

**STATISTICS RELEASE: INSOLVENCIES IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2011**

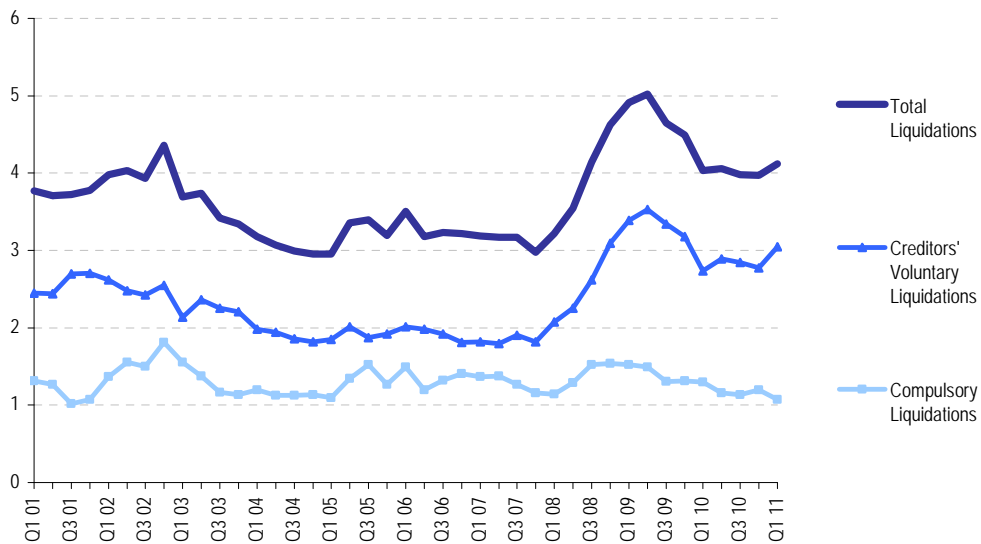
Statistics showing insolvencies in the first quarter of 2011 are published today (6 May) by the Insolvency Service.

**COMPANY INSOLVENCIES**

There were 4,121 compulsory liquidations and creditors' voluntary liquidations in total in England and Wales in the first quarter of 2011 (on a seasonally adjusted basis). This was an increase of 3.7% on the previous quarter and an increase of 2.1% on the same period a year ago.

**Figure 1. Company Liquidations in England & Wales**

Thousands, seasonally adjusted



Source: Insolvency Service and Companies House

This was made up of 1,074 compulsory liquidations (which are down 10.2% on the previous quarter and down 17.2% on the corresponding quarter of the previous year), and 3,047 creditors' voluntary liquidations (which are up 9.7% on the previous quarter and up 11.2% on the corresponding quarter of the previous year).



**Table I. Company Liquidations in England and Wales (seasonally adjusted) <sup>1</sup>**

	2010 Q1 r	2010 Q2 r	2010 Q3 r	2010 Q4 r	2011 Q1 p	% change – Q1 2011 on	
						Q1 2010	Q4 2010
<b>Company Liquidations</b>	<b>4,036</b>	<b>4,054</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>3,973</b>	<b>4,121</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>3.7</b>
of which: Compulsory	1,297	1,161	1,138	1,196	1,074	-17.2	-10.2
Creditors' Voluntary <sup>2</sup>	2,739	2,893	2,845	2,777	3,047	11.2	9.7

Source: Insolvency Service and Companies House

p = provisional, r = revised

<sup>1</sup> Longer series back to 2001 are presented in the accompanying detailed tables.

<sup>2</sup> Where the creditors' voluntary liquidation is the first insolvency procedure entered into (see Notes to Editors).

Additionally, there were 1,314 other corporate insolvencies in the first quarter of 2011 (not seasonally adjusted) comprising 349 receiverships, 782 administrations and 183 company voluntary arrangements. In total these represented a decrease of 2.2% on the same period a year ago.

**Table II. Other Corporate Insolvencies in England and Wales (not seasonally adjusted) <sup>1</sup>**

	2010 Q1	2010 Q2	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1 p	% change – Q1 2011 on	
						Q1 2010	
Receiverships <sup>2</sup>	356	302	349	302	349	-2.0	
Administrations <sup>3</sup>	783	777	633	642	782	0.4	
Company voluntary arrangements	204	232	159	170	183	-10.3	

Source: Companies House

p = provisional,

<sup>1</sup> Longer series back to 2001 are presented in the accompanying detailed tables.

<sup>2</sup> Includes Law of Property Act receivers (see "Notes to Editors" paragraph 21).

<sup>3</sup> Includes Administrator Appointments.

Note: The figures in Table II are not seasonally adjusted and are not, therefore, on the same basis as the headline figures in Table I. The accompanying detailed tables also include the non-seasonally adjusted series for corporate liquidations.

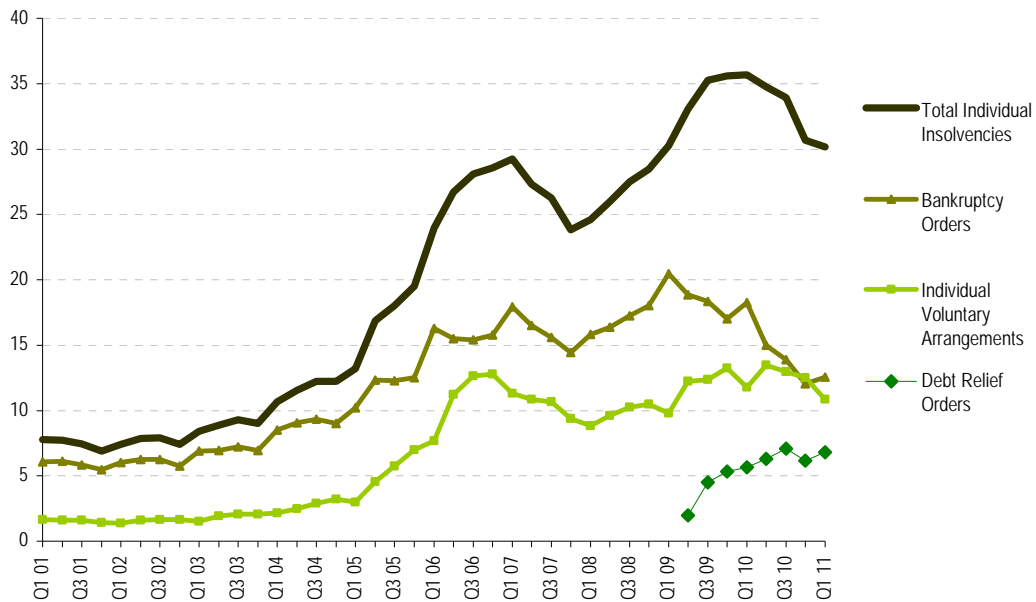
**INDIVIDUAL INSOLVENCIES (not seasonally adjusted - see 'Notes to Editors' paragraph 11)**

There were 30,162 individual insolvencies in England and Wales in the first quarter of 2011. This was a decrease of 15.5% on the same period a year ago.

This was made up of 12,539 bankruptcies (which were down 31.3% on the corresponding quarter of the previous year), 10,835 Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs), (which were down 8.0% on the corresponding quarter of the previous year) and 6,788 Debt Relief Orders (DROs), (which were up 20.3% on the corresponding quarter of the previous year)

**Figure 2. Individual insolvencies in England & Wales**

Thousands, not seasonally adjusted



Source: Insolvency Service  
Total individual insolvencies for Q2 2009 onwards include Debt Relief Orders, which came into force on 6 April 2009

In the first quarter of 2011, 84.2% of bankruptcies were made on the petition of the debtor, broadly comparable to the levels for recent quarters. The percentage of bankruptcy orders involving trading debts (self-employed bankruptcies) was 18.9% in the fourth quarter of 2010 (first quarter 2011 figures for trading-related bankruptcies are not yet available), notably higher than levels seen in recent quarters.

**Table III. Individual Insolvencies in England and Wales (not seasonally adjusted) <sup>1</sup>**

	2010 Q1	2010 Q2	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1 p	% change – Q1 2011 on
						Q1 2010
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>35,682</b>	<b>34,743</b>	<b>33,935</b>	<b>30,685 r</b>	<b>30,162</b>	<b>-15.5</b>
Bankruptcy Orders	18,256	14,982	13,907	12,028 r	12,539	-31.3
Debt Relief Orders	5,644	6,295	7,068	6,172	6,788	20.3
Individual Voluntary Arrangements	11,782	13,466	12,960	12,485 r	10,835	-8.0

Source: Insolvency Service

p = provisional, r = revised

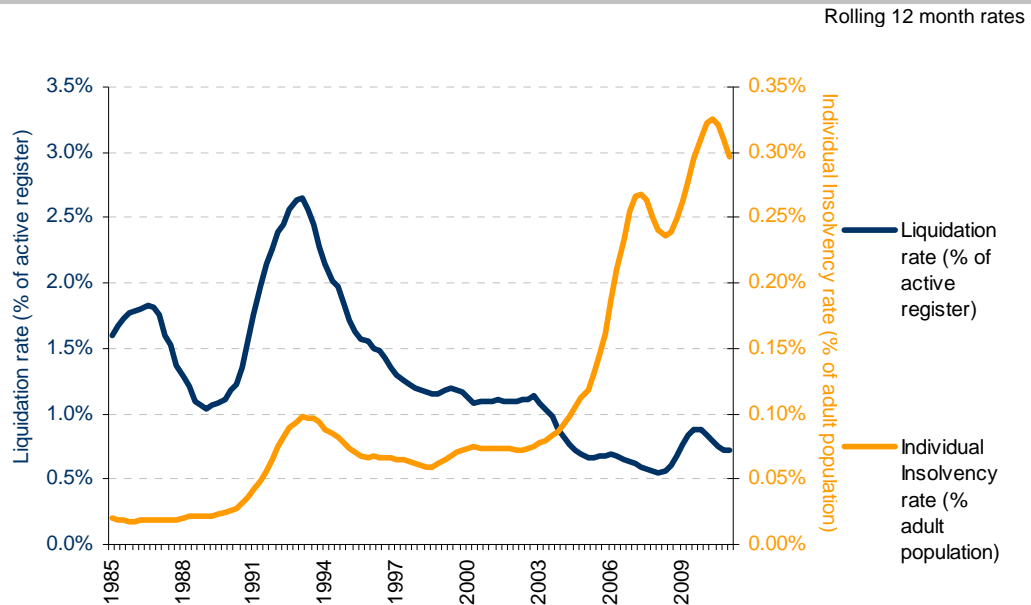
<sup>1</sup> Longer series back to 2001 are presented in the accompanying detailed tables, as are seasonally adjusted figures for individual voluntary arrangements (and for bankruptcy orders up to Q1 2009 only)

**COMPANY LIQUIDATION AND INDIVIDUAL INSOLVENCY RATES: LONGER-TERM PERSPECTIVE**

In the twelve months ending Q1 2011, approximately 1 in 139 active companies (or 0.7% of all active registered companies) went into liquidation, which is comparable to the previous quarter, when this figure stood at 1 in 138. As Figure 3 shows, the liquidation rate remains low compared to a peak of 2.6% in 1993, and the average of 1.3% seen over the last 25 years. It should be noted that the number of active companies has changed considerably over this period; there were 2.3 million active registered companies in Q1 2011; this compares with only about 900,000 in the early 1990s and less than 800,000 in 1986.

In the twelve months ending Q1 2011, approximately 1 in 337 people became insolvent. This is down from 1 in 323 in the previous quarter. As Figure 3 shows, the individual insolvency rate has displayed a steeply upward path (with some fluctuations) since 2004 and is currently elevated compared to the annual average of 1 in 1800 (0.1%) people seen over the last 25 years.

**Figure 3. Company Liquidation and Individual Insolvency Rates in England & Wales**



Source: Insolvency Service, Companies House and the Office for National Statistics  
 The company liquidation rate is calculated from company liquidations in the latest twelve month period divided by the average number of companies in that period. The individual insolvency rate is calculated from the total number of new bankruptcies, IVAs and DROs in the latest twelve month period divided by the average estimated adult (18+) population of England & Wales.

## INSOLVENCIES IN SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The following tables present recent trends in insolvencies in Scotland and Northern Ireland, complementing those for England and Wales above (longer series back to 2001 are presented in the accompanying detailed tables).

**Table IV. Insolvencies in Scotland (not seasonally adjusted)**

	2010 Q1	2010 Q2	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1 p	% change – Q1 2011 on
						Q1 2010
<b>Company Liquidations<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>275</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>1.5</b>
of which: Compulsory	202	215	154	164	208	3.0
Creditors' Voluntary <sup>2</sup>	73	82	70	81	71	-2.7
<b>Individuals<sup>3,4</sup></b>	<b>5,200</b>	<b>5,378 p</b>	<b>5,168 p</b>	<b>4,583 p</b>	<b>4,262</b>	<b>-18.0</b>
of which: Sequestrations <sup>4</sup>	3,167	3,139 p	3,092 p	2,493 p	2,687	-15.2
(of which: LILA)	(1,905)	(1,897) p	(1,631) p	(1,368) p	(1,204)	(-36.8)
Protected Trust Deeds	2,033	2,239 p	2,076 p	2,090 p	1,575	-22.5

p = provisional

<sup>1</sup> Source: Companies House

<sup>2</sup> Including those companies which had previously been in administration or other insolvency procedure

<sup>3</sup> Source: Accountant in Bankruptcy (AiB). Latest Release: [AiB Quarterly Statistics - Q4 2010/11](#)

<sup>4</sup> The sequestration figures include LILA (Low Income, Low Assets) cases. These were introduced as a new route into bankruptcy under the Bankruptcy and Diligence etc (Scotland) Act 2007, wef 1 April 2008.

**Table V. Insolvencies in Northern Ireland (not seasonally adjusted)**

	2010 Q1	2010 Q2	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1 p	% change – Q1 2011 on
						Q1 2010
<b>Company Liquidations</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>-7.8</b>
of which: Compulsory <sup>1</sup>	49	92	55	54	61	24.5
Creditors' Voluntary <sup>2</sup>	53	24	24	31	33	-37.7
<b>Individuals<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>554</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>24.9</b>
of which: Bankruptcies	316	363	290	352	451	42.7
IVAs	238	273	261	230	241	1.3

p = provisional

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland (DETINI)

<sup>2</sup> Source: Companies House

## Notes to accompany the Insolvency Statistics

### Data sources and quality

(More details may be found in the [Statement of Administrative Sources](#) and the over-arching [Statement on Quality Strategy, Principles and Processes](#), which cover all Official Statistics outputs from the Insolvency Service.)

**Relevance** (*the degree to which the statistical product meets user needs for both coverage and content*)

1. The official Insolvency Statistics are the most comprehensive record of the number of corporate and individual insolvencies in England and Wales. They include all formal types of insolvency procedure currently available. Insolvencies in Scotland and Northern Ireland are also included, but are shown separately as they are covered by separate legislation, there are some differences in definition, and policy responsibility for them lies within the devolved administrations. The Statistics Release itself covers the most recent 11 years of annual and quarterly figures; while historic data series are also available (back to 1960 in some cases), as are related sets of Official Statistics on insolvency.
2. Key users of insolvency statistics include the Insolvency Service itself, which has policy responsibility for insolvency in England and Wales and for the non-devolved areas within Scotland and N Ireland; other government departments; parliament; the insolvency profession; debt advice agencies; media organisations; academics; the financial sector; the business community and the general public. The headline quarterly statistics are widely reported in both national and regional media on the day of release.
3. The statistical production team welcome feedback from users of the Insolvency Statistics (current contact details are provide at the end of these Notes). More formal engagement with users has recently included a [Consultation on Insolvency Service Official Statistics](#), the Government Response to which was published in December 2010, and stakeholder meetings held in January 2011 to explore Consultation respondents' input and requests in more detail.

**Accuracy and Completeness** (*including the closeness between an estimated or stated result and the [unknown] true value*)

4. The statistics for England and Wales are derived from administrative records of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)' Insolvency Service and Companies House Executive Agencies. For Scotland, the company insolvency statistics are derived from administrative records at Companies House. Figures for individual insolvencies in Scotland are sourced from the Office of the Accountant in Bankruptcy (AiB). The Northern Ireland statistics are derived from administrative records of the DETI Insolvency Service and from Companies House. All formal insolvency procedures entered into by a company, a partnership or an individual are required by law to be reported to the appropriate body, so the statistics should be a complete record of insolvency in the United Kingdom.
5. Generally speaking, numbers of cases are based on the date the insolvency procedure was registered on the administrative recording system, not on the date of the order or agreement. The implication of this is that the published figures should capture all cases (on that definition) in a particular reporting period and they will not be influenced by, for example, the late reporting of orders made leading to missing data. Furthermore, there is a formal audit process, by which each Official Receiver's Office is reviewed on all aspects of case administration, including the quality and completeness of case information entered on to the administrative system. Targets are in place whereby an insolvency case should be entered onto the administrative system within two days of receipt to an Official Receivers Office. Details on compliance with this target can be found in the InsS' Annual Report. Additional checks are in place to check for and remove duplication of cases, to ensure that returns cover all reporting areas, and to check consistency within tables and between related tables.

**Coherence** (*the degree to which data which are derived from different sources or methods, but which refer to the same phenomenon, are similar*)

6. The Insolvency Service also publishes personal insolvency statistics on a regional basis and outcome statistics for individual voluntary arrangements, both as Official Statistics. These report figures on an annual basis, and they differ from the headline quarterly Insolvency Statistics in that there are some differences in the case selection criteria and/or the database from which they are sourced; this means that the totals are not identical between different outputs.

**Timeliness and Punctuality** (*Timeliness refers to the elapsed time between publication and the period to which the data refer. Punctuality refers to the time lag between the actual and planned dates of publication.*)

7. The Insolvency Statistics are published on the first Friday of the second month following the end of the quarter being reported on; this is the earliest publication date which ensures receipt of all the data inputs, and allows sufficient time for liaising with data suppliers and completing all the steps between this and compilation of the statistical release in its final form ready for publication.

8. There is a publication schedule for a year ahead available on the UK National Statistics Publication Hub and the statistics have always been published on target.

**Accessibility and Clarity** (*Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data. It also relates to the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice*)

9. The Insolvency Statistics are available free of charge to the end user on the Insolvency Service website. They are released via the Publication Hub and they meet the standards required under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and the Insolvency Service's own website accessibility policy.

10. Historic data are also published for the key series, as are a number of other Official Statistics on insolvency. A range of supporting information is available on the Statistics website pages here : [Information about Insolvency Service Official Statistics](#)

**Comparability** (*the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain*)

11. The series for bankruptcy orders can not be seasonally adjusted from Q2 2009 onwards due to the introduction (wef 6 April 2009) of debt relief orders (DROs). DROs comprise some of those individuals who would have otherwise been declared bankrupt (a subset of DRO-eligible cases, who were advised of the DRO route and chose to take it) and other individuals who, perhaps, could not have afforded the fee to enter into bankruptcy and who may have otherwise been in an informal debt management process, or been unable to access any form of debt resolution. It is not possible to quantify the impact of the introduction of DROs on the number of bankruptcy orders, nor to adjust the latter for it and, as a result, not possible to compile a consistent seasonally adjusted series for bankruptcy orders. Table 2 therefore only shows bankruptcy orders (and the derived "total individual insolvencies") on a seasonally adjusted basis up to the first quarter of 2009.

12. See also paragraphs 19, 20, 21 and 25 under the heading **Subject Context** below for additional specific aspects relevant to comparability.

## Methods and Revisions

(More details may be found in : [Insolvency Statistics Methodology](#) and : [The Insolvency Statistics Revisions Policy](#))

13. The X12ARIMA program (developed by the US Census Bureau) is used for the seasonal adjustment of the Insolvency Statistics for England and Wales, this being the recommended program within UK National Statistics. Seasonal adjustment is a process by which changes that are due to seasonal or other calendar influences are removed to produce a clearer picture of the underlying behaviour of the data series. The data series covering Scotland and Northern Ireland do not demonstrate consistent seasonality and only the raw (unadjusted) series are presented.

14. Figures sourced from Companies House (E&W) were revised previously (where appropriate) between 2007 Q1 and 2008 Q1. This reflected inaccuracies identified in the counting of cases during validation following the move to a new IT system in February 2008. The most noticeable revisions were to receiverships (where some companies had been counted more than once); the rest of this series prior to 2007 is not available on a revised basis. However, it should also be noted that because the revised counts have been run against a live database, they do not exactly reflect the original numbers of new cases that would have been reported.

15. Company insolvencies and bankruptcy orders (relating to the self-employed) in England and Wales broken down by industry are available from Q3 2007 according to the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2003, bringing them into line with other official statistics. Industry breakdowns for compulsory liquidations and bankruptcies (only) are only available one quarter in arrears of the headline series. Figures according to the previously used Insolvency Trade Classification (ITC) are available up to Q3 2006, but information by industry is not available for the period between Q4 2006 to Q2 2007 (inclusive) on either classification. Additionally, the broad split of bankruptcy orders into self-employed and other individuals is available under Table 2a.

16. Company liquidations in Scotland are available from Q1 2007 based on the SIC2003 industry breakdown and these can be found in Tables 4a and 4b. Earlier data are available separately classified according to the Insolvency Trade Classification (ITC).

## Subject context

(including relevant insolvency legislation, policy and practice in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland).

17. Insolvent companies entering liquidation in England & Wales and Scotland are dealt with under the Insolvency Act of 1986 and, in Northern Ireland, by the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. They can **either** be the subject of a **compulsory liquidation** (winding-up) order obtained from the court by a creditor, shareholder or director **or** themselves pass a resolution, subject to the approval of a creditors' meeting that the company be wound up voluntarily (**creditors voluntary liquidations**, registered at Companies House/Companies Registry). In either case they are said to have been **wound-up**, and numbers are given in Tables 1, 4 and 6. A third type of winding-up, members' voluntary liquidation, is not included because it does not involve insolvency.

18. The Insolvency Act 1986 and, in Northern Ireland, the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 also introduced the procedures of **company administration orders** and **company voluntary arrangements (CVAs)**. The administration procedure gives a period of time during which creditors are restrained from taking action and a court appointed administrator puts forward proposals to deal with the company's financial difficulties. The CVA procedure aids business by enabling a company in financial difficulty to come to a binding agreement with its creditors. These are listed separately under Table 3 for England and Wales and Table 5 for Scotland.

19. The Enterprise Act 2002 introduced revisions to the corporate administration procedures, replacing Part II of the Insolvency Act 1986 with Schedule B1. These include the introduction of additional entry routes into administration that do not require the making of an administration order and a streamlined process for **Administrations** whereby a company can in some circumstances be dissolved without recourse to liquidation. The primary objective of administration (and of CVAs) is the rescue of the

company as a going concern. These provisions came into force on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2003 and **Administrations under the Enterprise Act** have been included on Tables 3 and 5 from Q3 2003 (dissolution follows 3 months after a notice is filed with the Registrar of Companies, if no objections are raised by the court). On 27<sup>th</sup> March 2006 the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 introduced similar revisions to the corporate administration procedures in Northern Ireland, replacing Part III of the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 with Schedule B1.

20. Since the Enterprise Act 2002, a number of these streamlined administrations have subsequently converted to a creditors' voluntary liquidation. These liquidations in England and Wales are not included under the headline figures here or at Table 1, as they do not represent a new company entering into an insolvency procedure for the first time. For completeness, however, they are included under Table 3d. It is also possible for the outcome of an administration to be entry into a company voluntary arrangement or a compulsory liquidation, but these cases are not separately identifiable from Companies House' information and will therefore be included within the new case figures for these procedures (the numbers involved are relatively few, compared to those entering CVL). For Scotland and Northern Ireland, figures for creditors' voluntary liquidation *include* those companies which had previously been in administration or other insolvency procedure, as insufficient data are currently available to separate them from the totals, prior to 2010.

21. **Receivership appointments** comprise **administrative receivers** appointed under the 1986 Insolvency Act (and the 1989 Order for Northern Ireland) and certain **other receiver appointments, for example under the Law of Property Act 1925** - due to the use of the same statutory documentation for different types of receivership, it is not possible to give a breakdown between them. Law of Property Act receivers are classed as *Enforcement of Security* and are not insolvency procedures under the Insolvency Act of 1986. For this reason levels of, and trends in, receivership appointments should be interpreted with caution. The provisions of the Enterprise Act 2002 [section 250] (Insolvency [Northern Ireland] Order 2005 [Article 5]) have made some changes to the procedures for administrative receivership.

22. Individual insolvencies in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland are made up of **bankruptcy orders** and **individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs)** (though see also paragraph 23 below regarding the introduction of **debt relief orders (DROs)** in England and Wales). Insolvent individuals in England and Wales are dealt with mainly under the Insolvency Act 1986. A bankruptcy order is made on the petition of the debtor or one or more of his creditors when the court is satisfied that there is no prospect of the debt being paid. (Figures for bankruptcy orders include orders relating to the estates of deceased debtors). There are also individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs) and deeds of arrangement (the latter under the Deeds of Arrangement Act 1914), which enable debtors to come to an agreement with their creditors. Table 2 summarises the above procedures for England and Wales (IVAs and Deeds of Arrangement are included under a single column) and Table 2a provides bankruptcy orders further split by petition type. Changes to bankruptcy law in England and Wales introduced by the Enterprise Act 2002 came into force on 1 April 2004 – the Act made no changes to the existing individual voluntary arrangement regime.

23. The Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 introduced a new route into personal insolvency called the debt relief order (DRO), which came into effect from 6 April 2009. DROs provide debt relief, subject to some restrictions, and are suitable for people domiciled in England and Wales who do not own their own home, have little surplus income (no more than £50 a month), assets (other than possibly a car) not exceeding £300, and less than £15,000 of debt. DROs do not involve the courts; they are run by The Insolvency Service in partnership with skilled debt advisers, called approved intermediaries. A DRO lasts for a period of one year before discharge and, as for bankruptcy, there are penalties in place for debtors who seek to abuse the process. Additional information may be found on The Insolvency Service website here: <http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/bankruptcy/alternativestobankruptcy.htm>. Table 2 includes DROs from the second quarter of 2009.

24. Table 2b records numbers of Income Payments Orders (IPOs) and Income Payments Agreements (IPAs) where the bankrupt makes regular payments from surplus income towards his/her debts for a period of time, either by court order or by agreement. The figures record numbers of IPOs/IPAs made in each period, they do not, in general, relate to the date of the original bankruptcy order. Table 2b records a number of IPAs before Q2 2004 because the IPA provisions of the Enterprise Act 2002 (commenced on 1 April 2004) were applicable, upon commencement, to pre-commencement bankruptcies.

25. Insolvent individuals in Scotland (Table 4) are subject to **sequestration** (bankruptcy) or **protected trust deeds** under the Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1985 (as amended). This Act was amended by the

Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1993. On April 1 2008 the Bankruptcy and Diligence etc. (Scotland) Act 2007 came into force making significant changes to some aspects of bankruptcy, debt relief and debt enforcement in Scotland. Most notably, as far as these statistics are concerned, it introduced a new route into bankruptcy for people with low income and low assets (LILA). The sequestration figures for Q2 2008 onwards include these new LILA cases; therefore trends in numbers of sequestrations before and after this date should be interpreted with care. Protected trust deeds are voluntary arrangements in Scotland, but although they fulfil much the same role as individual voluntary arrangements, there are important differences in the way they are set up and administered. Details of both sequestrations and protected trust deeds are found on the register of insolvencies, which is maintained by the Accountant in Bankruptcy. Further information about insolvency in Scotland can be found on the Accountant's website at [www.aib.gov.uk](http://www.aib.gov.uk). It should also be noted that from April 2008, personal insolvency statistics have been extracted from information published on the AiB website (latest release 20 April 2011); whereas previously it was supplied on request, tailored to our publication requirements.

26. Insolvent individuals in Northern Ireland are dealt with under the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 and are recorded under Table 6. On 27 March 2006 the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 came into operation and implemented similar changes to bankruptcy procedures as the Enterprise Act 2002 introduced in England and Wales. Further information about insolvency in Northern Ireland can be found on their website at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-insolvency-index.htm>.

27. Under the Insolvency Act 1986 and the Insolvent Partnerships Order and, in Northern Ireland, the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 and the Insolvent Partnerships Order (Northern Ireland) 1995, insolvent partnerships may be wound up as an unregistered company or administered following bankruptcy orders against the partners. Insolvent Partnerships can also enter administration or a voluntary arrangement.

28. Numbers of insolvencies are not directly comparable with official estimates of business stock, formations or closures. Statistics of business start-ups and closures that are directly comparable with each other have been assembled from VAT and PAYE registered unit records and are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the 'Business Demography' report. The latest figures are those for 2009, and were issued in an ONS statistics bulletin on 1 December 2010. More detailed figures are available via the on-line database NOMIS. Additionally, the 'Small and Medium Enterprise statistics (SME) for the UK and regions' report, published by BIS, estimates the total number of businesses in the United Kingdom at the start of 2009 at 4.8 million.

Information concerning insolvency legislation, policy evaluation and research in England and Wales may be obtained from the Insolvency Service website at [Insolvency legislation, policy, evaluation and research](#)

### National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

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