

Social welfare law what is fair?

Findings from a nationwide
opinion poll survey

www.lag.org.uk/socialwelfarelawsurvey

LAG

Executive summary of research and findings

Opinion poll research was conducted on Legal Action Group's (LAG's) behalf on the public's use of legal advice services in the last year and on their views about what types of advice should be given priority for state funding. The opinion poll survey, which was carried out by GfK NOP, used a cross-section of 1,000 adults.

Problems with money, benefits, employment and housing are the most common types of social welfare law (SWL) problem faced by people. Respondents were asked if they had sought advice on any of those problems in the last year and, if not, where they would have gone to for advice if they had had such a problem. The key findings from this part of the research were as follows:

- People in social class DE were the most reliant on local advice centres for help the most common types of SWL problem. This group of people were the least likely to use the internet or telephone help lines or be able to travel far to access advice.
- 65 per cent of respondents, while they might not use advice centres, viewed them as the appropriate place to go to for advice about the most common types of SWL problem.
- People in social class DE were twice as likely as those in the other social classes to experience money problems such as debt and benefits. However, problems with employment and housing were the most evenly distributed across all social classes.

LAG believes that the government is likely to cut back on what will be paid for by civil legal aid. As part of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), £350m has to be found in savings from legal aid; there are also likely to be cuts in advice services that are paid for by local councils and other sources. Respondents were asked two questions regarding their opinions on what types of legal advice should be a priority for government funding. The key findings of the survey were as follows:

- 84 per cent of respondents believed that advice on civil law should be either free to everyone or to those who earn less than the national average income (£25,000).
- 10 per cent of respondents believed that such advice should be only available to people on benefits.

Support for legal services paid for by the state was remarkably consistent across the social classes. LAG concluded that this indicated that there exists a strong culture of fair play in respect of legal rights, ie, respondents believed that the state should pay for legal advice to help people when things go wrong. From the results of the opinion poll survey, it is apparent that the eligibility levels for civil legal aid, which for obtaining legal advice are only just above means-tested benefit levels, fall short of the public's expectations.

Respondents were asked to list three areas of legal advice that should be a priority for state funding:

- 70 per cent of respondents believed that child protection should be the top priority for state funding;
- 67 per cent of respondents believed that housing should be the second

- priority for state funding; and
- 53 per cent of respondents believed that employment should be the third priority for state funding.

In relation to the remaining areas of SWL:

- 36 per cent of respondents believed that benefits should be a priority for state funding;
- 36 per cent of respondents believed that debt advice should be a priority for state funding; and
- 17 per cent of respondents believed that divorce/relationship breakdown advice should be a priority for state funding.

Again, there was a remarkable degree of unanimity between the social classes about what should be the priority for advice. LAG believes that the opinion poll's results indicate that protecting children, keeping people in their homes and, to a lesser degree, advice on employment, benefits and debt are seen as a fair use of legal aid and other state funding for legal advice. While state funding for divorce/relationship breakdown-related work has least public support, LAG concluded that if it had been put to respondents that such cases may involve domestic violence, this area of advice might have enjoyed a higher level of support.

Introduction

LAG is a national, independent charity that seeks to promote equal access to justice for all members of society who are socially, economically or otherwise disadvantaged. To this end, LAG seeks to improve law and practice, the administration of justice and legal services.

This report presents an analysis of the findings of a groundbreaking, nationwide opinion poll survey into respondents' attitudes toward, and the experiences of, legal advice services. Survey respondents – a representative sample of the general public – gave their views on vitally important issues, such as which types of legal advice should be prioritised, and which groups in society most deserve access to financial support for advice. Respondents were also asked to describe their experiences of using legal advice services, and their personal expectations for these services.

A funding storm is about to break over the SWL advice sector in the coming months, which will reduce severely the services available to the public at a time of rising demand. In these straitened times, it will be crucial that the government pays close attention to the views of service users and the wider public to ensure that any cuts cause as little difficulty as possible.

Our findings show a remarkable degree of unanimity about the importance of government support for access to justice. For example, respondents in all social classes ranked different types of advice (ie, about money problems, housing and benefits) in the same order of priority; 84 per cent of respondents believed that advice on civil law should be either free to everyone or to those who earn less than the national average income (£25,000). Clearly this is something that crosses traditional class boundaries and leads us to conclude that there is a strong culture of fair play among the British public. Their expectation seems to be that even if a

problem is not likely to affect them, there should be state-funded services to give legal advice to people who do experience common civil law problems. We hope that the survey findings will inform the policy debate around the CSR and expected green paper on legal aid.

The opinion poll survey

The fieldwork was carried out by GfK NOP from 1 to 3 October 2010. The questions asked were included in the market research company’s weekly omnibus telephone survey. A cross-section of at least 1,000, randomly selected members of the public aged 16 and over were questioned in a telephone interview.

This report begins with a description of the ways in which SWL policy has changed in recent times, outlines the pressures facing the legal aid system currently, and then goes on to detail the research findings.

Challenging times: the policy and spending context

Internationally, the term ‘poverty law’ is used to describe those areas of civil law with which people on low incomes are likely to experience problems. In the UK, the term ‘social welfare law’ has been adopted to describe much the same areas of law. Most commonly, SWL is used to refer to the areas of debt, benefits, employment, housing, immigration and community care law. The Legal Service Commission (LSC) excludes immigration from its definition of SWL as the commission contracts for services in immigration law separately from the other categories of law. **Table 1** breaks down the enquiries in SWL that were dealt with by Citizens Advice Bureaux in 2009/2010.¹

For the purposes of this research, LAG decided to include debt, employment, housing and welfare benefits in the opinion poll survey questions as these are the areas of law on which the public are most likely to seek advice. Since the 1970s there has been a rapid expansion in both solicitor and not for profit (NFP) advice services to meet public demand for advice on SWL. In 1973 the government introduced the green form scheme for legal aid (now called Legal Help). Under this scheme, the public can, provided they pass both a means and merits test, receive advice on civil law matters, including those SWL matters in **Table 1**.

Eligibility for legal aid has fluctuated greatly over the years; overall the trend has been towards a reduction in eligibility levels from 80 per cent at the outset of the system in 1950 to less than half that number today.

A financial crisis in the mid-1980s led the then Conservative Lord Chancellor Lord Mackay to decide to cut back on eligibility and scope (ie, the categories of law covered by the green form scheme) in March 1986.²

In 1986, there were 1,236 generalist advice agencies providing welfare rights and other advice mainly funded by local councils.³ Under Lord Mackay, a pilot scheme to open up green form legal aid provision to NFP agencies was introduced. Eventually this was rolled out under the last government and led to around 400 NFP organisations providing mainly SWL services. Despite this, the majority of funding for SWL services continues to be provided by local councils. In 2005/2006, total non-government funding for local Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales broke down as follows:

Enquiry area	Number of enquiries
Debt	2,374,273
Benefits and tax credits	2,074,208
Employment	586,185
Housing	467,854
Immigration, asylum and nationality	94,480
Health and community care	77,520

- £71m from local authority funding;
- £29m from the LSC;
- £31.1m from Financial Inclusion Fund (FIF); and
- £30m from other sources.⁴

In addition to the above, in 2008/2009 the national charity Citizens Advice (CitA) received £56.19m in funding. Most of this funding came from government grants, the majority of which CitA received from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). BIS has announced that, this year, the department will cut the grant it pays to CitA by 11.4 per cent.

LAG fears that, in the coming months, funding cut backs will hit the SWL advice sector which will reduce severely SWL services available to the public at a time of rising demand. Advice in SWL, apart from that concerning homeless applications, is not a statutory responsibility of local councils. Councils will be put under severe financial pressure by the CSR. The Local Government Association predicts a £20bn per annum shortfall in the funding of frontline services by 2015.⁵ Draconian budget cutbacks in non-statutory services such as SWL advice are therefore likely as councils are forced to make cuts.

Since 2004, a total of £47.5m has been invested in frontline debt advice services by the government's FIF; however, the FIF is due to end in March 2011. As yet, the government has not made a commitment to renew the funding.

The legal aid budget is the Ministry of Justice's (MoJ's) second biggest item of expenditure at £2.2bn, out of a total MoJ budget of just over £9.1bn. The CSR announcement from the Treasury concerning the MoJ included a projected cut of £350m to the legal aid budget.⁶ It has been suggested in the media that officials at the MoJ are examining the possibility of withdrawing legal aid for work such as divorce.⁷ A green paper on legal aid is due to be published in the next few weeks, which will, LAG understands, include proposals for a radically-reshaped system.

The legal aid system is split roughly between advice-only services, which are given under what is called the Legal Help scheme, and cases involving representation, ie, licensed work. **Table 2** gives a breakdown of legal aid spending on Legal Help in SWL.⁸

Civil legal aid developed largely from the state's recognition that because of social change and the reform of the divorce laws, people needed access to state-funded lawyers as otherwise they would be unable to divorce.⁹ The trend over the past 30 years has been for a greater proportion of the legal aid budget to be spent on non-family matters, but family law remains the budget's largest item of expenditure. In 2008/2009, a total of £61.2m was spent on Legal Help in family cases as against £107m for all other civil legal help (excluding immigration cases).¹⁰ The difference is much more pronounced in licensed work with £524.7m spent on family work and £114.6m spent on non-family work, of which housing, at £27.9m, is the largest item of expenditure.¹¹

Table 2

Area of SWL	Spend in 2008/2009
Welfare benefits	£21.6m
Debt	£21.4m
Employment	£3.6m
Housing	£22.2m
Community care	£2m

Opinion poll survey results

Advice services

Summary

In the survey, respondents were asked the following questions:

- Where they had sought advice (if they had done so in the last year) or where they would seek advice from if they needed to in the future?
- How far they travelled (or would travel) to seek such advice?
- Which kind of problem they had sought advice about?

What emerged is that people in social class DE are most reliant on advice centres and are least likely to use the internet or telephone-based services to access advice. A large majority of respondents, while they might not use legal advice centres themselves, view such advice centres as the place to which they would go if they needed to obtain advice on SWL. People in all social classes are more likely to report problems in housing and employment law.

Problems reported

A total of 239 respondents reported having sought legal advice about one or more problem in the last year, with advice most commonly needed about the following:

- 30 per cent need advice about benefits;
- 28 per cent needed advice about employment;
- 23 per cent needed advice about money problems; and
- 19 per cent needed advice about housing. (See Table 3)

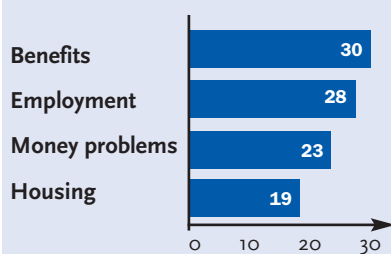
People in social class DE were most likely to have sought advice about all of the problems. Just under 49 per cent of respondents who had sought advice about a benefit problem came from social class DE. People in social class DE were twice as likely as those in the other social classed to have sought advice about benefits or money problems such as debt.

Experience of advice on employment and housing was the most evenly distributed by social class: for example, a similar proportion of people in social classes AB and DE had sought advice about housing (ie, eight per cent of people in social class AB had sought this kind of advice compared with 11 per cent of people in social class DE).

- 37 per cent, ie, the largest proportion of respondents who had sought advice went to a local advice centre such as a Citizens Advice Bureau.
 - 17 per cent of respondents who had sought advice went to a solicitor.
 - 35 per cent of respondents who had experienced an employment or housing problem used a telephone advice line or an internet site to help them with the problem. Some respondents might well have been using these methods to signpost to other services. Full-time employees were more likely than people who worked part-time or were not in work to access services using the internet or a telephone advice line:
 - 43 per cent of respondents who used a telephone advice line or an internet site to help with a problem were full-time employees;
 - 29 per cent of respondents who used a telephone advice line or an internet site to help with a problem were part-time employees; and
 - 29 per cent of respondents who used a telephone advice line or an internet site to help with a problem where part-time employees.
- People in social class DE were least likely to use the internet or a

Table 3

Problems reported (%)



telephone advice line compared with people in the other social classes:

- 26 per cent of people in social class DE had used one of these routes to seek advice compared with an overall average of 35 per cent of respondents. Although, interestingly, people in social class C2 are most likely to use these routes to advice:
- 43 per cent of people in social class C2 had used these routes to access advice.
- 52 per cent of people in social class DE had sought advice from a local advice centre.
- 26 per cent of people in social class AB had sought advice from a local advice centre.
- 65 per cent of respondents had accessed an advice centre near to where they lived (ie, within five miles or fewer).

Where would you go for advice?

Table 4 breaks down where respondents said they would go if they experienced a problem with benefits, money, employment or housing. The figures are taken from the replies of the 761 respondents who had not sought advice on one or more of these problems in the last year.

Once again, there are stark differences between people in different social classes:

- 24 per cent of people in social class DE would be prepared to seek legal advice on the internet or via a telephone advice line; and
- 47 per cent of people in social class AB said that they would be prepared to do so.
- 34 per cent of people in social class AB said that they would go to a solicitor for advice; and
- 20 per cent of people in social class DE said that they would be prepared to do so.
- 51 per cent of respondents said that they would only be prepared to travel five miles or fewer to obtain advice; and
- 71 per cent of people in social class DE were not willing to travel over five miles to obtain advice.

Paying for advice: what is fair?

The opinion poll survey asked two questions to try and discern respondents' views about what legal advice services the state should pay for and the priority that should be given to funding different areas of work. Tables giving the responses to these two questions across the dimensions described above are reproduced in the appendices.

Attitudes to state funding for advice

To assess public attitudes to the state paying for the cost of representing clients in SWL cases, respondents were asked the following question:

Good legal advice is very important to anyone in a court case, but it can be very expensive. When people cannot afford to cover the cost, it is mainly paid for by legal aid and other government funding, but as you may be aware there is pressure on legal aid and other public services due to budget cuts. Please tell me which one of the following you agree with?



Respondents had the following options:

- 1 Everyone should be entitled to free advice regardless of how much it costs;
- 2 Advice should be free only to people who earn less than the average national income (£25,000);
- 3 These services should be free only to people on benefits; and
- 4 These services should not be free to anyone.

Table 5 summarises respondents’ replies:

- 84 per cent of respondents believed that services should be either free to everyone or at least to those who earn less than the average national income.
- 9 per cent of respondents believed that such services should be only available to those people on benefits.

There is a large gap between public opinion and the reality of the available services that are funded by the state. Legal aid is only obtainable for advice in benefits and employment cases. In order to receive representation in these areas of law, for example, if a case needs to go to an employment tribunal (ET), the applicant has to fund it him/herself or rely on a service which receives support, usually from a local council, to provide representation.¹² As a result of the means test for legal aid, few people qualify for even advice in employment law. As set out in **Table 2**, £5.1m is the total legal aid budget for advice on employment law.

Support for legal services paid for by the state was remarkably consistent across the social classes:

- 39 per cent of people in social class AB chose option one;
- 37 per cent of people in social class in class DE chose option one;
- 43 per cent of people in social classes AB and DE chose option two;
- 43 per cent of people in social class C1 chose option one and 44 per cent chose option two; and
- 44 per cent of people in social class C2 chose option one and 46 per cent chose option two.

Table 5

State funding for advice (%)

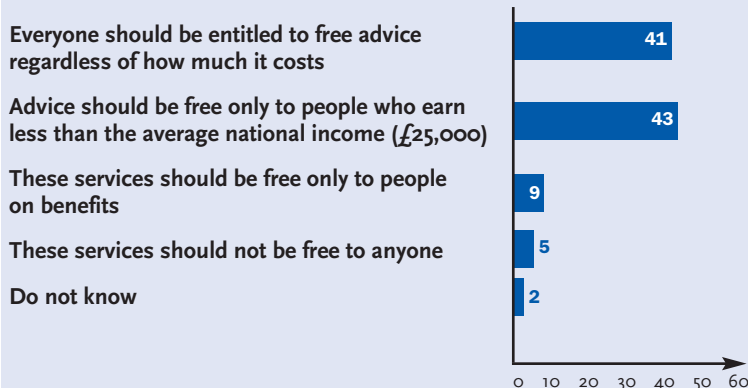
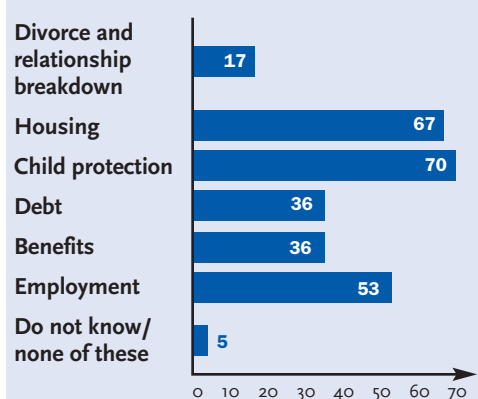


Table 6

Prioritising advice (%)



Respondents' replies to the question indicated that there is a high level of support for the state paying for services in the SWL areas of benefits, money/debt, housing and employment, and that this support is remarkably uniform across all social classes. It would appear that respondents' expectation is that if they have a problem in one of these areas of law, they should be entitled to representation and legal advice, especially if they earn less the average national income. Significantly, even if respondents came from a social class less likely to experience a problem, the belief seemed to predominate that the state should pay for services to help people whose income is at or below the national average. There seems to be a factor in play here which we have labelled as a sense of fair play, ie, respondents seemed to believe that if a person is facing a civil legal problem, it is fair s/he should have access to free advice that is paid for by the state. In fact, legal aid for advice in SWL is only available to people whose income in at or just above means-tested benefit rates. There is therefore a large gap between respondents' expectations of what should be available when they experience a problem and the reality.

Prioritising advice

To test respondents' attitude to prioritising the kind of advice that should be paid for by the state, they were asked the following question:

If you had to prioritise three different areas of advice for the government to pay out for, which areas are most important? Please give me your top three?

The choices were as follows:

- Divorce and relationship breakdown;
- Housing (for example, advice on homelessness, evictions and disrepair claims against landlords);
- Child protection;
- Debt;
- Benefits;
- Employment;
- None of these; and
- Do not know.

We decided to include divorce as an option as this area of law had already being identified by the government for possible cuts (see above). Child protection was also included as an option as this area of law makes up the bulk of work included under the family legal aid scheme. See **Table 6** for respondents' replies to the question.

One of the striking features with the responses to this question is the remarkable degree of unanimity across social classes. For example,

- 75 per cent of people in social class AB class chose child protection in their top three; and
- 70 per cent of people in social class DE chose child protection in their top three.

The only notable difference between social classes is that people in social class DE favoured benefit advice above employment advice, which perhaps reflects the higher proportion of people in this social class that is likely to claim benefits.

Perhaps a surprising result was that 18 per cent of respondents who were either married or living with a partner chose divorce and relationship breakdown as a priority for advice, while 17 per cent of all respondents chose divorce and relationship breakdown as a priority for advice (see **Table 6**). It seems wrong to assume that respondents who were either married or living with a partner viewed themselves as more likely to experience this problem than others and would see this area of work as a priority; either this group of respondents are hopeless romantics, or broadly share the view of other respondents that divorce and relationship breakdown work should be a relatively low priority.

LAG would caution against jumping to the conclusion that all divorce/relationship breakdown-related work should be withdrawn from state funding. Respondents' attitude towards funding domestic violence cases was not tested, but we suspect that this would have had a high level of approval. Much of divorce work is difficult to untangle from domestic violence-related cases; for example, a possible question to put the public might have been the following: 'Is it fair for a partner who has experienced domestic violence to go through a divorce without any legal help paid for by the state?'

Housing law was identified as the second highest advice priority. Again, this is a finding that enjoys a high degree of consensus across the social classes:

- 73 per cent of people in social class AB included housing in their top three.

After family law, the highest level of civil legal aid expenditure (excluding asylum and immigration work) goes into housing law work; it would seem that this is supported by respondents' opinion.

Debt and benefits both had the same level of respondents' support:

- 36 per cent included these areas of advice in their top three. As discussed above, these problems are more likely to be experienced by people in social class DE, and so their lower scores are perhaps a reflection of how likely such problems are likely to affect respondents. After housing law these are the most common problems to be dealt with by the legal help scheme.

The fact that employment law enjoyed the third highest ranking would seem to be in keeping with the survey's finding that the experience of employment problems was most evenly distributed across the social classes (see Appendix). However, as stated above, employment law enjoys the least amount of state support because of the legal aid means test. The findings of this research indicates that employment law advice merits more state support or alternative methods of assistance, such as insurance-backed services or encouragement to join a trade union.

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The Baring Foundation

- 1 See 'Citizens Advice annual advice statistics 2009/10', Citizens Advice press release, 17 May 2010 at: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/pressoffice/press_index/press_20100517.htm.
- 2 Steve Hynes and Jon Robins, *The Justice Gap: Whatever happened to legal aid?*, LAG, 2009, p28.
- 3 Richard Berthoud, Sheila Benson and Sandra Williams, *Standing up for claimants: welfare rights work in local authorities*, Policy Studies Institute, 1986.

LAG intends to follow up this research next year in order to compare trends and build a comprehensive data set on the public's views about civil legal services. We are planning further publications on civil legal services with a focus on social welfare law.

LAG will be producing a set of policy recommendations based on the research, which we hope will influence the future development of independent civil law legal services to improve access to justice for the general public.

- 4 Available at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.berr.gov.uk/consumers/fact-sheets/page38097.html>.
- 5 *Spending Review 2010: Local Government Group submission* is available at: www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/13759861.
- 6 See *Spending Review 2010 press notices*, p28, available at: http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/sr2010_pressnotices.pdf.
- 7 James Kirkup, 'Kenneth Clarke to slash legal aid budget', *Daily Telegraph*, 16 July 2010, available at: www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/7895199/Kenneth-Clarke-to-slash-Legal-Aid-budget.html.
- 8 See *Statistical Information 2008/09*, LSC, at p6, available at: www.legalservices.gov.uk/docs/about_us_main/Stats_Pack_o809v3.pdf.
- 9 See note 2 at p20.
- 10 See note 8.
- 11 See note 8.
- 12 Appeals of decision from ETs to the Employment Appeal Tribunal and the higher courts are covered by the certificated scheme.

Appendix

GOOD LEGAL ADVICE IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ANYONE IN A COURT CASE, BUT IT CAN BE VERY EXPENSIVE. WHEN PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD TO COVER THE COST IT IS MAINLY PAID FOR BY LEGAL AID AND OTHER GOVERNMENT FUNDING, BUT AS YOU MAY BE AWARE THERE IS PRESSURE ON LEGAL AID AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES DUE TO BUDGET CUTS. PLEASE TELL ME WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING YOU AGREE WITH.

BASE : ALL ADULTS AGED 16+

	TOTAL	SEX		AGE						SOCIAL CLASS			
		MALE	FEMALE	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	485 49%	515 52%	119 12%	140 14%	183 18%	178 17%	165 16%	215 22%	221 22%	307 31%	214 21%	258 26%
WEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	487 49%	513 51%	125 13%	145 15%	189 19%	169 17%	154 15%	218 22%	222 22%	307 31%	219 22%	252 25%
EVERYONE SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO FREE ADVICE REGARDLESS OF HOW MUCH THEY EARN	406 41%	191 39%	215 42%	76 61%	72 49%	73 39%	65 38%	48 31%	72 33%	86 39%	131 43%	97 44%	92 37%
ADVICE SHOULD BE FREE ONLY TO PEOPLE WHO EARN LESS THAN THE AVERAGE NATIONAL INCOME (£25,000)	440 44%	210 43%	230 45%	34 27%	57 39%	85 45%	75 45%	80 52%	108 50%	96 43%	134 44%	101 46%	109 43%
THESE SERVICES SHOULD BE FREE ONLY TO PEOPLE ON BENEFITS	89 9%	47 10%	42 8%	7 6%	11 7%	15 8%	22 13%	17 11%	17 8%	20 9%	26 8%	12 5%	31 12%
THESE SERVICES SHOULD NOT BE FREE TO ANYONE	49 5%	29 6%	19 4%	6 5%	4 2%	13 7%	6 3%	4 3%	16 7%	18 8%	13 4%	6 3%	12 5%
DON'T KNOW	16 2%	9 2%	7 1%	2 2%	2 2%	2 1%	1 1%	4 3%	4 2%	2 1%	3 1%	3 1%	8 3%

GOOD LEGAL ADVICE IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ANYONE IN A COURT CASE, BUT IT CAN BE VERY EXPENSIVE. WHEN PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD TO COVER THE COST IT IS MAINLY PAID FOR BY LEGAL AID AND OTHER GOVERNMENT FUNDING, BUT AS YOU MAY BE AWARE THERE IS PRESSURE ON LEGAL AID AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES DUE TO BUDGET CUTS. PLEASE TELL ME WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING YOU AGREE WITH.

BASE : ALL ADULTS AGED 16+

	TOTAL	GOVERNMENT OFFICE REGION											
		SCOTLAND	NORTH EAST	NORTH WEST	YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER	EAST MIDLANDS	WALES	EAST OF ENGLAND	WEST MIDLANDS	SOUTH WEST	LONDON	SOUTH EAST	NORTHERN IRELAND
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	81 8%	40 4%	109 11%	88 9%	77 8%	50 5%	108 11%	87 9%	86 9%	115 12%	129 13%	30 3%
WEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	83 8%	42 4%	109 11%	83 8%	71 7%	49 5%	111 11%	88 9%	87 9%	123 12%	126 13%	28 3%
EVERYONE SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO FREE ADVICE REGARDLESS OF HOW MUCH THEY EARN	406 41%	37 45%	16 39%	33 31%	30 34%	31 43%	24 48%	40 34%	31 36%	31 36%	59 48%	65 51%	10 34%
ADVICE SHOULD BE FREE ONLY TO PEOPLE WHO EARN LESS THAN THE AVERAGE NATIONAL INCOME (£25,000)	440 44%	39 47%	23 54%	63 58%	41 49%	36 51%	18 36%	47 43%	37 43%	34 39%	44 36%	46 37%	11 40%
THESE SERVICES SHOULD BE FREE ONLY TO PEOPLE ON BENEFITS	89 9%	5 6%	3 7%	8 7%	8 10%	3 6%	3 6%	17 15%	9 10%	9 10%	10 8%	9 7%	6 21%
THESE SERVICES SHOULD NOT BE FREE TO ANYONE	49 5%	2 3%	-	3 3%	4 5%	1 1%	5 10%	4 4%	8 9%	9 10%	7 5%	4 4%	1 5%
DON'T KNOW	16 2%	-	-	1 1%	1 1%	-	-	2 2%	2 3%	4 4%	4 3%	2 2%	-

GOOD LEGAL ADVICE IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ANYONE IN A COURT CASE, BUT IT CAN BE VERY EXPENSIVE. WHEN PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD TO COVER THE COST IT IS MAINLY PAID FOR BY LEGAL AID AND OTHER GOVERNMENT FUNDING, BUT AS YOU MAY BE AWARE THERE IS PRESSURE ON LEGAL AID AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES DUE TO BUDGET CUTS. PLEASE TELL ME WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING YOU AGREE WITH.

BASE : ALL ADULTS AGED 16+

	TOTAL	MARITAL STATUS			WORKING STATUS		
		MARRIED/ LIVING AS MARRIED	SINGLE	WIDOWED/ DIVORCED/ SEPARATED	FULL TIME	PART TIME	NOT WORKING
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	556 56%	240 26%	184 18%	403 40%	145 15%	452 45%
WEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	549 55%	262 26%	190 19%	424 42%	160 16%	416 42%
EVERYONE SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO FREE ADVICE REGARDLESS OF HOW MUCH THEY EARN	406 41%	216 39%	129 49%	61 32%	169 40%	73 46%	163 39%
ADVICE SHOULD BE FREE ONLY TO PEOPLE WHO EARN LESS THAN THE AVERAGE NATIONAL INCOME (£25,000)	440 44%	264 46%	94 36%	92 49%	183 43%	70 44%	187 45%
THESE SERVICES SHOULD BE FREE ONLY TO PEOPLE ON BENEFITS	89 9%	50 9%	21 8%	18 9%	44 10%	11 7%	34 8%
THESE SERVICES SHOULD NOT BE FREE TO ANYONE	49 5%	21 4%	13 5%	14 7%	24 6%	2 1%	23 9%
DON'T KNOW	16 2%	7 1%	5 2%	5 3%	3 1%	3 2%	10 2%

IF YOU HAD TO PRIORITISE THREE DIFFERENT AREAS OF ADVICE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PAY OUT FOR, WHICH AREAS ARE MOST IMPORTANT? PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR TOP 3.

BASE : ALL ADULTS AGED 16+

	TOTAL	SEX		AGE						SOCIAL CLASS			
		MALE	FEMALE	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	485 49%	515 52%	119 12%	140 14%	183 18%	178 18%	165 17%	215 22%	221 22%	307 31%	214 21%	258 26%
WEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	487 49%	513 51%	125 13%	145 15%	189 19%	169 17%	154 16%	218 22%	229 22%	307 31%	219 22%	252 26%
DIVORCE AND RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN	165 17%	74 15%	92 18%	18 13%	14 10%	35 18%	35 21%	27 18%	36 16%	41 18%	51 17%	34 15%	40 16%
HOUSING (FOR EXAMPLE ADVICE ON HOMELESSNESS, EVICTIONS AND DISREPAIR CLAIMS AGAINST LANDLORDS)	667 67%	330 68%	337 66%	72 58%	109 75%	121 64%	121 71%	113 74%	130 60%	161 73%	194 63%	141 64%	171 68%
CHILD PROTECTION	697 70%	324 67%	373 73%	85 68%	103 71%	142 75%	128 76%	108 70%	131 60%	167 75%	200 65%	154 71%	176 70%
DEBT	359 36%	183 38%	176 34%	47 37%	61 42%	68 36%	61 36%	47 31%	74 34%	77 35%	117 38%	82 37%	83 33%
BENEFITS	363 36%	174 36%	189 37%	46 36%	43 30%	62 33%	56 33%	63 41%	94 43%	68 31%	109 36%	75 34%	111 44%
EMPLOYMENT	528 53%	260 53%	268 52%	83 66%	96 66%	112 59%	85 50%	62 40%	90 41%	121 54%	178 58%	130 59%	100 40%
NONE OF THESE	23 2%	15 3%	8 2%	5 4%	1 1%	6 3%	1 1%	2 1%	8 4%	4 2%	8 3%	4 2%	7 3%
DON'T KNOW	27 3%	9 2%	18 3%	1 1%	1 1%	2 1%	6 3%	7 4%	12 6%	3 1%	11 4%	3 1%	10 4%

IF YOU HAD TO PRIORITISE THREE DIFFERENT AREAS OF ADVICE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PAY OUT FOR, WHICH AREAS ARE MOST IMPORTANT? PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR TOP 3.

BASE : ALL ADULTS AGED 16+

	TOTAL	GOVERNMENT OFFICE REGION											
		SCOTLAND	NORTH EAST	NORTH WEST	YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER	EAST MIDLANDS	WALES	EAST OF ENGLAND	WEST MIDLANDS	SOUTH WEST	LONDON	SOUTH EAST	NORTHERN IRELAND
UNWEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	81 8%	40 4%	109 11%	88 9%	77 8%	50 5%	108 11%	87 9%	86 9%	115 12%	129 13%	30 3%
WEIGHTED TOTAL	1000	83 8%	42 4%	109 11%	83 8%	71 7%	49 5%	111 11%	88 9%	87 9%	123 12%	126 13%	28 3%
DIVORCE AND RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN	165 17%	8 9%	6 14%	23 21%	19 22%	10 14%	9 18%	13 12%	18 21%	17 20%	18 15%	20 16%	4 16%
HOUSING (FOR EXAMPLE ADVICE ON HOMELESSNESS, EVICTIONS AND DISREPAIR CLAIMS AGAINST LANDLORDS)	667 67%	60 72%	22 52%	70 64%	47 57%	50 71%	37 76%	75 68%	60 68%	63 72%	78 64%	86 69%	19 67%
CHILD PROTECTION	697 70%	53 64%	27 64%	86 79%	50 61%	50 71%	30 61%	84 76%	60 68%	53 61%	96 78%	86 68%	21 74%
DEBT	359 36%	21 25%	28 66%	36 33%	36 43%	23 32%	19 39%	42 38%	32 27%	24 27%	43 35%	43 34%	11 40%
BENEFITS	363 36%	41 50%	12 29%	34 32%	32 39%	21 30%	18 37%	44 39%	29 34%	29 34%	38 31%	51 41%	13 45%
EMPLOYMENT	528 53%	41 49%	25 59%	59 54%	52 62%	43 60%	32 65%	56 51%	45 52%	36 41%	73 60%	53 42%	14 49%
NONE OF THESE	23 2%	4 5%	-	1 1%	-	1 1%	-	2 2%	4 4%	3 4%	5 4%	3 3%	-
DON'T KNOW	27 3%	3 4%	1 3%	4 3%	1 1%	2 3%	-	4 3%	-	6 7%	1 1%	4 3%	1 3%