This represents an increase (4.9%) on the level recorded last year, when trainee registrations stood at 5,385. Trainee registrations are now running at the highest levels recorded to date having exceeded 5,000 per annum for each of the past 4 years.

Chart 6 Annual registration of trainees 1992–93 to 2002–03



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 8.7 Table 8.7 shows the data on the number of trainees registered in 1992–93 and 2002–03 with the total analysed by trainee gender. Overall, the number of traineeships has increased by just over a half (53.5%) over the period. Within this total growth, that for women trainees was markedly higher than that for males (76.6% and 25.8% respectively). In fact, for each of the years since 1992–93 for which we have data, the majority of new trainee registrations have

been female. In this latest year, 62.7% of trainees registered were women. This is the highest proportion yet recorded and is up on the proportion recorded last year when it stood at 60.0%.

Table 8.7 Number of traineeships registered in 1992-93 and 2002-03 analysed by gender of trainee

| Year | Male | | Female | | Total |
|-------------------------------|-------|------|--------|------|--------------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. |
| 1992-93 | 1,677 | 45.6 | 2,004 | 54.4 | 3,681 |
| 2002-03 | 2,110 | 37.3 | 3,540 | 62.7 | 5,650 |
| % change 2002-03 over 1992-93 | | 25.8 | | 76.6 | 53.5 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.8 Six years ago in 1997 we were able to examine, for the first time, the ethnic origin of new trainees. This year the ethnicity and gender of new trainees is shown in Table 8.8. The trainees' ethnic origin was validly recorded for 5,287 trainees, or 93.6% of the 5,560 new traineeships registered. This shows some further slight improvement in the quality of this data from last year, when the ethnicity of 92.5% of new trainees was known. In 2002-03, ethnic minority trainees represented 17.9% of trainees of known ethnicity, an almost identical value to the 18.0% recorded last year. The ethnic grouping most highly represented was 'Asian', which accounted for 57.0% of ethnic minority trainees. Overall, the proportion of women was slightly higher amongst ethnic minority trainees than for the group of trainees as a whole. Whereas, as we have seen, 62.7% of trainees overall were women, this proportion rose to 64.8% amongst those from ethnic minorities. The African-Caribbean group had the highest proportion of women trainees at 77.6%.

Table 8.8 Trainee registrations by ethnic origin and gender 2002-03

| Ethnic origin | Male | Female | Total | trainees with known ethnicity |
|---|-------|--------|-------|-------------------------------|
| | No. | No. | No. | % |
| African-Caribbean | 11 | 38 | 49 | 0.9 |
| Asian | 202 | 338 | 540 | 10.2 |
| Chinese | 17 | 54 | 71 | 1.3 |
| African | 39 | 64 | 103 | 1.9 |
| Other ethnic origin | 64 | 120 | 184 | 3.5 |
| Total known ethnic minority | 333 | 614 | 947 | 17.9 |
| Ethnic minority trainees as % of those with known ethnicity | 17.0% | 18.5% | 17.9% | - |
| White European | 1,631 | 2,709 | 4,340 | 82.1 |

Contd.

Table 8.8 Continued:

| Ethnic origin | Male | Female | Total | trainees with known ethnicity |
|--------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| | No. | No. | No. | % |
| Total with known ethnicity | 1,964 | 3,323 | 5,287 | 100.0 |
| % of trainees with known ethnicity | 93.1% | 93.9% | 93.6% | |
| Trainees with unknown ethnicity | 146 | 217 | 363 | |
| % of trainees with unknown ethnicity | 6.9% | 6.1% | 6.4% | |
| All trainees | 2,110 | 3,540 | 5,650 | |
| All trainees % | 37.3% | 62.7% | 100.0% | |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.9 Table 8.9 shows the numbers of new male and female traineeships registered in each Government Office Region (modified to maintain the important division between the City and the Rest of London) in 2002–03. Of the 5,650 trainees registered, 1,567 (27.7%) were located in the City of London. A further 1,117, or 19.8%, were located in the rest of London. Taken overall, just under one-half (47.5%) of first-year trainees were located in London in 2002–03. This compares with the 49.6% of London registrations recorded last year. Male trainees were slightly more likely than female trainees to be located in London. Whereas slightly over one-half (51.3%) of male trainees were located in London, the corresponding proportion for female trainees was only 45.2%. The region with the highest proportion of female trainees was Wales with 69.1%, and the region with the lowest proportion was the City of London with 57.0%.

Table 8.9 Trainee placements in 2002–03 analysed by Government Office Region

| Region | Male | | | Female | | | Total | |
|--------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | No. | % | % by region | No. | % | % by region | Total | % by region |
| City of London | 673 | 43.0 | 31.9 | 894 | 57.0 | 25.2 | 1,567 | 27.7 |
| Rest of London | 409 | 36.6 | 19.4 | 708 | 63.4 | 20.0 | 1,117 | 19.8 |
| South East | 135 | 31.4 | 6.4 | 296 | 68.6 | 8.3 | 431 | 7.6 |
| Eastern | 104 | 31.9 | 4.9 | 223 | 68.1 | 6.3 | 327 | 5.8 |
| South West | 95 | 33.9 | 4.5 | 186 | 66.1 | 5.3 | 281 | 5.0 |
| West Midlands | 140 | 36.2 | 6.7 | 247 | 63.8 | 7.0 | 388 | 6.9 |
| East Midlands | 77 | 37.3 | 3.7 | 130 | 62.7 | 3.7 | 207 | 3.7 |
| Yorkshire and Humberside | 163 | 38.4 | 7.7 | 260 | 61.6 | 7.4 | 423 | 7.5 |
| North West | 209 | 35.6 | 9.9 | 378 | 64.4 | 10.7 | 587 | 10.4 |
| North East | 51 | 33.3 | 2.4 | 103 | 66.7 | 2.9 | 154 | 2.7 |
| Wales | 52 | 30.9 | 2.5 | 117 | 69.1 | 3.3 | 169 | 3.0 |
| Total | 2,110 | 37.3 | 100.0 | 3,540 | 62.7 | 100.0 | 5,650 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.10 In addition to looking at the regional distribution of traineeships, we are also able to look at the types of organisation in which these male and female trainees are placed. This data, which is shown in Table 8.10, shows overwhelmingly that trainees are placed in private practice firms. Of the traineeships registered this year, 5,353 (94.7%) were for placements in private practice firms. Male trainees were marginally more likely to be placed in private practice firms, and female trainees were marginally more likely to be placed in local government, the court service, and other sectors.

Table 8.10 Trainee placements in 2002–03 analysed by category of employment of training institution

| Category of employment | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Private practice | 2,019 | 95.7 | 3,334 | 94.2 | 5,353 | 94.7 |
| Commerce and industry | 35 | 1.7 | 40 | 1.1 | 75 | 1.3 |
| Government department | 4 | 0.2 | 19 | 0.5 | 23 | 0.4 |
| Local government | 26 | 1.2 | 65 | 1.8 | 91 | 1.6 |
| Court | 11 | 0.5 | 34 | 1.0 | 45 | 0.8 |
| Crown prosecution service | 9 | 0.4 | 20 | 0.6 | 29 | 0.5 |
| Advice service | 1 | 0.0 | 15 | 0.4 | 16 | 0.3 |
| Other | 5 | 0.2 | 13 | 0.4 | 18 | 0.3 |
| Total | 2,110 | 100.0 | 3,540 | 100.0 | 5,650 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.11 Given the importance of private practice firms in the training process, it is interesting to look at the characteristics of those firms which provide training placements. Of particular importance is the distribution of trainees by the size of firm in which they were placed. Data on the number of male and female trainees analysed by size of firm (measured by the total number of partners) is shown in Table 8.11. Of the 5,353 traineeships registered with private practice firms in 2002–03, just under one-third, 32.9%, were located in the small number of very large firms with 81 or more partners. At the other end of the spectrum only 4.9% of trainees were placed for training within sole practices. Male trainees were much more likely than female trainees to be placed in the very largest 81 or more partner firms. The proportions here were 36.1% and 31.0% respectively. In contrast to this, female trainees were more likely than male trainees to be placed in the smaller and medium-sized firms with between two and 80 partners although some of the differences here were not substantial. In sole practices there was only a slight difference in the proportion of male and female trainees (5.0% and 4.8% respectively).

Table 8.11 Trainee placements in 2002–03 analysed by the size of private practice firm in which trainees were located

| Size of firm | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|----------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Sole practice | 101 | 5.0 | 160 | 4.8 | 261 | 4.9 |
| 2–4 partners | 343 | 17.0 | 624 | 18.7 | 967 | 18.1 |
| 5–10 partners | 245 | 12.2 | 524 | 15.7 | 769 | 14.4 |
| 11–25 partners | 280 | 13.9 | 496 | 14.9 | 776 | 14.5 |
| 26–80 partners | 320 | 15.9 | 597 | 14.9 | 817 | 15.3 |
| 81+ | 729 | 36.1 | 1,033 | 31.0 | 1,762 | 32.9 |
| Total | 2,019 | 100.0 | 3,334 | 100.0 | 5,353 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

- 8.12 Since August 1987, in an attempt to try to ensure that the solicitors' profession is open to all regardless of their background, the Council of the Law Society has recommended minimum starting salaries for trainee solicitors. The rates set by the Council are shown below in Table 8.12. In 1993, after considerable debate, the Council agreed to maintain the principle of minimum salaries. However, the salary rates were frozen at their 1992 levels, and the outer London rate was abolished. From then through to 1999, the recommended salary levels were frozen at their 1993 levels. In February 2000, the recommended minimum was raised to £13,600 in London and £12,000 elsewhere. (Another change made at that time was that now only on special application may firms offer training contracts at salaries below the Council minimum recommendation). A further revision took place in August 2002 when the minimum in Central London was raised to £14,600, and elsewhere to £13,000.

Table 8.12 Council recommended minimum starting salaries for trainee solicitors

| Effective date | Central London ¹ | Outer London | Rest of England and Wales |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| From 1/9/87 | £6,600 | £6,100 | £5,200 |
| From 1/8/88 | £7,200 | £6,900 | £6,000 |
| From 1/8/89 | £8,500 | £8,200 | £7,300 |
| From 1/8/90 | £9,900 | £9,600 | £8,700 |
| From 1/8/91 | £11,300 | £11,000 | £10,100 |
| From 1/8/92 | £12,150 | £11,850 | £10,850 |
| From 1/8/93* | £12,150 | £10,850 | £10,850 |
| From 1/8/2000 | £13,600 | £12,000 | £12,000 |
| From 1/8/2002 | £14,600 | £13,000 | £13,000 |

* Outer London category abolished in 1993

¹ Central London is the City of London, Holborn and Westminster.

8.13 Analyses of trainees' actual starting salaries by gender and region are shown below in Table 8.13. This shows that, in 2002–03, average starting salaries were highest in Central London (the City, Holborn and Westminster) at £26,635, and lowest in Wales at £13,757. Taken over all trainees, the average starting salary was £19,748. This represents an increase of 2.4% on the average salary paid last year, which was £19,277. Within this total rise male trainee salaries increased by 2.9% on average, whilst the increase for female trainees was only 2.4%. This indicates a further widening of the pay gap.

Table 8.13 Trainees' starting salaries by Government Office Region and gender

| Region | Male average (£) | Female average (£) | All trainees average (£) | % male average salary over female | Average salary as % of minimum | % trainees paid at or below the minimum |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Central Ldn | 29,950 | 26,396 | 26,635 | 2.1 | 182 | 1.7 |
| Rest of Greater Ldn | 20,516 | 18,905 | 19,481 | 8.5 | 150 | 15.9 |
| South East | 16,275 | 16,086 | 16,145 | 1.2 | 124 | 22.8 |
| Eastern | 15,214 | 14,729 | 14,885 | 3.3 | 114 | 33.8 |
| South West | 15,790 | 15,296 | 15,468 | 3.2 | 119 | 21.6 |
| West Midlands | 15,390 | 15,185 | 15,264 | 1.4 | 117 | 41.5 |
| East Midlands | 14,832 | 14,855 | 14,846 | -0.2 | 114 | 47.5 |
| Yorks and Humberside | 16,290 | 15,575 | 15,843 | 4.6 | 122 | 32.9 |
| North West | 15,657 | 14,816 | 15,118 | 5.7 | 116 | 44.5 |
| North East | 14,570 | 14,487 | 14,513 | 0.6 | 112 | 52.5 |
| Wales | 13,645 | 13,810 | 13,757 | -1.2 | 106 | 61.2 |
| Total | 20,657 | 19,195 | 19,748 | 7.6 | n/a | 20.1 |

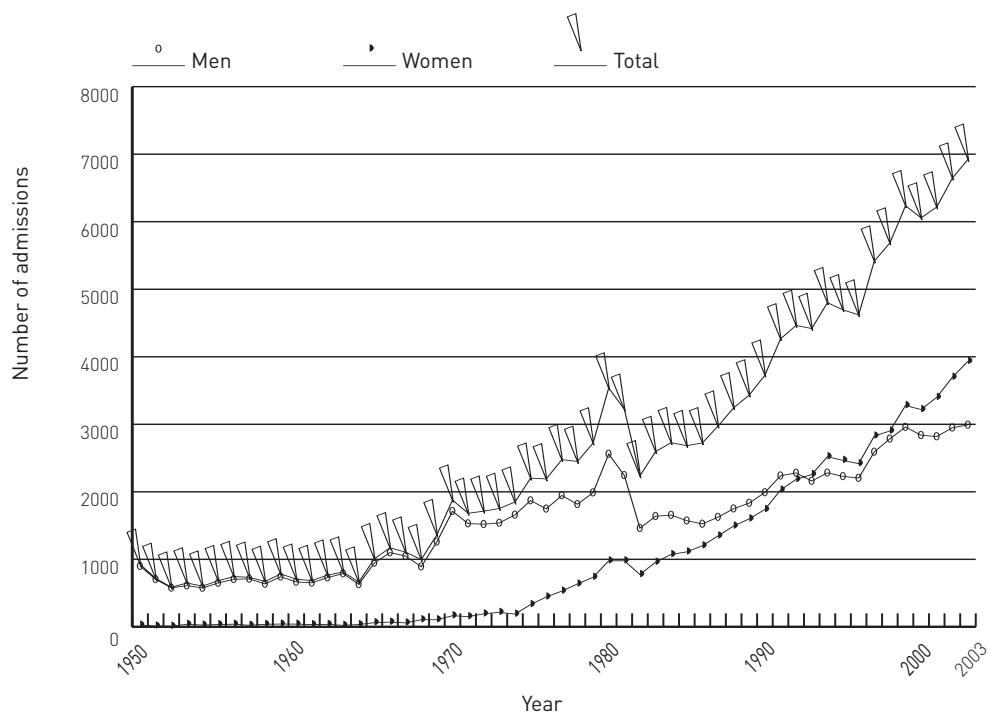
Source: Law Society's REGIS database

8.14 Table 8.13 also breaks the data down by trainee gender. On average, male trainees were offered starting salaries which were 7.6% above the average level for females, up from a 7.0% gender gap last year. The average salary levels for male and female trainees being £20,657 and £19,195 respectively. Although, on average, male trainees had much higher starting salaries than female trainees, in two of the regions, female trainee starting salaries were higher than that for males. Female trainee salaries were 1.2% higher than male trainee salaries in Wales and 0.2% higher in the East Midlands region.

9. Admission to the Roll

- 9.1 There are two distinct routes to admission to the Roll: a direct route, followed by completing the required educational and vocational training outlined in Chapter 5, and the transfer route, which includes transfers from other legal professions within England and Wales, such as barristers, legal executives and magistrates and justices' clerks, as well as lawyers who qualified in other jurisdictions. This latter group includes a number of Scottish and Northern Irish lawyers.
- 9.2 The total number of individuals admitted to the Roll in the year that ended 31 July 2003 was 6,924. This represents an increase of 4.2% on the 6,646 individuals who were admitted in 2001–02. Chart 7 shows the growth in admissions of men and women separately for the period 1950 to 2003. Over this period, total annual admissions rose by 747.7% at an average annual increase of 4.2% per year. Over the same period, female admissions have grown at an average annual rate of 10.8%, which equates to a doubling of the number of female admissions approximately every seven years. The average growth rate for male admissions, 2.5%, has been less than one-quarter that for women over the period.

Chart 7 Growth in solicitors' admissions to the Roll 1950–2003



Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.3 Table 9.3 shows the trend over the past 10 years in the number of men and women admitted to the profession. Between 1993 and 2003, total admissions grew by 56.8% from a base of 4,417. Over this period, male admissions rose by 38.5%, whilst female admissions grew much more rapidly, by 74.3%. Women have accounted for the majority of new admissions in each year since 1992–93 and, in 2002–03, 56.8% of those admitted were female. This proportion, which is showing some increase over time and is the highest recorded to date, contrasts with the position 10 years ago when, in 1993, 51.1% of new entrants to the profession were women.

Table 9.3 Men and women admitted to the Roll 1992–93 to 2002–03

| | Men | | Women | | Total | Annual change |
|-----------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|---------------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 1992–93 | 2,160 | 48.9 | 2,257 | 51.1 | 4,417 | -1.1 |
| 1993–94 | 2,281 | 47.5 | 2,520 | 52.5 | 4,801 | 8.7 |
| 1994–95 | 2,229 | 47.5 | 2,466 | 52.5 | 4,695 | -2.2 |
| 1995–96 | 2,203 | 47.7 | 2,417 | 52.3 | 4,620 | -1.6 |
| 1996–97 | 2,590 | 47.8 | 2,827 | 52.2 | 5,417 | 17.3 |
| 1997–98 | 2,784 | 49.0 | 2,901 | 51.0 | 5,685 | 4.9 |
| 1998–99 | 2,959 | 47.4 | 3,278 | 52.6 | 6,237 | 9.7 |
| 1999–2000 | 2,838 | 46.9 | 3,218 | 53.1 | 6,056 | -2.9 |
| 2000–01 | 2,819 | 45.3 | 3,399 | 54.7 | 6,218 | 2.7 |
| 2001–02 | 2,949 | 44.4 | 3,697 | 55.6 | 6,646 | 6.9 |
| 2002–03 | 2,991 | 43.2 | 3,933 | 56.8 | 6,924 | 4.2 |
| % change | | | | | | |
| 2003–1993 | | 38.5 | | 74.3 | | 56.8 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.4 The age distribution of those admitted in 2002–03 is shown in Table 9.4. The table shows there was little substantive difference in the age distribution of male and female admissions. Taken overall, the average age of those admitted was 29.8 years. The average age for males was marginally higher than that for females, the average ages being 30.2 and 29.5 years respectively. Almost one-half of new admissions were aged 27 years or less, and just under two-thirds were aged 29 or less.

Table 9.4 The age distribution of solicitors admitted to the Roll in 2002–03

| Age | Male | | Female | | All admissions. | | Cumulative |
|-------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-----------------|-------|------------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | |
| 23 | 2 | 0.1 | 4 | 0.1 | 6 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| 24 | 41 | 1.4 | 79 | 2.0 | 120 | 1.7 | 1.8 |
| 25 | 325 | 10.9 | 598 | 15.2 | 923 | 13.3 | 15.2 |
| 26 | 490 | 16.4 | 705 | 17.9 | 1,195 | 17.3 | 32.4 |
| 27 | 420 | 14.0 | 574 | 14.6 | 994 | 14.4 | 46.8 |
| 28 | 272 | 9.1 | 395 | 10.0 | 667 | 9.6 | 56.4 |
| 29 | 215 | 7.2 | 283 | 7.2 | 498 | 7.2 | 63.6 |
| 30–34 | 703 | 23.5 | 692 | 17.6 | 1,395 | 20.1 | 83.7 |
| 35–39 | 290 | 9.7 | 305 | 7.8 | 595 | 8.6 | 92.3 |
| 40–44 | 133 | 4.4 | 183 | 4.7 | 316 | 4.6 | 96.9 |
| 45–49 | 49 | 1.6 | 61 | 1.6 | 110 | 1.6 | 98.5 |
| 50–54 | 29 | 1.0 | 33 | 0.8 | 62 | 0.9 | 99.4 |
| 55 and over | 15 | 0.5 | 11 | 0.3 | 26 | 0.4 | 99.8 |
| Total known | 2,984 | 99.8 | 3,923 | 99.7 | 6,907 | 99.8 | |
| Unknown | 7 | 0.2 | 10 | 0.3 | 17 | 0.2 | 100.0 |
| Grand total | 2,991 | 100.0 | 3,933 | 100.0 | 6,924 | 100.0 | |
| Average age | | 30.2 | | 29.5 | | 29.8 | |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.5 Table 9.5 shows the proportion of men and women who were admitted in the year 2002–03 by each of the different routes. For 5.6% of admissions these data were not recorded. Just over two-thirds of admissions, 70.0%, were through the direct qualification route and, of these, just under three-quarters were law graduates and the remainder were non-law graduates who had passed the CPE. Women were more likely than men to qualify by this direct route, 73.6% of admissions as against 65.3%, and, within this total, were slightly more likely than men to have qualifying law degrees. In contrast, men were slightly more likely than women to qualify via a transfer in; the relevant proportions here being 28.7% and 21.1% respectively. Men were more likely than women to have been barristers or to be transferring in from another jurisdiction, 26.7% as opposed to 17.4%, but women were slightly more likely than men to have qualified initially as either a legal executive or as a magistrates' or justices' clerk, 3.6% as opposed to 2.0%.

Table 9.5 The routes to admission to the Roll in 2002–03

| Entry routes | Male | | Female | | All admissions | |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|----------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Direct entry: | | | | | | |
| Law degree | 1,405 | 47.0 | 2,191 | 55.7 | 3,596 | 51.9 |
| Non-law degree | 548 | 18.3 | 705 | 17.9 | 1,253 | 18.1 |
| Total direct entry | 1,953 | 65.3 | 2,896 | 73.6 | 4,849 | 70.0 |
| Entry by transfer: | | | | | | |
| Overseas lawyer | 667 | 22.3 | 583 | 14.8 | 1,250 | 18.1 |
| Barrister | 131 | 4.4 | 104 | 2.6 | 235 | 3.4 |
| FILEX | 45 | 1.5 | 110 | 2.8 | 155 | 2.2 |
| Justices' clerk | 14 | 0.5 | 31 | 0.8 | 45 | 0.6 |
| Total transfers | 857 | 28.7 | 828 | 21.1 | 1,685 | 24.3 |
| Route unknown | 181 | 6.1 | 209 | 5.3 | 390 | 5.6 |
| All admissions | 2,991 | 100.0 | 3,033 | 100.0 | 6,024 | 100.0 |
| % | 43.2 | | 56.8 | | 100.0 | |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.6 Just under one-quarter of admissions (24.3%) in 2002–03 were, as we have seen, transfers in from other professions and jurisdictions. Table 9.6 analyses transfers in by whether they were from other professions within England or Wales, or from other jurisdictions, and shows the country of origin of those transferring from other jurisdictions. Of the 1,685 transfers, over one-quarter, 25.8%, were from other professions based within England and Wales, most of whom were individuals who had previously qualified as either barristers or legal executives. The remaining 74.2% were transfers in from other jurisdictions. Most notable here were Australian and New Zealand lawyers, who alone accounted for over one-quarter (28.8%) of all transfers in. In addition to these, transfers from the USA and Canada accounted for a further 10.0%, those from Hong Kong 6.6%, and those from other parts of the UK a further 4.9% of all transfers.

Table 9.6 Analysis of transfers into the profession 2002–03

| | Male | | Female | | All transfers | |
|----------------------------------|------|-------|--------|-------|---------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| From other professions: | | | | | | |
| Legal executives | 45 | 5.3 | 110 | 13.3 | 155 | 9.2 |
| Barristers | 131 | 15.3 | 104 | 12.6 | 235 | 13.9 |
| Justices' clerks | 14 | 1.6 | 31 | 3.7 | 45 | 2.7 |
| Sub-total | 190 | 22.2 | 245 | 29.6 | 435 | 25.8 |
| From other jurisdictions: | | | | | | |
| Hong Kong | 47 | 5.4 | 65 | 7.9 | 112 | 6.6 |
| Australia/New Zealand | 262 | 30.6 | 224 | 27.0 | 486 | 28.8 |
| USA/Canada | 94 | 11.0 | 74 | 9.0 | 168 | 10.0 |
| Scotland/N. Ireland/Isle of Man | 45 | 5.3 | 38 | 4.5 | 83 | 4.9 |
| Eire | 19 | 2.2 | 13 | 1.5 | 31 | 1.9 |
| Other EU countries | 33 | 3.8 | 47 | 5.6 | 79 | 4.7 |
| Non-EU countries | 21 | 2.4 | 11 | 1.4 | 32 | 1.9 |
| Singapore/Malaysia | 64 | 7.5 | 58 | 7.0 | 122 | 7.3 |
| India/Pakistan/Sri Lanka | 44 | 5.2 | 23 | 2.8 | 67 | 4.0 |
| Nigeria | 34 | 3.9 | 23 | 2.8 | 57 | 3.4 |
| All other jurisdictions | 5 | 0.5 | 8 | 1.0 | 13 | 0.8 |
| Sub-total | 667 | 77.8 | 583 | 70.4 | 1,250 | 74.2 |
| Grand total | 857 | 100.0 | 828 | 100.0 | 1,685 | 100.0 |

Source: Law Society database

9.7 The main factor affecting age on admission is the route taken to qualification. Table 9.7 shows the average age on qualification for men and women for each of the separate routes. These reflect the average times taken to qualify by each route and show that the group with the lowest average age, 28.1 years, were direct entrants with qualifying law degrees. Those admitted by the CPE route were aged 30.4 years on average. Taken over all direct admissions, the average age recorded was 28.7 years. Those transferring in were, on average, just over four years older than direct admissions, at 33.0 years. With the exception of justices' clerks there was little difference between the average ages of men and women qualifying by the same route, though male transfers in from the barristers' profession and other jurisdictions were around two years older than their female counterparts. For the small number of justices' clerks, female admissions were almost 6 years younger on average than their male counterparts.

Table 9.7 Average age on admission to the Roll by route to admission and gender 2002-03

| Entry routes | Male | | Female | | All admissions | |
|---------------------------|-------|-------------|--------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| | No. | Average age | No. | Average age | No. | Average age |
| Direct entry: | | | | | | |
| Law degree | 1,405 | 28.1 | 2,191 | 28.1 | 3,596 | 28.1 |
| Non-law degree | 548 | 30.3 | 705 | 30.4 | 1,253 | 30.4 |
| Total direct entry | 1,953 | 28.8 | 2,896 | 28.7 | 4,849 | 28.7 |
| Entry by transfer: | | | | | | |
| Overseas lawyer | 667 | 33.4 | 583 | 31.5 | 1,250 | 32.5 |
| Barrister | 131 | 33.1 | 104 | 31.0 | 235 | 32.1 |
| FILEX | 45 | 36.5 | 110 | 37.2 | 155 | 37.0 |
| Justices' clerk | 14 | 42.4 | 31 | 36.5 | 45 | 38.3 |
| Total transfers | 857 | 33.6 | 828 | 32.4 | 1,685 | 33.0 |
| Route unknown | 181 | 30.0 | 209 | 30.5 | 390 | 30.2 |
| All admissions | 2,991 | 100.0 | 3,933 | 100.0 | 6,924 | 100.0 |
| % | 43.2 | 30.2 | 56.8 | 29.5 | 100.0 | 29.8 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

9.8 Table 9.8 shows the numbers and percentages qualifying via each route in 2002–03 contrasted with the position one year and 10 years ago. In order to make the comparison, the 5.6% of admissions for whom the route was unknown in 2002–03 have been allocated pro rata to the other known categories. The table shows that the proportion of direct admissions has decreased from 83.2% of all admissions in 1992–93 to 74.2% in 2002–03. Within this total, non-law graduates have assumed greater importance. Whereas only 14.1% of all admissions in 1992–93 were non-law graduates, this proportion approached one-fifth, 19.2%, by 2002–03. Another route which has become relatively more important is transfers in. These have increased from 16.8% of all admissions ten years ago to 25.8% now.

Table 9.8 Trends in the main routes to admission to the Roll 1992–1993, to 2002–03

| Routes to admission | 1992–93 | 2001–02 | 2002–03 |
|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Law degree | 3,050 | 3,660 | 3,811 |
| Non-law degree | 624 | 1,446 | 1,328 |
| Transfers | 743 | 1,539 | 1,786 |
| Total | 4,417 | 6,646 | 6,924 |
| Routes to admission | % | % | % |
| Law degree | 69.1 | 55.1 | 55.0 |
| Non-law degree | 14.1 | 21.8 | 19.2 |
| Transfers | 16.8 | 23.2 | 25.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

9.9 We are also able to examine trends in the number of admissions drawn from the ethnic minorities. Table 9.9 shows the comparison between 1997–98, 2001–02 and 2002–03. The table shows that, as a proportion of those admissions for whom the ethnicity was known, ethnic minority admissions represented just over one-sixth, 17.3% of the total in 2002–03 compared with 15.8% five years ago. Fluctuations in the intervening years mean that although there is no great consistency it appears that this proportion is increasing slightly over time. Most of the observed increase over the past five years has been fuelled by increases in ‘Asian’ and ‘other ethnic’ admissions. Asian and ‘other ethnic group’ admissions have increased by almost a half over the past five years. In contrast the number of ethnic Chinese admissions have almost halved over the period. It can also be seen that this data is degrading over time: ethnicity is now known for only 76.7% of admissions, compared with 85.8% in 1997–98.

Table 9.9 Trends in ethnic minority admissions to the Roll 1997–98, 2001–02 and 2002–03

| Ethnicity | 1997–98 | 2001–02 | 2002–03 | % change | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| | | | | 2003 over 2002 | 2003 over 1998 |
| African-Caribbean | 46 | 62 | 67 | 8.2 | 45.8 |
| Asian | 360 | 451 | 506 | 12.3 | 40.7 |
| Chinese | 226 | 88 | 108 | 22.9 | -52.2 |
| African | 52 | 101 | 96 | -4.9 | 84.8 |
| Other | 87 | 147 | 139 | -5.3 | 59.9 |
| Total from ethnic minorities | 771 | 849 | 917 | 8.0 | 18.9 |
| Number of admissions where ethnicity is known | 4,876 | 5,168 | 5,311 | 2.8 | 8.9 |
| Ethnic minorities as a % of those with known ethnicity | 15.8 | 16.4 | 17.3 | 5.1 | 9.2 |
| Total admissions | 5,685 | 6,646 | 6,924 | 4.2 | 21.8 |
| % of admissions with known ethnicity | 85.8 | 77.8 | 76.7 | -1.4 | -10.6 |
| Male admissions | 2,784 | 2,949 | 2,991 | 1.4 | 7.4 |
| Males as % of total | 49.0 | 44.4 | 43.2 | - | - |
| Female admissions | 2,901 | 3,697 | 3,933 | 6.4 | 35.6 |
| Females as % of total | 51.0 | 55.6 | 56.8 | - | - |
| Total admissions | 5,685 | 6,646 | 6,924 | 4.2 | 21.8 |

Source: Law Society’s REGIS database

- 9.10 In 2002–03 there were 917 admissions from the ethnic minorities out of a total of 6,924. Comparable figures for last year were 849 admissions out of a total of 6,646. The slight increase in the representation of ethnic minorities over the past year is largely accounted for by the increase in the number of Asian admissions. These rose by 12.3% over the year to 506. In contrast to this, African and ‘other ethnic’ admissions were relatively static falling by around 5.0%.
- 9.11 A fuller breakdown of ethnic minority admissions in 2002–03 is shown in Table 9.11. This table analyses admissions by both gender and ethnicity and shows that last year 63.2% of those admitted from the ethnic minorities were female. This is a higher value than that for admissions as a whole (56.8%). Within the ethnic minorities, the proportion of female admissions was highest amongst the ethnic Chinese, 78.7%, and lowest amongst Asians, 60.6%.

Table 9.11 Ethnic minority admissions in 2002–03 by gender

| Ethnic group | Male | | Female | | Total |
|--|-------|------|--------|------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. |
| African-Caribbean | 22 | 32.9 | 45 | 67.1 | 67 |
| Asian | 199 | 39.4 | 307 | 60.6 | 506 |
| Chinese | 23 | 21.3 | 85 | 78.7 | 108 |
| African | 35 | 36.5 | 61 | 63.5 | 96 |
| Other | 58 | 41.8 | 81 | 58.2 | 139 |
| Total admissions from ethnic minorities | 338 | 36.8 | 579 | 63.2 | 917 |
| Number of admissions where ethnicity is known | 2,189 | 41.2 | 3,123 | 58.8 | 5,311 |
| Ethnic minorities as a % of those with known ethnicity | 15.4 | | 18.6 | | 17.3 |
| Number of admissions where ethnicity is unknown | 802 | 49.7 | 810 | 50.3 | 1,613 |
| Total admissions | 2,991 | 43.2 | 3,933 | 56.8 | 6,924 |
| % of admissions with known ethnicity | 73.2 | | 79.4 | | 76.7 |

Source: Law Society's REGIS database

Appendices

Map of Government Office Regions

| Standard Statistical Region | County* | Government Office Region |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| North | Cleveland* Durham Northumberland Tyne and Wear | North East |
| | Cumbria | |
| North West | Cheshire Greater Manchester Lancashire Merseyside** | North West |
| Yorkshire and Humberside | Humberside* North Yorkshire South Yorkshire West Yorkshire | Yorkshire and the Humber |
| East Midlands | Derbyshire Leicestershire Lincolnshire Northamptonshire Nottinghamshire | East Midlands |
| West Midlands | Hereford and Worcester* Shropshire Staffordshire Warwickshire West Midlands | West Midlands |
| South West | Avon* Cornwall Devon Dorset Gloucestershire | South West |
| East Anglia | Cambridgeshire Norfolk Suffolk | East of England |
| South East | Bedfordshire Essex Hertfordshire | |
| | Greater London | London |
| | Berkshire* Buckinghamshire East Sussex Hampshire Isle of Wight* Kent Oxfordshire Surrey West Sussex | South East |

* Counties prior to local government reorganisation

** North West region includes Merseyside from 1 August 1998



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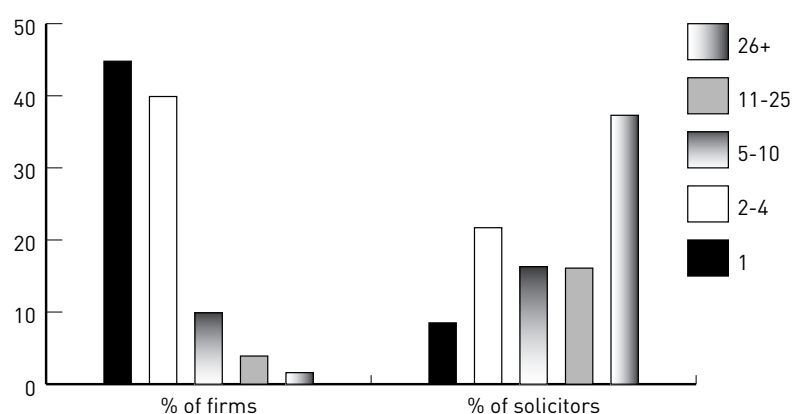
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Key statistics

Solicitors' profession as at 31 July 2003

| | |
|---|---------|
| Solicitors on the Roll | 116,110 |
| Solicitors with practising certificates | 92,752 |
| Women solicitors with practising certificates | 36,819 |
| Ethnic minority solicitors with practising certificates | 7,356 |
| Solicitors working in private practice | 72,545 |
| Private practice firms | 9,198 |
| New solicitors admitted to the Roll | 6,924 |
| Trainee solicitors commencing contracts | 5,650 |

Distribution of firms and solicitors 2002-03



| Partners | % of firms | % of solicitors |
|------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 44.8 | 8.5 |
| 2-4 | 39.5 | 21.7 |
| 5-10 | 9.9 | 16.3 |
| 11-25 | 3.9 | 16.1 |
| 26 or more | 1.6 | 37.3 |

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