

## Key facts about the solicitors' profession in the North East region

The Law Society conducts research on the solicitors' profession in England and Wales. This fact sheet presents key figures on the profession for the North East region as at November 2010.

Key statistics as at November 2010	No	%
<b>Solicitors with practising certificates</b>	<b>3,152</b>	
Male solicitors with practising certificates	1,680	53.3
Female solicitors with practising certificates	1,472	46.7
Solicitors in private practice	2,379	78.7
Solicitors in commerce and industry	167	5.5
Solicitors in central and local government	424	14.0
Solicitors in other sectors	54	1.8
Solicitors in sole practices	179	5.9
Solicitors in practices with 2-4 partners	1,292	42.7
Solicitors in practices with 5-10 partners	593	19.6
Solicitors in practices with 11-25 partners	321	10.6
Solicitors in practices with more than 26 partners	639	21.1
<b>Trainees</b>		
Number of trainees	<b>142</b>	
Number of male trainees	51	35.9
Number of female trainees	91	64.1
Starting salary (median)	£16,830	
<b>Organisations</b>		
Organisations employing solicitors (head office)	<b>591</b>	
Private practices (head office)	314	53.1
Other organisations employing solicitors <sup>1</sup>	277	46.9

<sup>1</sup> Non private practice comprises of organisations employing solicitors by the following type of business: Commerce & Industry; Government (Government Department, Local Government, Court Government funded services, and Crown Prosecution Service); Other (Advice service, Educational establishment, Churches etc.).

## Practising certificate holders

Table 1 shows the ethnicity of all practising certificate holders in the region compared with all the regions in England and Wales, and Chart A illustrates their age distribution. One-third (33.3%) of solicitors are aged between 26-35 years old and this is typical of the profession as a whole where 35.3% fall into this age range. Older solicitors are slightly over-represented in this region. The ethnicity profile shows that the proportion of White solicitors is significantly higher in the region than in England and Wales in general.

Table 2 provides details of the number of years of post qualification experience of practising certificate holders within the North East region compared to the profession as a whole. It shows that there are slightly more solicitors with 20-49 years of experience in this region than in England and Wales in general.

The top three main areas of work for practising certificate holders in this region are business affairs (15.8%), wills and probate (7.7%) and personal injury (6.9%). In comparison with the profession as a whole, personal injury is cited by 4.9% and wills and probate by 7.2% of the profession with business affairs dominating at 21.0%.

## Trainees

In 2010 46.5% of trainees are aged 25 and under, with only 2.8% of trainees aged over 41 years, compared with 45.8% and 3.2% respectively for the profession.

Table 3 shows trainee registrations by ethnicity for the North East region and for the entire profession. It demonstrates that there are proportionately fewer BME trainees in the region than in the profession as a whole.

The overwhelming majority (90.9%) of trainees work in law practices, with only 2.8% in commerce and industry and 5.6% in local and central government.

More than one-third of trainees are based in small firms of 2 to 4 partners and 5 to 10 partners (33.8% and 33.1% respectively). The proportion of trainees working in large firms of more than 26 partners in the North East region is lower than in the profession as a whole (21.8% against 49.7%), as well as the number of those based in sole practices (2.8% against 6.0% in the profession).

## Private practice firms

There are 314 private practice head offices in the region. The distribution of size of firms across the region is shown in table 4. It demonstrates that there are proportionately fewer sole practices and more firms with 5-10 partners in the region in comparison to England and Wales in general.

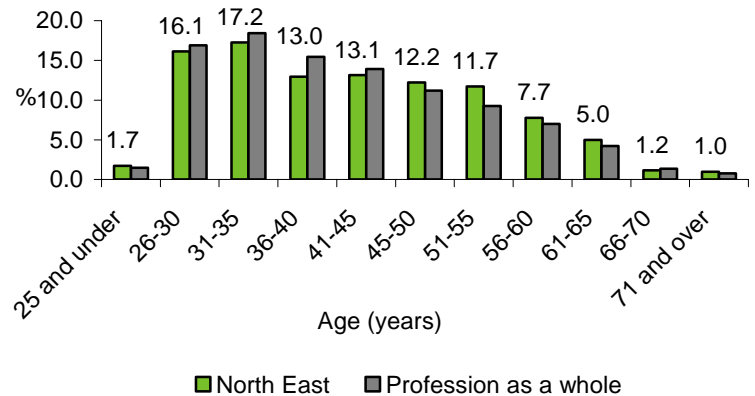
## Further reading

*Trends in the solicitors' profession, Annual statistical report 2009.* Bill Cole, Nina Fletcher, Tara Chittenden and Joanne Cox. Strategic Research Unit. The Law Society. 2009.

**Table 1 Ethnicity of practising certificate holders**

	North East		All regions	
	No	%	No	%
African Caribbean	3	0.1	798	0.7
Asian	53	1.7	7,438	6.6
Chinese	7	0.2	924	0.8
African	5	0.2	1,417	1.3
Other Ethnicity	20	0.6	2,117	1.9
White	2,867	91.0	90,337	79.7
Unknown	197	6.2	10,341	9.1
Total	3,152	100	113,372	100

**Chart A Age distribution of practising certificate holders**



**Table 2 Experience of practising certificate holders by years qualified**

	North East		All regions	
	No	%	No	%
0-9	1,295	41.1	49,666	43.8
10-19	809	25.7	29,646	26.1
20-25	525	16.7	16,146	14.0
30-39	327	10.4	10,136	8.9
40-49	52	1.7	1,734	1.5
50+	15	0.5	291	0.3
Unknown	129	4.1	5,753	5.1
Total	3,152	100	113,372	100

**Table 3 Ethnicity of trainees**

	North East		All regions	
	No	%	No	%
African Caribbean	0	0.0	45	0.7
Asian	11	7.8	787	11.5
Chinese	0	0.0	152	2.2
African	1	0.7	145	2.1
Other Ethnicity	2	1.4	274	4.0
White	120	84.5	4,972	72.4
Unknown	8	5.6	493	7.2
Total	142	100	6,868	100

**Table 4 Size of firms (head office)**

	North East		All regions	
	No	%	No	%
Sole practice	121	38.5	4,583	45.1
2-4	138	43.9	4,185	41.1
5-10	42	13.4	898	8.8
11-25	7	2.2	310	3.1
26+	5	1.6	196	1.9
Unknown	1	0.3	0	0.0
Total	314	100	10,172	100

Source: The Law Society REGIS database