

# The Impacts of Reduced Access to Legal Assistance: Evidence from England and Wales

Project Outline for the International Legal Aid Group Conference 2025

Juliet-Nil Uraz \*

June, 2025

## Abstract

In 2013, England and Wales implemented a sweeping legal aid reform that drastically reduced publicly funded legal assistance for low-income households facing social welfare issues. The 80% funding cut led to uneven provider closures and increased congestion, restricting legal assistance to immediate court actions while eliminating support for early interventions. This paper examines the reform's impact on access to justice and socioeconomic outcomes for vulnerable populations. Constructing panel data on provider activity from 2011 to 2023, we assess its effects on legal aid availability, eviction and debt court cases, housing market tension, healthcare services use, and mortality. We adopt a dual empirical strategy : first, a difference-in-differences approach leveraging spatial and temporal variations in access to providers, measured by changes in distance; and second, a Bartik instrument to address differential provider resilience to the reform and predict shifts in legal aid provision. We quantify the cumulative impact of reduced access to free, in-person legal assistance on outcomes with lasting socioeconomic implications. Preliminary findings suggest that the legal aid cuts increased the average distance to the nearest provider by 3.2 km. This reduced access led to localized rises in eviction filings and orders, as well as higher mortality over the decade. This study highlights an overlooked intervention targeting households at risk of homelessness and over-indebtedness. Using a Marginal Value for Public Funds framework, it shows how a cost-savings reform initiated by the central government may have shifted welfare costs onto local authorities, offering empirical insights into the unintended socioeconomic and public health consequences of cutting legal aid post-recession.

**JEL codes:** G51, H53, H75, I38, K15, K41

**Keywords:** Legal Assistance, Legal Aid, Eviction, Housing, Mortality, Austerity

---

\*London School of Economics - Opportunity Insights, Harvard. Please do not circulate without the author's permission.  
Corresponding author: j.uraz@lse.ac.uk - julietniluraz@fas.harvard.edu. This project draws on my doctoral dissertation at the London School of Economics. Please note that it is a work in progress and may be revised. All views expressed, as well as any errors, are my own. This version was prepared for the International Legal Aid Conference held in Cologne, Germany, in June 2025. I am deeply grateful to Varsha Aithala, Catherine Albiston, Marcella Alsan, Elliott Ash, Nimrod Ben-Cnaan, Matthew Burnett, Leonard Bocquet, Elisabetta De Cao, Raj Chetty, Brandon Davis, Mary-Alice Doyle, Francisco Ferreira, Hazel Genn, Deven Ghelani, Thiemo Fetzner, Paul Heaton, Nathaniel Hendren, Johann Koehler, Alyx Mark, Michael Makowsky, James Organ, Berkay Ozcan, Amaia Palencia-Esteban, Lindsey Poole, Rebecca Sandefur, Marisol Smith, Margaux Suteau, Kathryn Young, Jo Wilding, the American Bar Foundation Early Career Access to Justice Initiative fellows, members of the Legal Aid Practitioners Group, the Law Centre Network, all my colleagues at Policy in Practice, as well as many workshop and seminar participants for generously sharing their time and for their helpful comments and suggestions throughout. I also warmly thank Opportunity Insights and Harvard community for hosting this project upon its completion, and for providing an inspiring environment in which to continue this research.

## 1 Context and Motivation

Legal aid serves as a funding mechanism that enables low-income households to access legal services by subsidizing the fees of contracted lawyers. Historically, these programs have focused primarily on criminal justice. However, there is growing recognition of their importance in civil matters, such as housing and welfare disputes. In the United States, an increasing number of cities have started to subsidize legal representation for tenants facing eviction Roumiantseva (2022). By contrast, the United Kingdom has a much longer history of civil legal aid. Shortly after World War II, it developed a comprehensive system of publicly funded legal assistance. Initially intended to support veterans seeking divorce, the program evolved into a means-tested system that eventually covered nearly all areas of law. Until recent reforms, it provided low-income households with state-funded legal advice and representation to help them navigate the complexities of the everyday justice system.

Despite the prominence of legal aid programs, little is known about their impacts on welfare and public health, and even less about the consequences of restricting their scope and eligibility in times of austerity. Recent global surveys have revealed widespread unmet needs for legal assistance World Justice Project (2019), yet robust evaluations of restricted access remain scarce. The inclusion of Access to Justice in the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 16.3), underscores the pressing need for evidence on the welfare implications of expanding or curtailing such programs (OECD (2019), World Bank (2019)). While emerging empirical work, particularly in the United States, has begun to explore the benefits of expanding legal assistance in eviction cases, this paper turns to the opposite scenario: what happens when the provision of civil legal assistance is severely reduced across multiple areas of law. Focusing on the 2013 legal aid reform in England and Wales, this study provides new national-level evidence on the consequences of such a policy shift. Specifically, it investigates how reduced access to legal assistance in social welfare disputes affected court outcomes, housing market pressures, healthcare services utilization, and mortality rates.

The 2013 reform marked one of the most significant austerity-era changes to the legal aid system. In response to the global financial crisis, the UK introduced broad public spending cuts across sectors, including justice and local government services. Civil legal aid was particularly affected: the reform sharply reduced funding, limiting eligibility to cases involving immediate risks to health or housing security. It also shifted the system toward a last-resort model by eliminating funding for early advice interventions - services that previously helped resolve disputes escalating to court proceedings. As a result, legal aid, which had once provided state-funded advice and representation to low-income households throughout their legal journeys, was drastically scaled back.

These changes undermined access along three key dimensions - availability, affordability, and proximity - reducing the supply of timely, free, in-person legal assistance for local communities without introducing effective substitutes. Although the government promoted digital and telephone-based provision,

such alternatives often failed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations (Balmer et al. (2012), Burton (2018)). The reform led to a 70% drop in the number of supported cases and an 80% reduction in funding (Figures 1 and 2). Applied uniformly, it ignored regional variations in local providers' capacity to absorb the shock. The financial strain unintentionally halved the number of legal aid providers between 2011 and 2019 (Figure 3a), increasing congestion at remaining offices and forcing clients to travel farther for assistance (Figure 3b). This generated growing spatial and temporal disparities in access to subsidized, in-person legal assistance - even for cases still covered by the scheme. The resulting geographic variation in service availability provides a quasi-experimental setting to estimate the Marginal Value of Public Funds (MVPF) associated with civil legal aid. This study leverages that variation to assess how reduced access to legal assistance affected outcomes in court proceedings, housing market pressures, health service use, and mortality.

The primary objectives of the reform were to achieve significant cost savings and enhance overall value for taxpayers. Although it significantly lowered government spending on legal aid, the full welfare implications remain uncertain nearly a decade later. Serious concerns from stakeholders and the National Audit Office persist regarding potential shifts of costs to other public sectors, a phenomenon that has not been thoroughly evaluated (National Audit Office (2014), National Audit Office (2024)). By restricting the scheme's scope, the reform may have led to more complex and costly cases, poorer outcomes for affected parties and unintended additional costs such as temporary accommodation for local authorities responsible for preventing homelessness among evicted tenants. This project proposes to adopt a MVPF approach by focusing on social welfare cases, which have experienced drastic reductions in access, and by investigating the effects on three sets of outcomes: eviction and debt court cases, housing market indices, and health outcomes measured through mortality rates and healthcare services uses.

## **2 Contribution**

This project addresses the limited evidence on the welfare cost and benefits of legal assistance programs from a value-for-money perspective (Abel and Vignola (2010), Stout Risius Ross, Inc. (2016)). It adds to welfare analyses conducted in the US context by Abramson (2022) and van Dijk et al. (2024), which focus on frictional costs on the housing market, while extending the analysis to homelessness and health outcomes. Moreover, it contributes to the growing literature evaluating legal counsel programs in civil cases, primarily centered on the US. Initial evidence generated through randomized controlled trials (Seron et al. (2001), Greiner and Pattanayak (2011), Greiner et al. (2013)) showed that personalised legal assistance improved court outcomes compared to generic information provision. Further evaluations of the right-to-counsel initiative in NYC (Ellen et al. (2021), Cassidy and Curie (2022), van Dijk et al. (2024)) found that beneficiaries were less likely to be evicted and incurred lower monetary judgments when offered legal representation.

In contrast, this project provides the first national-scale evidence outside the U.S. of a *negative* supply

shock in legal assistance. It offers a comprehensive perspective on the effects of removing legal assistance across all social welfare cases simultaneously, rather than focusing solely on eviction proceedings, quantifying the multifaceted impacts of transforming legal aid into a last-resort scheme. By including effects on mortality, it links with sociolegal and public health literatures that connect unmet legal needs to health status. Research documenting health-justice partnerships has demonstrated the potential of collaborations between healthcare providers and legal advisors in improving physical and mental health outcomes (Tobin-Tyler et al. (2011)). While Genn (2019) has theorized the bidirectional relationship between unresolved legal problem and deteriorating health, Leifheit et al. (2024) have recently shown that living in areas eligible for right-to-counsel reduced adverse birth outcomes among Medicaid-insured parents in NYC.

Lastly, this project builds on emerging evidence indicating that legal assistance is more effective when integrated with other services (Caspi and Rafkin (2024), Uraz (2024)) and can impact welfare participation over the long-run (Cunningham and Goodman-Bacon (2025), Britto et al. (2025)). Joint models of legal provision and benefits support are particularly common for welfare cases (Newton et al. (2020)). It connects with studies documenting the impacts of rental assistance on self-rated health (Keene et al. (2020)), mental health (Denary et al. (2021)), nutrition (Denary et al. (2023)) and Hemoglobin levels (Fenelon et al. (2022)). By evaluating legal aid as a welfare policy, it provides a legal assistance perspective on the dynamic relationship between eviction and poverty, a connection extensively documented by Desmond (2016) and recently quantified by Collinson et al. (2024) in the US context. It quantifies the role that legal assistance can play in amplifying austerity effects demonstrated in voting behaviours (Fetzer (2019)), homelessness (Fetzer et al. (2023)), and mortality (Berman and Hovland (2024)).

### **3 Data**

#### **3.1 Legal Aid Providers Activity in England and Wales**

To evaluate changes in access to legal assistance, this project draws on data from the Ministry of Justice's Legal Aid Statistics, which records the activity levels and locations of legal aid providers quarterly since 2009. This dataset includes providers' postcodes, volumes of caseworks, type of legal assistance and areas of law. This mapping facilitates a spatial analysis of access across areas of law, including housing, debt, and welfare benefits, capturing the effects of provider contraction on local service availability. Distance is measured from the provider postcode to the population-weighted centroid of the main geographical unit: the 7,201 Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs). MSOAs are census entities which boundaries are drawn to ensure an average number of inhabitants of 8,000.

This open-source dataset does not represent the full universe of organisations offering legal support. In particular, it excludes not-for-profit organisations that have not engaged in legal aid work since 2009, even if they have continued to provide other forms of legal services to low-income households. Additionally, it omits organisations that stopped providing legal aid after the implementation of LASPO but

remained active in other areas of legal assistance for which legal aid funding was no longer available.

At the time of writing, no comprehensive time series exist for the activities of legal advice providers operating outside the legal aid system. Existing literature (Society (2017); Wilding (2021)) relies exclusively on the Ministry of Justice dataset and is therefore limited to providers within the legal aid scheme. To address this gap, we are currently constructing a new database to track the locations and operational periods of all organisations delivering legal support to low-income households. This effort draws on data from the Charity Commission, Companies House, and civil society actors, and focuses on identifying advice providers that meet recognised quality standards.

As a first step, we acknowledge this limitation but proceed under the assumption that providers not engaged in legal aid work are imperfect substitutes for the type of assistance previously available under the legal aid scheme — namely, personalised, high-intensity legal support delivered by solicitors. This contrasts with more generic, lower-intensity forms of advice typically offered by volunteers or paralegals. To further mitigate this concern, we cluster the analysis at the local authority level.

### **3.2 Eviction and Debt Court Outcomes**

Court data serve as indicators of household welfare costs, with eviction marking housing instability and debt judgments impacting credit scores. The primary measures include the incidence of eviction and debt cases per 1,000 inhabitants in each MSOA, alongside the rate of adverse judgments (eviction orders and debt judgments without installment options) between 2001 and 2023. Legal aid remained theoretically available for eviction cases once eviction materializes in court actions, while access to legal aid for debt issues was restricted to cases where the home was at risk. The reform led to a 45% reduction in legal aid for housing cases and a 97% reduction for debt cases. Eviction data were obtained through Freedom of Information requests, and debt judgments data were accessed via the County Court Judgments database. Debt data includes claims up to £100,000, as well as the incidence of cases for claims below £250, £500 and £1000.

### **3.3 Housing Market Indices**

The following indices reflect housing market tensions, capturing both housing affordability and the risk of homelessness. Housing affordability is proxied by houses prices related to the share of low-income households in the area. Average yearly house prices by MSOA are sourced from the House Price Statistics for Small Areas. While this project aims to include rental prices as well, rental transactions data from property search website is currently only available to the author for the period 2014 to 2021. To capture homelessness risk, this project relies on the comprehensive Statutory Homelessness statistics reported by local authorities to the central government. This data is available only for the 348 local authorities of England and includes annual counts of households on local authority housing waiting lists, counts of

households assessed for homelessness relief or prevention and those in temporary accommodations.

### 3.4 Mortality Rates and Use of Emergency Services

Mortality data from the Mortality Statistics for England and Wales supplies yearly death counts by age and sex at the MSOA level for analysis spanning 2001 to 2021. The underlying cause of death is available from 2013. The project will focus on age-adjusted mortality to assess health impacts accurately. Additionally, avoidable mortality data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) captures preventable and treatable deaths, providing a supplementary health metric at the MSOA level for intervals between 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 (England only). To further investigate the reform's effect on poor health outcomes, we additionally look at attendance and emergency weekly admissions in the 316 emergency services of England (data available from 2010) and occupancy of hospital beds at the 204 National Health Service organisations level (data available from 2000).

## 4 Empirical Strategies

This project uses the 2013 legal aid reform as a quasi-experiment, utilizing spatial and temporal variation in access to legal services. Two empirical strategies are employed: (1) a Difference-in-Differences (DiD) approach using changes in distance to legal aid providers as a treatment variable, and (2) a Bartik (shift-share) instrumental variable (IV) approach based on legal providers' caseload composition. Both strategies incorporate an event-study design to capture the reform's dynamic effects over time, providing estimates of its impact on socio-economic vulnerability, housing stability, and health outcomes. We intend to implement and compare these different empirical strategies to assess the sensitivity of the estimates to alternative specifications and reinforce the robustness of our conclusions.

The first strategy defines treatment and control groups based on relative changes in local access to legal aid post-reform. Following (Lindo et al. (2020), Fischer et al. (2018)), it treats changes in distance to the nearest provider as exogenous variation. Treatment can be defined in several ways:

- **Static** - areas are classified as treated or untreated based on the relative change in distance experienced over a specified window. We define this window as Q2 2012 to Q1 2014, spanning from the date the reform received Royal Assent — when the Bill passed all stages of parliamentary debate and its final version became publicly known — until one full financial year after implementation. The reform came into force on April 1, 2013, and the UK financial year runs until March 31. This period captures both anticipatory behaviours and the non-immediate adjustments of legal aid providers to the post-reform landscape;
- **Staggered** - Although the 2013 reform was not staggered in its implementation, its effects on access evolved dynamically. The number of legal aid providers continued to decline nationally in the years following the reform. Consequently, we expect heterogeneous treatment effects over time, as the erosion of supply may have triggered different local responses. In this approach, treated units

are defined as areas that experienced an increase in distance to their nearest legal aid provider at any point after the reform. Unlike the static definition, this strategy does not account for the magnitude of the change in distance but treats any positive, non-zero increase as an indicator of treatment.

Treatment can also be operationalized as:

- **Binary** - For example, by using the quintile distribution of changes in distance between Q2 2012 and Q1 2014, we define treated areas as those in the top quintile. These areas experienced an average increase in distance of 14.3 km.
- **Continuous** - Alternatively, we take the continuous change in distance and estimate the marginal effect of each additional kilometer of distance to the nearest provider on the outcomes of interest.

The second strategy employs a Bartik IV approach (Goldsmith-Pinkham et al. (2020)) using variation in providers' pre-reform caseloads to quantify the differential impact of the reform. The key insight is that providers varied in how much of their activity was concentrated in areas of law that were more or less severely affected by the 2012 reform. The Ministry of Justice's Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) predicted the extent of anticipated volume reductions and funding losses for each area of law (e.g., housing, debt, etc.) and type of assistance (e.g., early intervention vs. full representation). Using these domain-level shocks, we construct an MSOA-level instrument that captures each area's predicted exposure to legal aid retrenchment.

By isolating the impact of the reform through differential supply-side provider exposure, the Bartik IV strategy further ensures that observed changes in outcomes are not driven by endogenous shifts in local demand. By drawing on the entire network of providers to define changes in access, this approach also accounts for the clustering of legal services, which creates differential access patterns between rural and urban areas. The instrument is computed for each MSOA and is inspired by a gravity framework to model legal aid flows. It captures each MSOA's degree of exposure to changes in legal aid access by reflecting both providers resilience and their spatial distribution.

## **5 Mapping overall provision of legal aid across areas of law**

Using changes in distance as a proxy for changes in access to legal aid poses several challenges. One key limitation is that access is conditional on the legal specialisation of providers. Beneficiaries can only receive appropriate assistance if a nearby provider is both qualified and contracted by the Ministry of Justice to deliver services in the relevant area of law. At the same time, providers specialising in areas of law that were most affected by the reform are likely to have experienced more substantial operational impacts. The structure and funding models of legal aid providers differ substantially. Private firms often operate with mixed client portfolios—balancing legal aid and privately funded work—whereas not-for-profit organisations typically rely on a combination of government, local authority, and philan-

thropic funding for services not covered by legal aid. These structural differences are likely to produce **heterogeneous** responses to the reform.

Overall, we expect providers' responses to the reform to vary along several dimensions: their *legal structure* (private firm vs. not-for-profit), *size* and *geographical outreach* (e.g., single-office vs. multi-branch firms), *degree of specialisation* (generalist vs. specialist), and their *baseline exposure to legal aid* (measured by volume of cases and revenue share). These characteristics shape both their vulnerability to legal aid cuts and their strategic capacity to adapt. Providers may respond at both the **intensive** and **extensive** margins. At the intensive margin, organisations might adjust the scope or focus of their services—for instance, by diversifying into new areas of law, consolidating services by closing some offices, or expanding to new locations. At the extensive margin, they may exit the market altogether, remain but scale back services, or even enter the market if new opportunities arise under the revised funding environment.

To better understand how the legal aid landscape responded to these reforms—and how this reshaping may have driven heterogeneous effects across different areas—we present descriptive evidence on sectoral trends. Our analysis confirms that many providers anticipated the reform and exited the market prior to the LASPO Act's implementation. However, we also observe that some firms entered the market during this period, contributing to a substantial reshuffling to the spatial distribution of legal aid provision (see Figure 4). While a stock analysis reveals a general decline in the number of active providers (Figure 3a) and a gradual increase in average distance to the nearest provider (Figure 3b), a more granular analysis shows that some areas actually experienced a decline in distance due to high turnover, encouraged in part by the competitive tendering process for legal aid contracts.

Two parallel trends are particularly noteworthy. First, the sector experienced growing **specialisation**, with an increasing share of firms focusing on fewer areas of law post-reform (see Figure 6). While over half of providers covered four or more areas of law in 2009-10, only 25% did so in 2013-14. Second, we observe a trend toward **consolidation**, with more firms operating multiple offices. In 2009-10, over 60% of firms had a single office; by 2013-14, more than 50% had two or more (Figure 7). Meanwhile, the largest providers reduced their footprint: while some firms operated more than 30 offices in 2009-10, none did so by 2013-14.

These structural shifts motivated the construction of a second measure of access to legal aid at the MSOA level. While still accounting for geographic distance, this measure introduces variation by area of law and adjusts for spatial clustering of providers—particularly in metropolitan areas. Instead of considering only the distance to the nearest provider, it incorporates all providers  $p$  active in a given legal domain  $a$  at baseline (defined as the 2009-10 financial year), calculating the distance from each MSOA's population-weighted centroid to each provider.

To reflect provider capacity, the measure is weighted by the number of legal aid cases handled in the relevant area of law  $Volume_{a,p}$ . It also accounts for each provider's degree of specialisation—measured as the share of their total legal aid workload devoted to that area of law  $Specialisation_{a,p}$ . In an alternative



specification, specialisation is proxied by the share of legal aid income derived from that area relative to the provider’s total legal aid revenue.

Drawing on a gravity model framework, the resulting provider-level exposure is then interacted with the size of the low-income population in each MSOA,  $Population_{MSOA}$ , — which serves as a proxy for legal need or “market size.” The resulting composite metric estimates the baseline flow of legal aid services into each MSOA, or more precisely, provides a relative measure of access to legal aid for a given legal issue in area  $a$ . While not interpretable in absolute terms, the metrics allows for consistent comparison and ranking of MSOAs by their level of access.

$$Access_{MSOA,a} = \sum_p \frac{1}{Distance_{MSOA,p}} \times Volume_{a,p} \times Specialisation_{a,p} \times Population_{MSOA}$$

In our instrumental variable strategy, we use the access weights described above to construct a Bartik-style instrument that varies at the MSOA level. Prior to the reform, the Ministry of Justice conducted an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) estimating the expected reduction in legal aid workload and income across legal domains and provider types (Ministry of Justice of the United Kingdom (2011)). Using these domain-specific predictions, along with provider-level data on case volumes and revenues, we compute a predicted shock for each provider —capturing the anticipated impact of the reform given their pre-reform distribution of legal aid work.

These predicted provider-level shocks are then aggregated to the MSOA level by weighting each provider’s predicted shock by their relative contribution to the provision of legal aid in that area of law. The resulting MSOA-level instrument captures the expected change in access due to the reform, based on both the geographic distribution and legal-area exposure of each community. Table 10.1.2 in the Appendix reports the estimated percentage impact by area of law, as outlined in the EIA.

## 6 Preliminary Results

Preliminary results suggest that areas most affected by the reform in the two years following its implementation gradually experienced higher eviction rates of eviction, both in terms of claims and orders. These differences become statistically significant approximately five years after the reform and appear to diminish during the pandemic-era eviction moratorium (Figures 8a, 8b). Alternative specifications and empirical strategies broadly support this pattern. Pooled average treatment effects over the post-reform period indicate an increase of 8.7 eviction claims and 5.6 orders per 100,000 inhabitants, representing a 26% and 13% increase, respectively, relative to the 2012 mean baseline.<sup>1</sup> Six years after the reform, these same areas also exhibited a significantly higher mortality rate. However, when pooled over the entire post-reform period, the average treatment effect on mortality is statistically insignificant (Figure 9a).

<sup>1</sup>These figures are preliminary and should not be cited without prior authorisation. Please contact the author for the most up-to-date estimates.

## **6.1 Why would access to legal aid matter for court outcomes?**

Several mechanisms could explain how the reduction in access to legal assistance has led to an increase in eviction claims and orders in the most affected areas. First, the rise in the number of eviction claims may indicate a decline in the number of eviction cases settled outside of courts, contrary to policymakers' expectations. The reform was implemented under the belief that legal assistance often led to unnecessary litigation, anticipating that legal aid lawyers might push for court proceedings incentivised by the prospect of higher remuneration for longer-lasting cases. However, the higher number of claims observed in the most affected areas after the reform suggests that access to legal assistance may actually facilitate compromises or help tenants move out without resorting to formal eviction processes, before landlords file claims with the court. Conversely, landlords may be incentivized to directly use the formal process when they anticipate that tenants will have limited access to legal representation, using the court system as a deterrent when tenants are less likely to represent themselves.

Second, the increased number of eviction orders issued could be attributed to fewer cases in which tenants had legal representation, or because tenants accessed legal representation too late in the process to avoid eviction orders. This is exemplified by the transformation of legal aid into a last-resort defense mechanism, such as the duty scheme at court, where lawyers meet legal aid clients on the spot and have very limited time and information to build a defense. Our fieldwork suggests that the outcomes obtained through the duty scheme are often perceived as unfavourable from a tenant's perspective, with Suspended Possession Orders being commonly seen as the 'least bad' outcome. These orders allow tenants to stay in the property as long as they meet certain conditions. However, tenants face the risk of facilitated eviction if they fail to comply. Our preliminary results suggest a higher number of Suspended Possession Orders in areas most affected by the reform, even if the effects are not statistically significant, potentially signaling the role played by duty scheme lawyers in securing this outcome in areas where they are the only representatives of legal aid left.

## **6.2 Why would access to legal assistance matter for mortality?**

A decrease in access to legal assistance may lead to a higher mortality rate in the most affected areas through several potential mechanisms. First, the increased number of evicted households indicates a rise in housing insecurity. Formal eviction proceedings represent only a conservative estimate of the total number of people facing eviction prospects; many individuals move out before court proceedings take place. Reduced access to legal assistance also means a higher number of households navigating the legal journey alone, leading to increased stress especially for the most vulnerable population.

There is a body of evidence linking the experience of unresolved legal problems to poor physical and mental health outcomes. Studies indicate a bidirectional relationship between legal problems and health outcomes, with legal problems exacerbating health conditions and vice versa. The World Justice Project estimated in 2019 that one in three people suffered from physical or mental health issues as

a consequence of their legal problems (World Justice Project (2019)). Legal needs surveys report a high level of stress, anxiety, depression, and physical health difficulties among households with social welfare legal problems (YouGov (2019), YouGov (2024)). Moreover, the role of legal problems in exacerbating health inequalities has largely been theorized in the sociolegal literature (Pleasence et al. (2008), Genn (2019)) and explored in the public health literature (see for example Leifheit et al. (2024)).

Such a causal relationship between legal problems and morbidity is especially acute when it comes to housing quality and security, domestic violence, or immigration (Tobin-Tyler et al. (2011)). Repeated and sustained exposure to stress has direct effects on high blood pressure, development of diabetes and ischemic heart disease (McEwen, 2000), and indirect effects on health status through its influence on risky health behaviours (Adler and Newman, 2002; Mullainathan and Shafir, 2013). Legal problems triggering stress-related ill-health have also been shown to lead to a higher number of consultations with healthcare professionals (Pleasence (2006)).

By contrast, access to legal assistance can reduce stress and promote well-being by addressing both legal and non-legal needs that influence health outcomes. The absence of such support often leaves households without holistic guidance, exacerbating vulnerability. Preliminary evidence from a side project led by the author for the Legal Education Foundation, in collaboration with Policy in Practice, draws on administrative benefits data to track households following receipt of legal assistance. The findings suggest that when supporting tenants facing eviction, legal practitioners often go beyond strictly housing-related advice (Uraz (2024)). Lawyers may refer their clients to healthcare providers, particularly when identifying disabilities or mental health issues that could serve as evidence to adjourn eviction cases. Additionally, they may assess clients' eligibility for public benefits or local welfare schemes when suspecting non-take-up, or when helping to establish credible plans to address rent arrears and persuade a judge not to issue an eviction order— all of which can have spillover effects on prospects for better health.

Preliminary findings suggest that the observed mortality effects are concentrated among older adults, though this remains under investigation. This pattern would be consistent with greater vulnerability among populations most affected by digital exclusion and the lack of in-person alternatives to the holistic support legal aid can provide. To further explore potential mechanisms, we are currently examining the reform's impact on hospital bed occupancy and the use of emergency services. One hypothesis is that patients may remain hospitalized longer if medical teams are reluctant to discharge them without confidence in their housing security or overall safety—conditions potentially worsened by reduced access to legal support. We are also investigating whether the reform affected the incidence of emergency service use for mental health crises or intimate partner violence, which may increase when timely, preventative legal assistance is unavailable.

### 6.3 How can we disentangle the effect of the reform from austerity?

One might be concerned that the effects of the reform reflect only the broader impact of the austerity cuts implemented by the UK government across a wide range of sectors. This concern is based on evidence of spatial variation in the intensity of welfare cuts at the local authority level — a variation exploited by Fetzer (2019), Fetzer et al. (2023), and Berman and Hovland (2024) to measure the impacts of austerity on voting behaviour, homelessness, and mortality, respectively. To address this concern, we retrieve data on exposure to welfare austerity cuts, following Fetzer (2019), and interact our main *Access* variable with the austerity measure. Additionally, we include local authority fixed effects in our specification to account for variation within local authorities.

Pooled Difference-in-Differences estimates, using the continuous definition of the change in the distance variable, suggest that even if a higher score of austerity exposure amplifies the effect of the reform, austerity alone does not explain the observed findings. Specifically, the key DiD coefficient interacting the change in distance and the Post dummy remains significant after accounting for austerity exposure (see Table 1). Furthermore, the relationship between the change in distance and austerity exposure appears to be weakly negatively correlated (Figure 10). Finally, the results hold when local authority fixed effects are included, though confidence intervals are inflated due to the smaller sample size, as some local authorities lack variation in distance across their MSOAs. Nonetheless, to address additional concerns, we are currently constructing indices of exposure to the austerity and to the financial crisis at the MSOA level.

### 6.4 What can we learn from the geography of legal needs?

This project leverages a quasi-experimental setting created by a sudden shock to the supply of legal aid services. To strengthen the analysis, we examine how the gap between legal needs and service provision varied across areas before and after the reform. To compare areas with similar levels of legal needs, we adopt a methodology inspired by Pleasence et al. (2001) and construct proxies of local demand for housing legal aid. We compute the average number of households facing eviction proceedings, those in fuel poverty and those assessed for homelessness prevention or relief by their local authority. We then compare this estimated number of households likely to encounter housing legal issues with the count of active housing providers in the region.

Our estimates suggest that, at constant needs, the ratio of clients per provider ranged from 1,000 to 3,000 in 2011, and expanded from 1,000 to 20,000 in 2021 as shown in Figure 11. This supports the claim that the reform changed the geography of the provision of assistance, to a large extent irrespective of local needs. Figure 12 additionally shows that needs, measured based on this definition, have relatively evolved at a same pace across the country, except in few localised areas. As a robustness checks, we are testing the sensitivity of our estimates when excluding areas which experienced the greatest change in needs.

## 7 Marginal Value of Public Funds

By examining how reduced access to legal aid affects welfare-relevant outcomes (e.g., housing stability, mortality rates, emergency uses and court outcomes), this study aims to ultimately assess whether the cost savings from the reform were offset by wider social costs adopting a Marginal Value for Public Funds perspective. To this end, this study will calculate the reduction in public spending due to the legal aid reform, using the provider-level data on caseload volume and expenditures reductions post-reform. It will also estimate monetized welfare impacts on outcomes from the beneficiaries' perspective, using the causal estimates derived from the DiD approaches.

These quasi-experimental estimates enable us to calculate the excess numbers of court cases, deaths and emergency services usage attributable to the reform. To translate these effects into monetary values, we will: (1) estimate the additional costs borne by the public sector as externalities resulting from reduced legal aid, including courts costs from increased hearings, local authority costs for additional households in temporary accommodation, and NHS costs from increased emergency service use, (2) use existing literature estimates to monetize welfare impacts on individuals, such as income effects from an increased likelihood of eviction (Collinson et al. (2024)), higher consumer bankruptcy risk (Dobbie and Song (2015)), and shortened life-expectancy (eg. based on mortality risk valuations), (3) incorporate changes in house prices to capture tenants' overall welfare gain, following van Dijk et al. (2024). These findings will provide critical guidance on structuring legal aid funding to maximize public welfare, informing policymakers on the welfare trade-offs of legal aid cuts.

## 8 Conclusion

Access to justice is a cornerstone of the rule of law, yet its practical implications remain insufficiently understood. Interventions aimed at helping individuals understand, navigate, and utilize the legal system to protect their rights have rarely been evaluated outside the courtrooms. This study underscores the importance of adopting an empirical approach to assess the functioning and broader impacts of legal assistance programs.

By examining the 2013 legal aid reform in England and Wales, this paper aims to provide evidence that changes in access to in-person legal assistance have far-reaching consequences, not only for the vulnerable households directly affected but also for wider socioeconomic and public health outcomes. The observed increases in eviction and mortality rates highlight the societal costs of unmet legal needs, suggesting that access to legal support plays a critical role in stabilizing at-risk populations and fostering social welfare.

While economics research has only started to open the black box of the civil justice system, expanding empirical investigations may prove increasingly important in light of the United Nations' recognition of access to justice as a global priority under its 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 16.3). Such work could contribute to a deeper understanding of justice systems and inform the design of policies

that safeguard both individual rights and collective well-being.

## 9 Figures

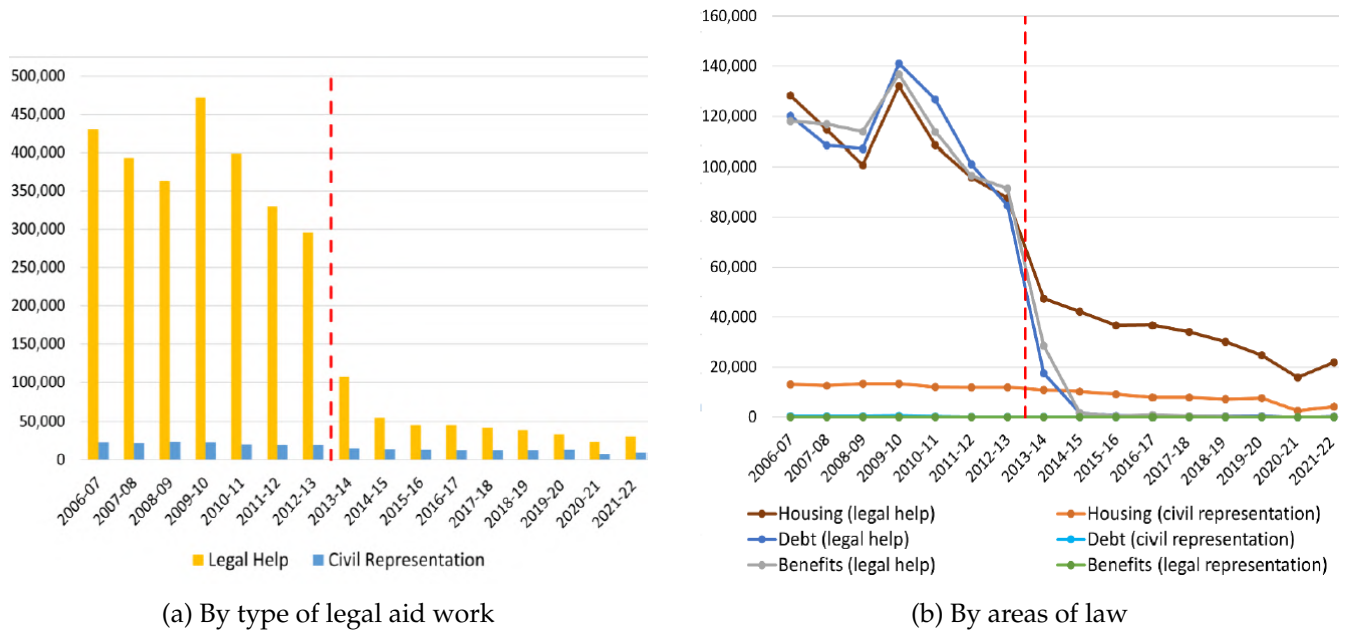


FIGURE 1: Evolution of the number of legal aid cases completed

Source: Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics, own computation.

Note: These graphs depict the volume of legal aid completed in England and Wales between 2006 and 2022. A case is considered completed when there are no further interactions between a client and their legal aid lawyer, and the lawyer has claimed their fees from the government. Legal aid work is categorized into two main types: legal help and civil representation. According to the Ministry of Justice definitions, legal help includes advice and assistance about a legal problem but does not include representation or advocacy in proceedings, while civil representation is representation by solicitors and barristers for civil cases that could go to court. The lines representing the number of legal representation cases for debt and benefits cases overlap. The dashed red line indicates when the legal aid reform, the 2013 LASPO Act, came into effect in April 2013.

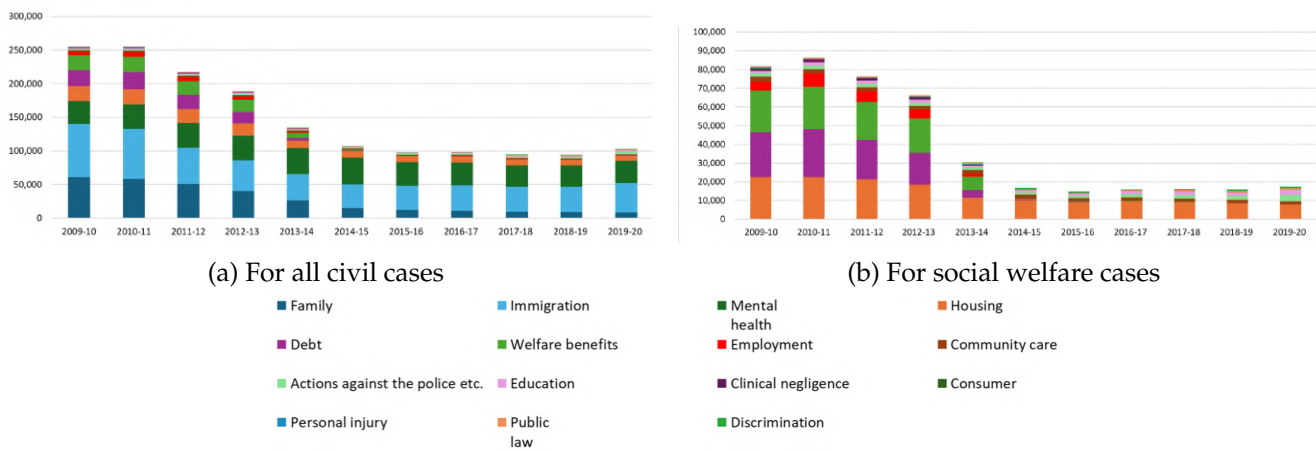
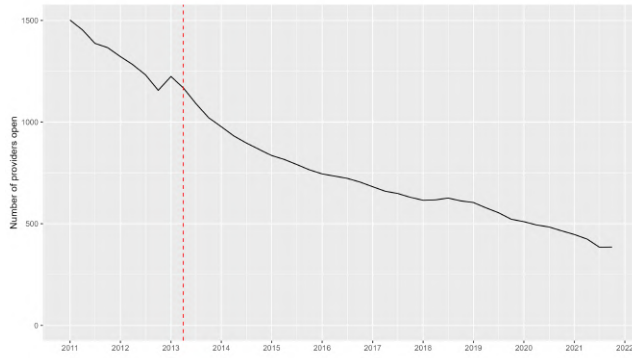


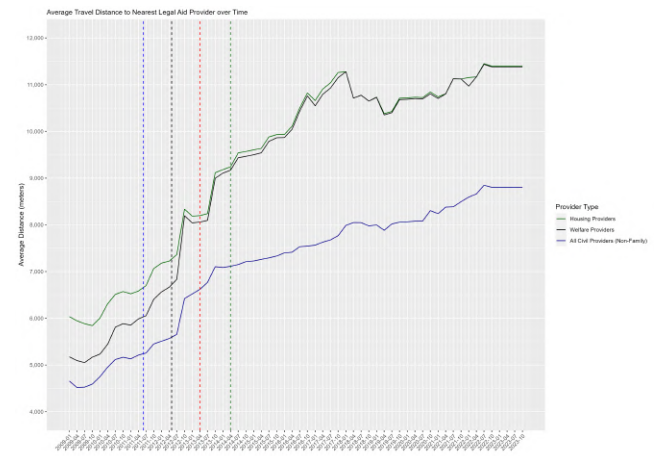
FIGURE 2: Evolution of the annual value of legal aid claims (in £) by area of law

Source: Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics, own computation.

Note: These graphs depict the evolution of legal aid funding in England and Wales between the financial years 2009 and 2019, broken down by areas of law.



(a) Number of active legal aid providers over time



(b) Average Distance to Nearest Legal Aid Provider over Time

FIGURE 3: Change in total numbers and distance to nearest legal aid providers

*Source:* Provider operations data were compiled by the author based on the Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics, and geographic coordinates of MSOA population centroids were obtained from the ONS using the 2011 Census boundaries.

*Note:* Providers are considered inactive if they do not take on new legal aid cases for all subsequent quarters. The dashed lines illustrate the timeline of the implementation of the LASPO Act, from its introduction to Parliament—the date on which its content was released to the general public—through to its full enforcement. The blue dashed line represents the date the Bill was introduced in the House of Commons (June 21, 2011). The black dashed line represents the date the Act received Royal Assent (May 1, 2012). The red dashed line represents the date the Act came fully into force (April 1, 2013). The green dashed lines indicate the window chosen to measure the change in distance: from the Royal Assent date to one financial year post-implementation (Q2 2012 to Q1 2014). Distance is measured as the straight-line distance from the population-weighted centroid of each Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA) to the postcode of the nearest legal aid provider. At each time point, if there is at least one active provider within the local authority, we calculate the distance to the nearest provider within that local authority. Distance is measured in meters.

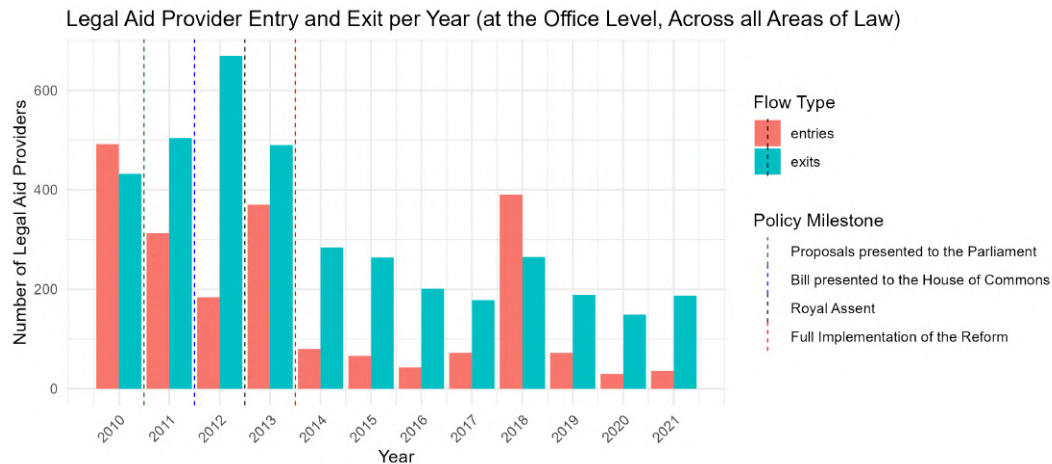


FIGURE 4: Entry and Exit Flows of Legal Aid Providers Over Time

*Note:* This graph displays the number of legal aid providers entering or exiting the market in each financial year, across all areas of law. A provider is considered to have entered the market when they open at least one legal aid case in a given location within the financial year, having not done so in any previous year. Conversely, a provider is classified as having exited when they do not initiate any new legal aid cases in all subsequent years. The dashed line indicates key policy milestones related to the adoption and implementation of the LASPO reform.



### Legal Aid Provider Entry and Exit per Year by Area of Law (Office Level)

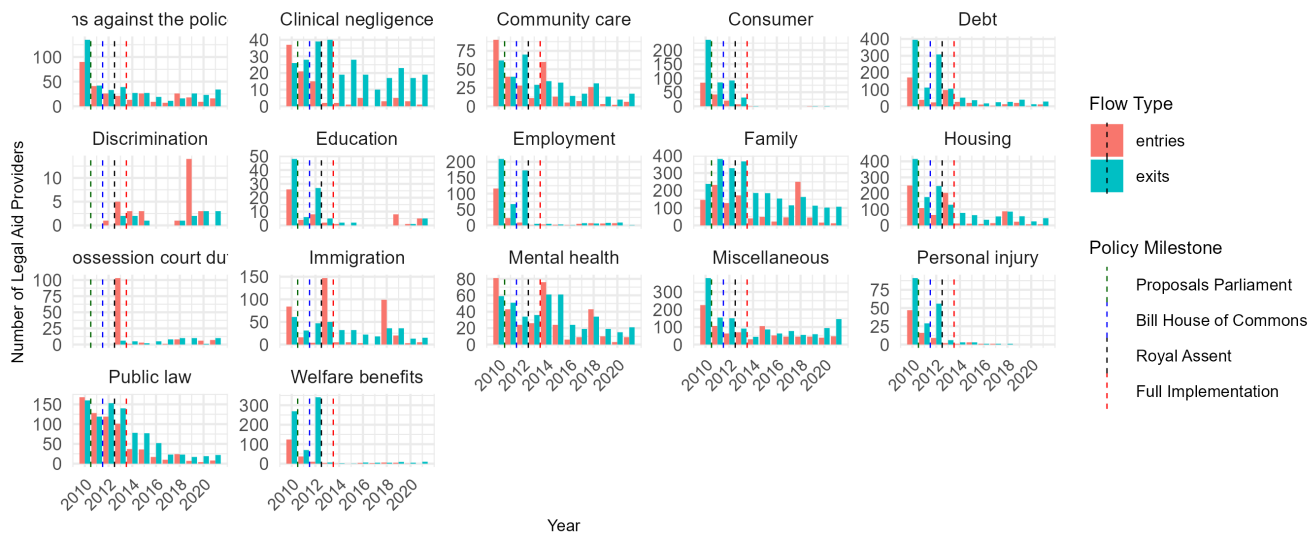


FIGURE 5: Entry and Exit Flows of Legal Aid Providers Over Time, by Area of Law

*Note:* This graph shows the number of legal aid providers entering or exiting the market in each financial year, broken down by area of law, using the classification adopted by the Ministry of Justice in the Legal Aid Statistics. A provider is considered to have entered the market in a specific area of law when they open at least one legal aid case in that domain and location during the financial year, having not done so in any previous year. Conversely, a provider is classified as having exited an area of law when they do not initiate any new legal aid cases in that domain in all subsequent years. The dashed line marks key policy milestones related to the adoption and implementation of the LASPO reform. Note that providers may operate across multiple areas of law; as such, figures across categories should not be summed to obtain total market entries or exits.

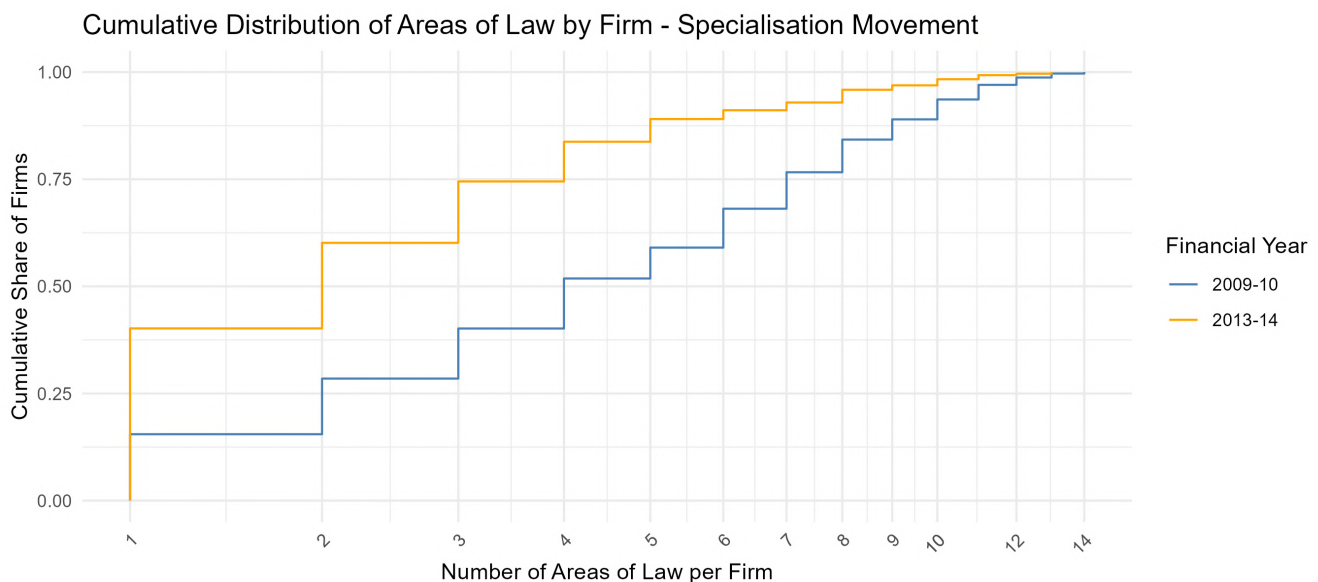


FIGURE 6: Cumulative Distribution of the Number of Areas of Law Covered by Legal Aid Providers, 2009–2014

*Note:* This graph shows the number of areas of law covered by legal aid providers in 2009–10 and 2013–14, illustrating a trend toward greater specialisation, with a lower share of providers covering multiple areas of law following the LASPO reform.

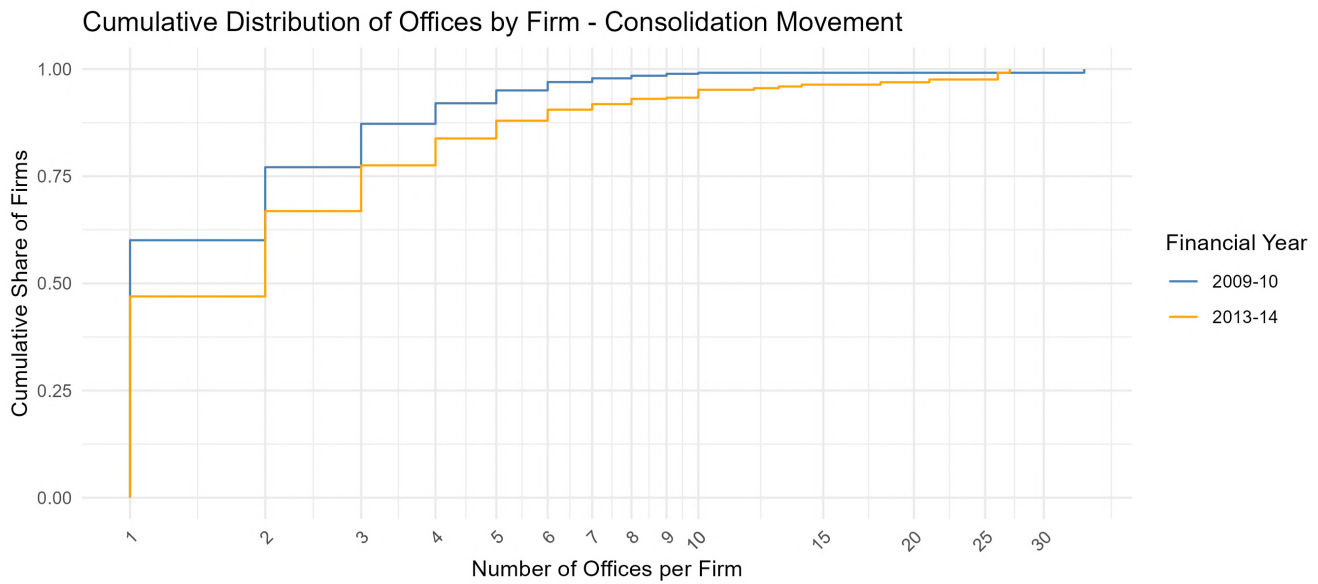
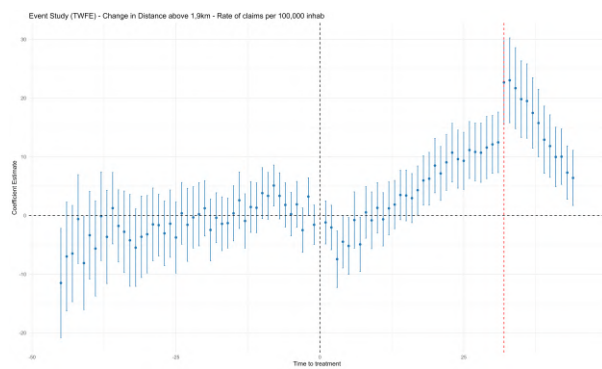
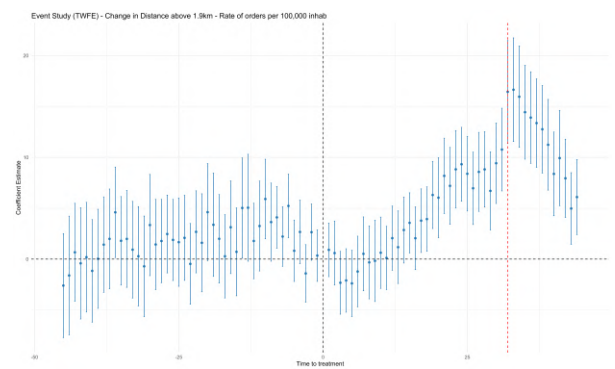


FIGURE 7: Cumulative Distribution of the Number of Provider Offices, 2009–2014

*Note:* This graph shows the number of offices per legal aid firm in 2009–10 and 2013–14, illustrating a trend toward greater consolidation, with a higher share of providers operating multiple offices following the LASPO reform. An office is defined as a distinct geographical location.

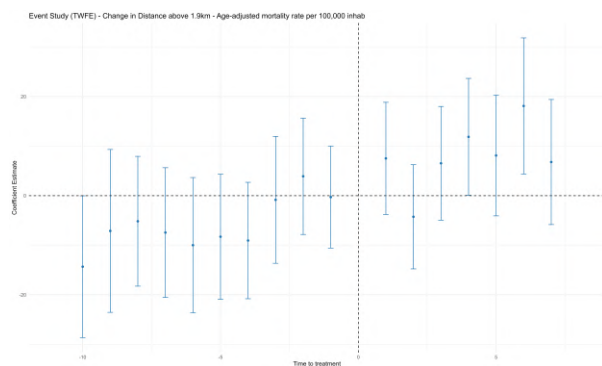


(a) Eviction claim rate per 1,000 inhabitants - 2001 to 2023

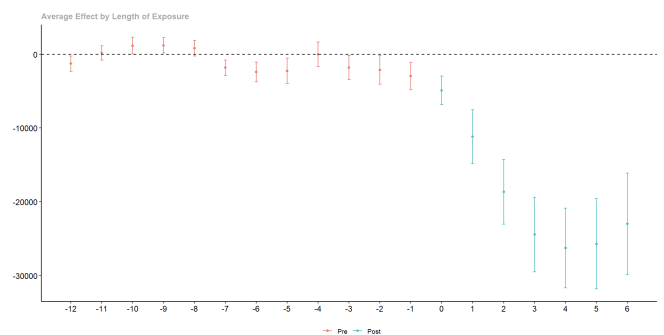


(b) Eviction orders per 100,000 inhabitants - 2001 to 2023

FIGURE 8: Event Study from Difference-in-Differences Model: Eviction Claim Rates and Orders



(a) Age-Adjusted Mortality per 100,000 inhab. - 2002 to 2019



(b) Mean house prices - 2002 to 2019

FIGURE 9: Event Study from Difference-in-Differences Model: Mortality Rate and House Prices

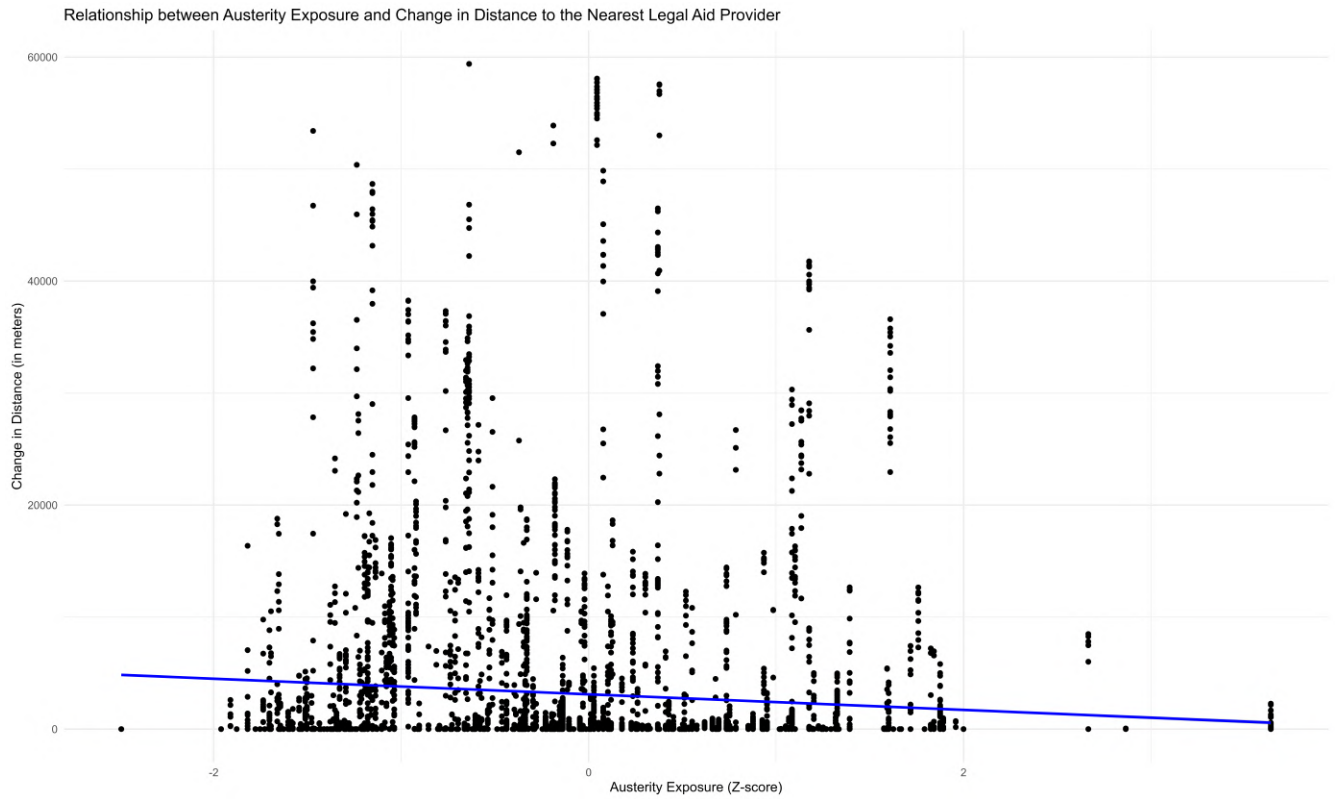
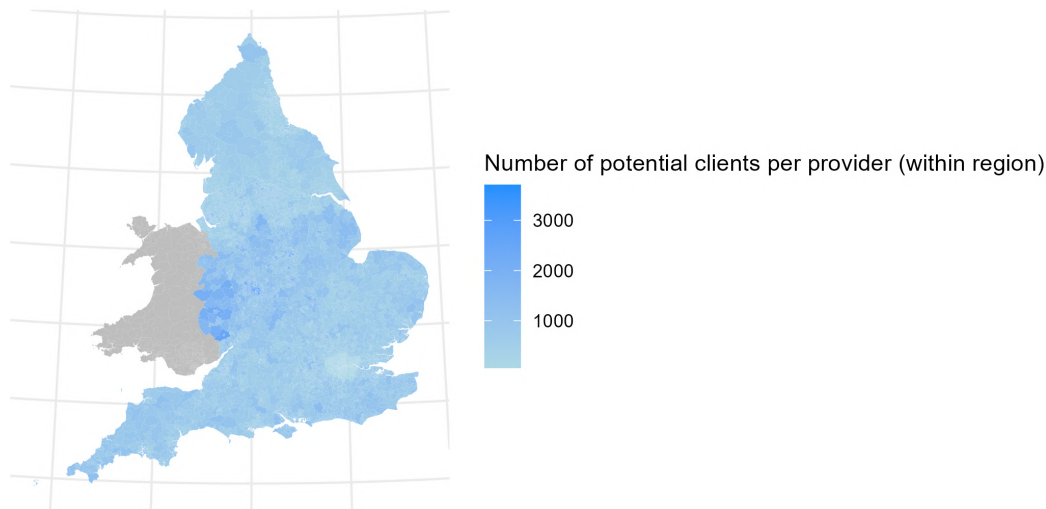


FIGURE 10: Relationship between austerity exposure and change in distance to the nearest legal aid provider

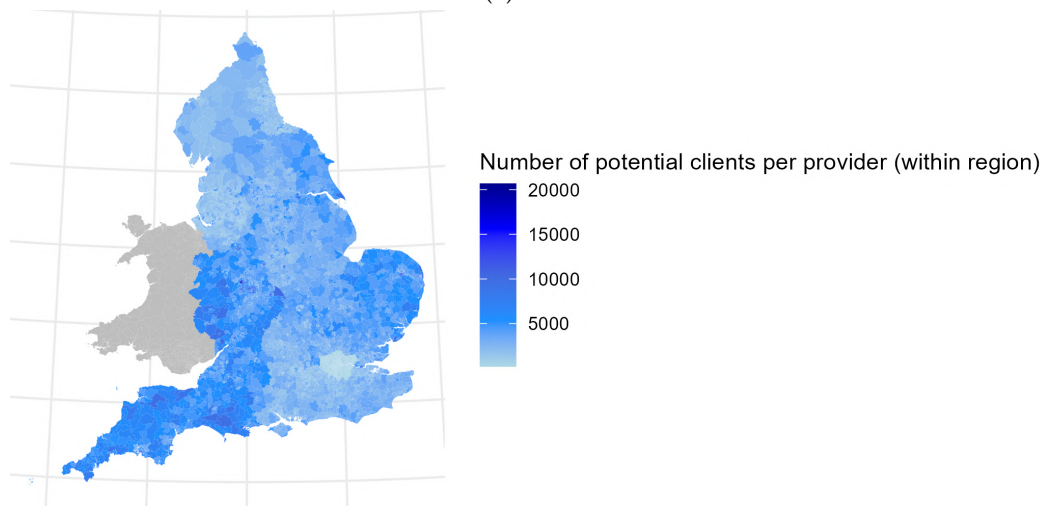
TABLE 1: Heterogeneity analysis - Pooled DiD estimates using the Continuous Change in Distance definition by austerity exposure

	Eviction claims	Eviction orders	Age-adjusted mortality
<b>Mean at Baseline</b> (rate per 100,000 inh.) [Pre-reform average outcome level]	67.12	48.40	944.2
<b>Change in Distance * Austerity</b> [Pre-reform differences in levels]	-0.593*** (0.169)	-0.320** (0.112)	-0.704 (0.411)
<b>Austerity exposure</b> [Effect of austerity alone]	22.18*** (2.897)	15.02*** (1.659)	78.55*** (7.197)
<b>Change in Distance *Post</b> [Main treatment effect]	<b>0.246**</b> (0.082)	<b>0.124*</b> (0.052)	<b>0.655***</b> (0.171)
<b>Austerity *Post</b> [Effet of austerity alone after reform]	-8.679*** (1.469)	-5.023*** (0.837)	1.519 (2.808)
<b>Change in Distance * Post * Austerity</b> [Heterogeneous effect by austerity]	0.362*** (0.079)	0.174*** (0.051)	0.581** (0.221)
<b>Nb. Observations</b>	562,516	562,516	105,390
<b>MSOA + Time Fixed Effects</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes





(a) 2011



(b) 2021

FIGURE 11: Estimated Clients to Providers Ratio for Housing Legal Aid by Region, in England

*Source:* Activities of legal aid providers based on the Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics; Possession claims based on Freedom of Information data from the Ministry of Justice; Statutory Homelessness Statistics; Fuel Poverty Statistics.

*Note:* These maps depict the relative demand for housing legal aid across regions in 2011 and 2021, respectively. For each of the ten regions defined by the 2011 Census, we consider the number of active housing legal aid providers in 2011 and 2021. At the MSOA level, we estimate the average number of households in needs of legal assistance, proxied by the frequency of three events: possession claims, fuel poverty and assessment for homelessness prevention or duty. We then compare the potential demand for legal aid with the actual provision at the regional level to estimate the number of potential clients per provider for each region.

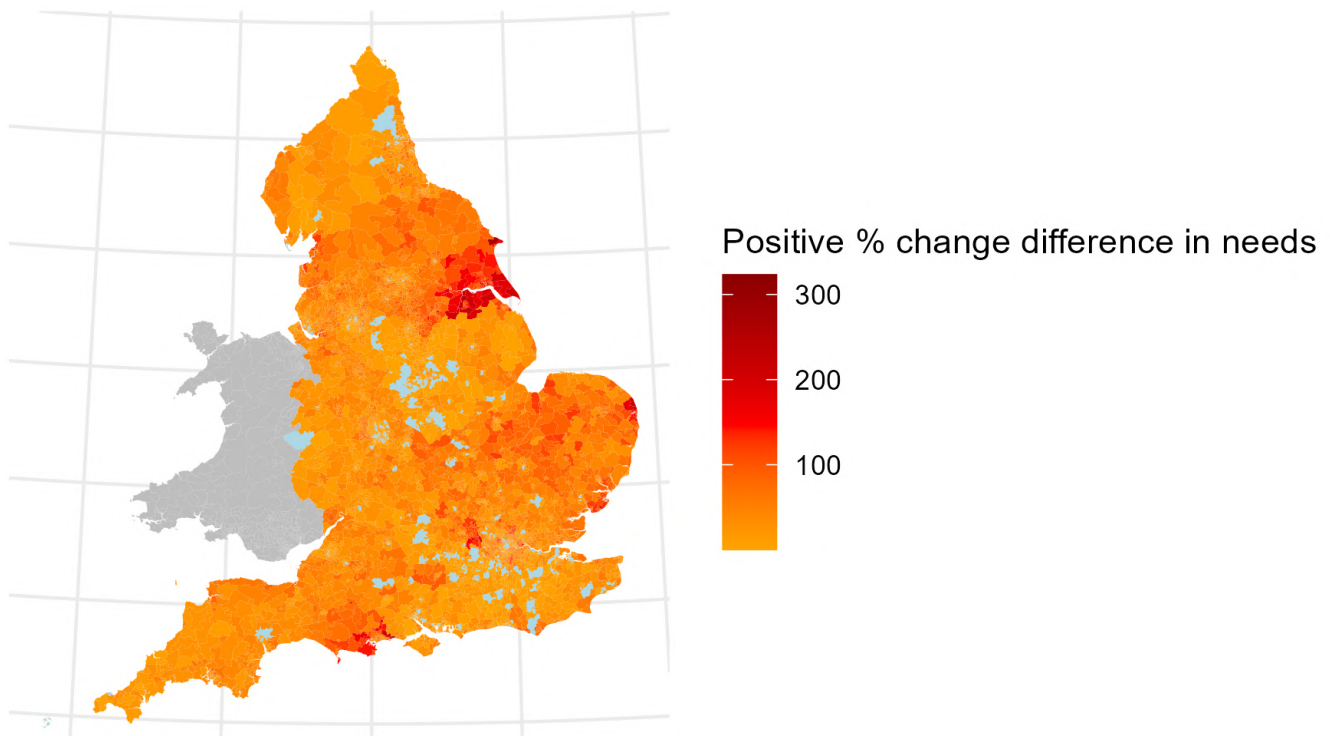


FIGURE 12: Evolution of housing legal needs between 2011 and 2021

*Note:* This map depicts the relative increase in demand for housing legal aid in England between 2011 and 2021. To measure the demand, we estimate the average number of households at the MSOA (Middle Layer Super Output) level that experience one of the following events: facing a possession claim, being in fuel poverty, or having been assessed for homelessness prevention or relief by the local authority. These events serve as small-area proxies for housing legal aid needs. Areas in light blue have experienced a slight decrease in demand over time. Our indicators are scaled by population density at the MSOA level, using mid-year population estimates in 2011 and 2020 from the ONS.

## 10 Appendix

### 10.1 Background Information

#### 10.1.1 Timeline

TABLE 2: Timeline of Legal Aid Reform Events

Quarter (Financial Year)	Date	Event
Q1 – 2010	May 2010	Publication of the Coalition programme which mentions the intention to review legal aid.
Q1 – 2010	June 2010	Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice speech to the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies announcing a consultation on legal aid in autumn 2010.
Q3 – 2010	November 2010	Publication of the Ministry of Justice Green Paper and Proposals for the Reform of Legal Aid presented to Parliament.
Q1 – 2011	June 2011	Bill introduced in the House of Commons.
Q1 – 2012	May 2012	Bill received Royal Assent.
Q1 – 2013	April 2013	Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) 2012 came fully into effect on April 1st, 2013.

Source: ?

### 10.1.2 Impact Assessment of the Reform

TABLE 3: Expected and Actual Volume Shocks by Area of Law and Scheme, in Percentage

Area of Law	Legal Help		Civil Representation	
	Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual
Actions against the police etc.	-48	31	-70	-21
Clinical negligence	-75	-100	-65	-94
Community care	-1	-36	0	75
Consumer	-100	-100	-99	-100
Debt	-74	-100	-13	-80
Discrimination	–	–	–	–
Domestic violence	–	–	0	-15
Education	-58	19	-29	-78
Employment	-78	-100	-95	-100
Family	-80	-94	–	–
Financial provision	–	–	-64	-92
Housing	-40	-48	-11	-36
Immigration	-92	-80	-9.46	-62
Mental health	0	-13	0	108
Miscellaneous	-85	-80	-60	130
Other family proceedings	–	–	-65	-95
Personal injury	-91	-100	-81	1000
Private law Children Act proc.	–	–	-53	-79
Public law	-14	26	-1	-39
Welfare benefits	-98	-99	0	-40
Combined family proceedings	–	–	-2	-100

**Source:** of Justice of the United Kingdom (2019), please see Figure 3 page 31 for non family areas of law and Figure 89 page 145 for family areas.

TABLE 4: Expected and Actual Spending Shocks by Area of Law and Scheme, in Percentage

Area of Law	Legal Help		Civil Representation	
	Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual
Actions against the police etc.	-44	31	-59	-26

Area of Law	Legal Help		Civil Representation	
	Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual
Clinical negligence	-75	-100	-64	-93
Community care	-1	-36	0	138
Consumer	-100	-100	-99	-100
Debt	-75	-100	-13	-85
Discrimination	–	–	–	–
Domestic violence	–	–	0	-22
Education	-32	19	-50	-85
Employment	-76	-100	-95	-100
Family	-80	-95	–	–
Financial provision	–	–	-72	-94
Housing	-38	-48	-12	-41
Immigration	-89	-80	-9.14	-64
Mental health	0	-13	0	66
Miscellaneous	-82	-80	-63	121
Other family proceedings	–	–	-83	-95
Personal injury	-91	-100	-80	1000
Private law Children Act proc.	–	–	-70	-79
Public law	-16	26	-1	-38
Welfare benefits	-97	-99	0	-50
Combined family pro- ceedings	–	–	0	-100

**Source:** of Justice of the United Kingdom (2019), please see Figure 3 page 31 for non family areas of law and Figure 89 page 145 for family areas.



### 10.1.3 Eviction process in the county courts of England and Wales

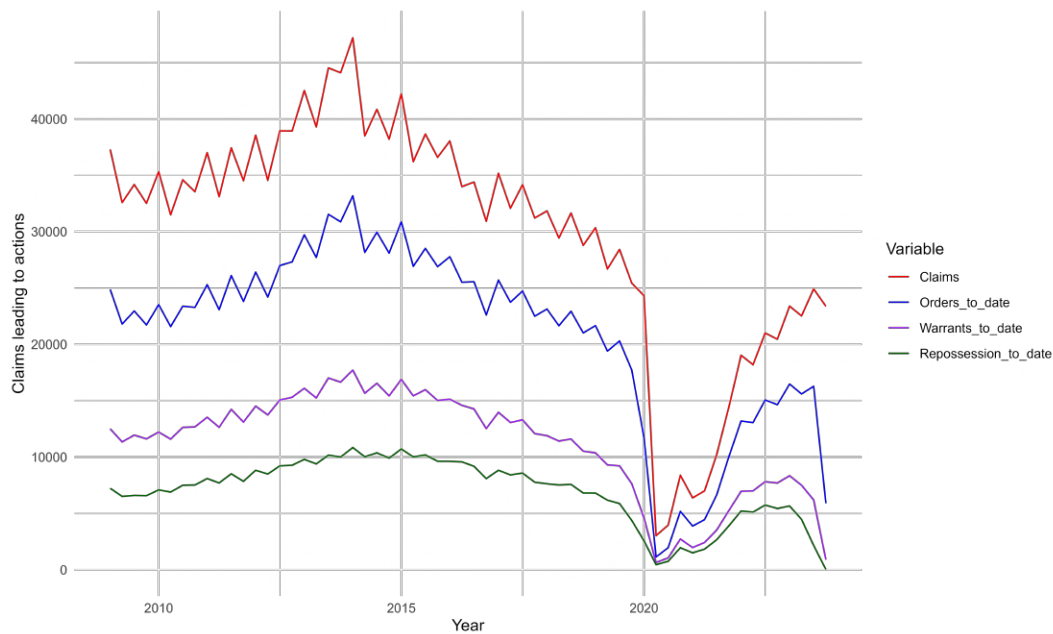


FIGURE 13: Number of possession claims that lead to orders, warrants and repossessions over time

*Source:* Ministry of Justice Mortgage and Landlord Possession Statistics.

*Note:* Quarterly National Statistics on possession claims that lead to orders, warrants and repossessions. This graph only covers actions initiated by landlords in the county courts of England and Wales and excludes mortgage cases. Numbers are measured "to date", meaning by the end of the considered quarter.

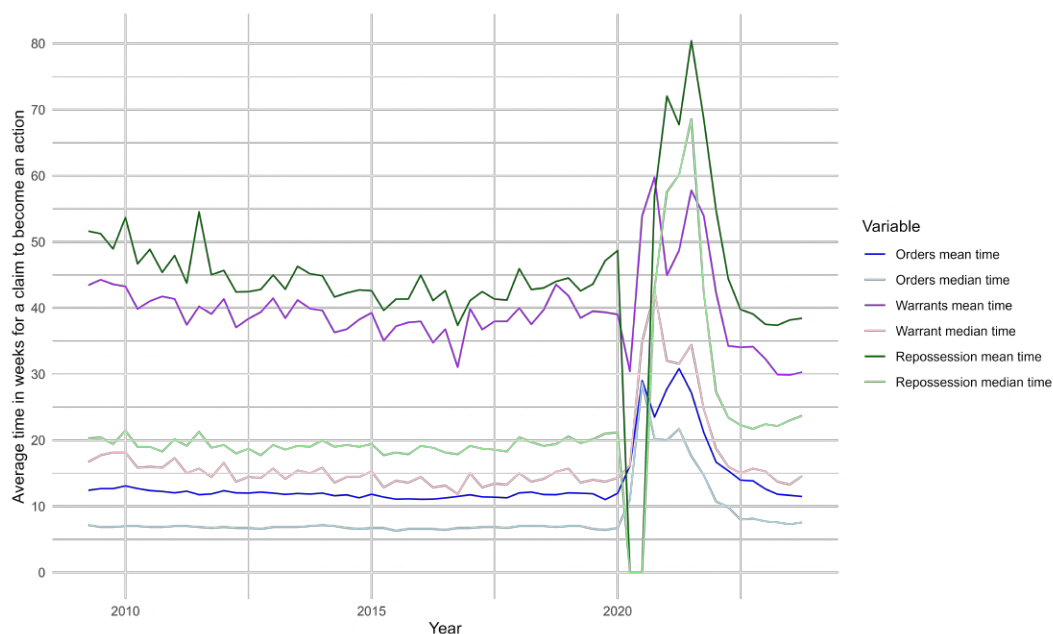


FIGURE 14: Average time for possession claims to become an order, warrant and repossession over time

*Source:* Ministry of Justice Mortgage and Landlord Possession Statistics.

*Note:* Quarterly National Statistics on the average length of time (median/mean) for possession claims to become an order, warrant and repossession. This graph only covers actions initiated by landlords in the county courts of England and Wales and excludes mortgage cases. Time is measured in weeks.

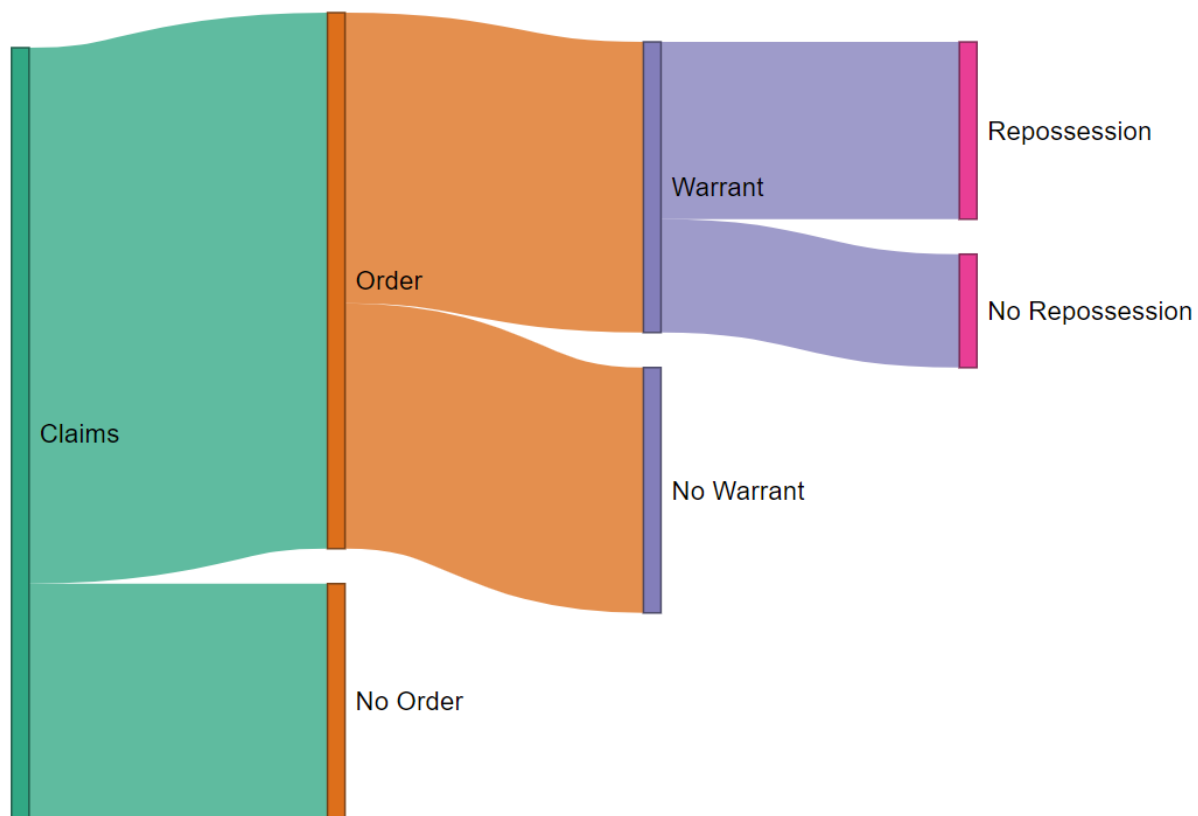


FIGURE 15: Flowchart eviction proceedings outcomes

Source: Ministry of Justice Mortgage and Landlord Possession Statistics Data Visualisation Tool

## 10.2 Evolution of the number of cases and providers by area of law

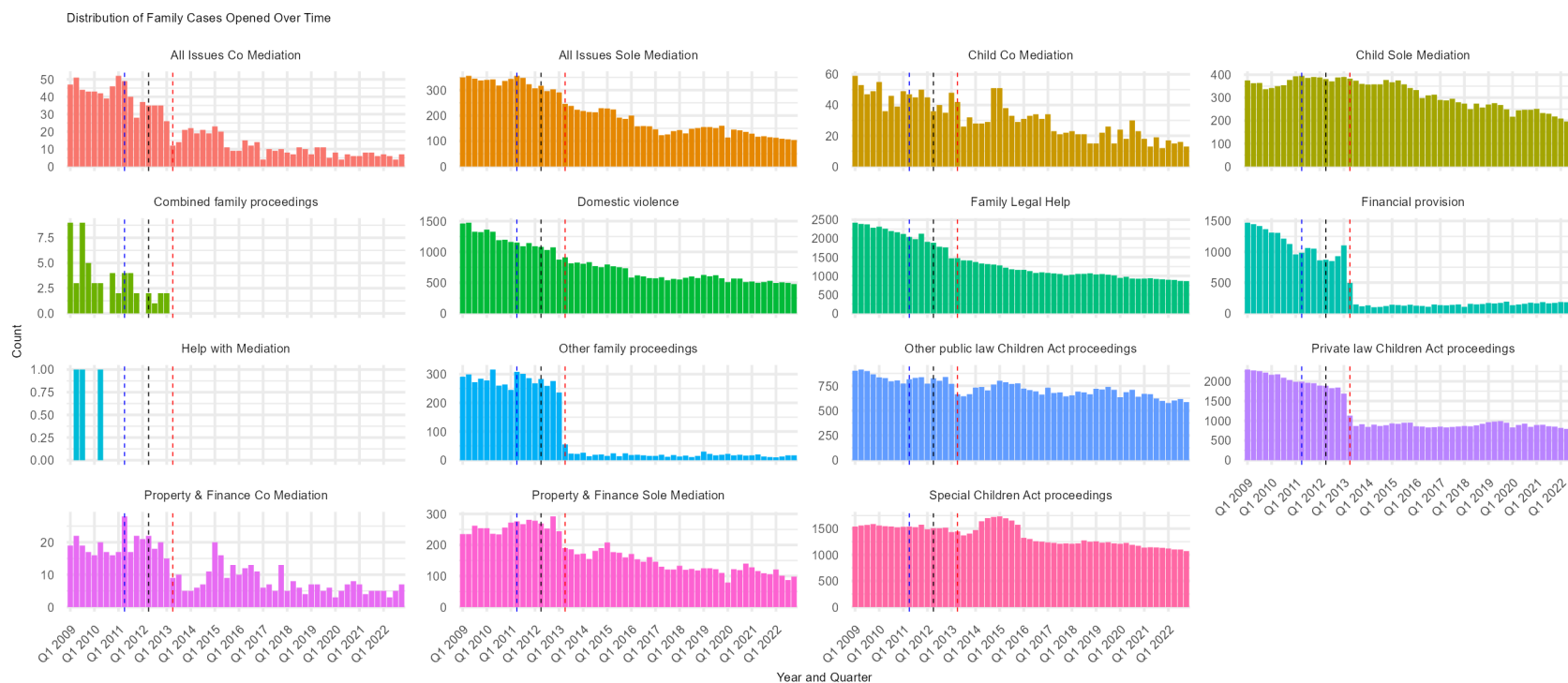


FIGURE 16: Trends in Legal Aid Cases Opened Each Quarter in Family Law, by Area of Law

Source: Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics.

Note: These graphs show the number of legal aid cases opened each quarter by all providers in England and Wales, broken down by area of law. The classification as "Family Law" follows the classification listed in the ?? pages 48-49.

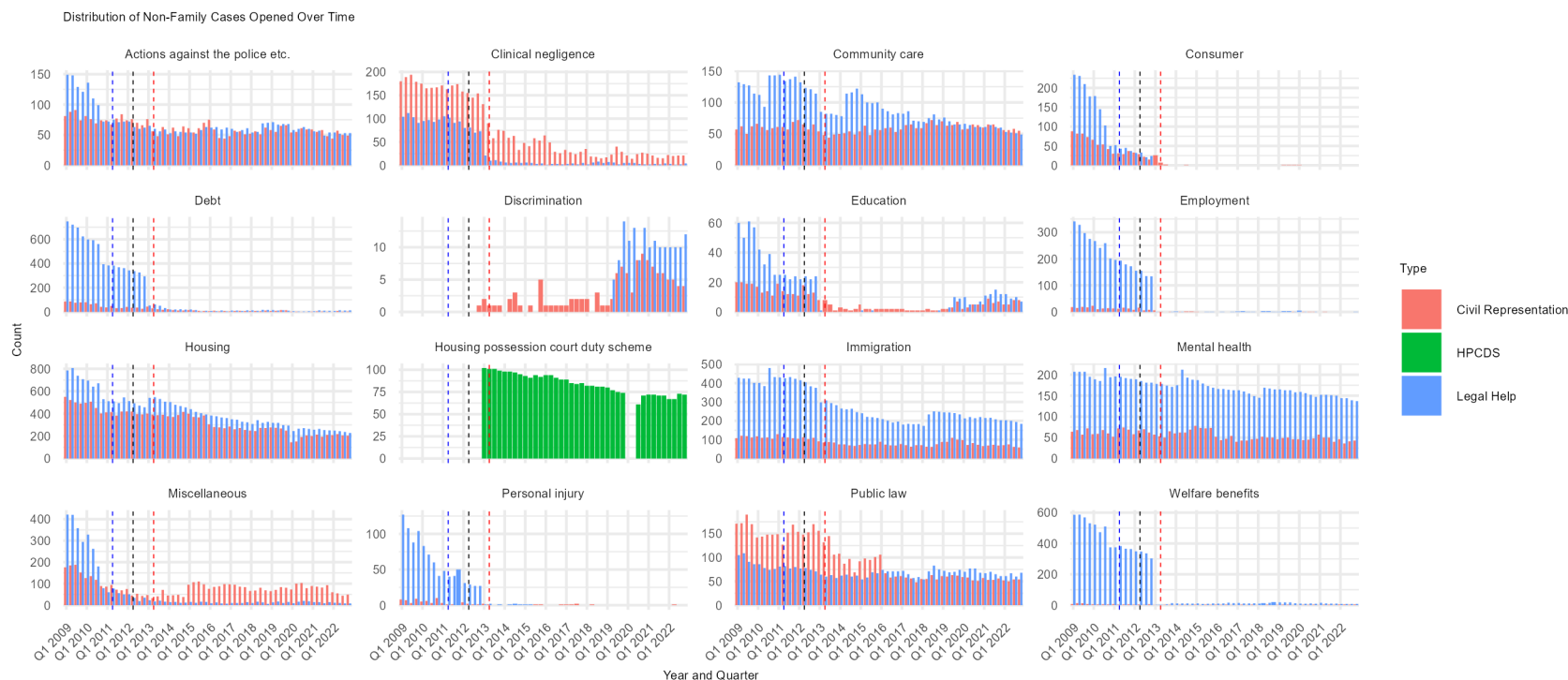


FIGURE 17: Trends in Legal Aid Cases Opened Each Quarter in Non-Family Civil Law, by Area of Law and Type of Assistance

Source: Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics.

Note: These graphs show the number of legal aid cases opened each quarter by all providers in England and Wales. The data is broken down by area of law and type of assistance: legal help, civil representation, or the Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS) — a scheme available only in possession proceedings, where a lawyer present in the courtroom can provide immediate advice and representation, regardless of legal aid eligibility.

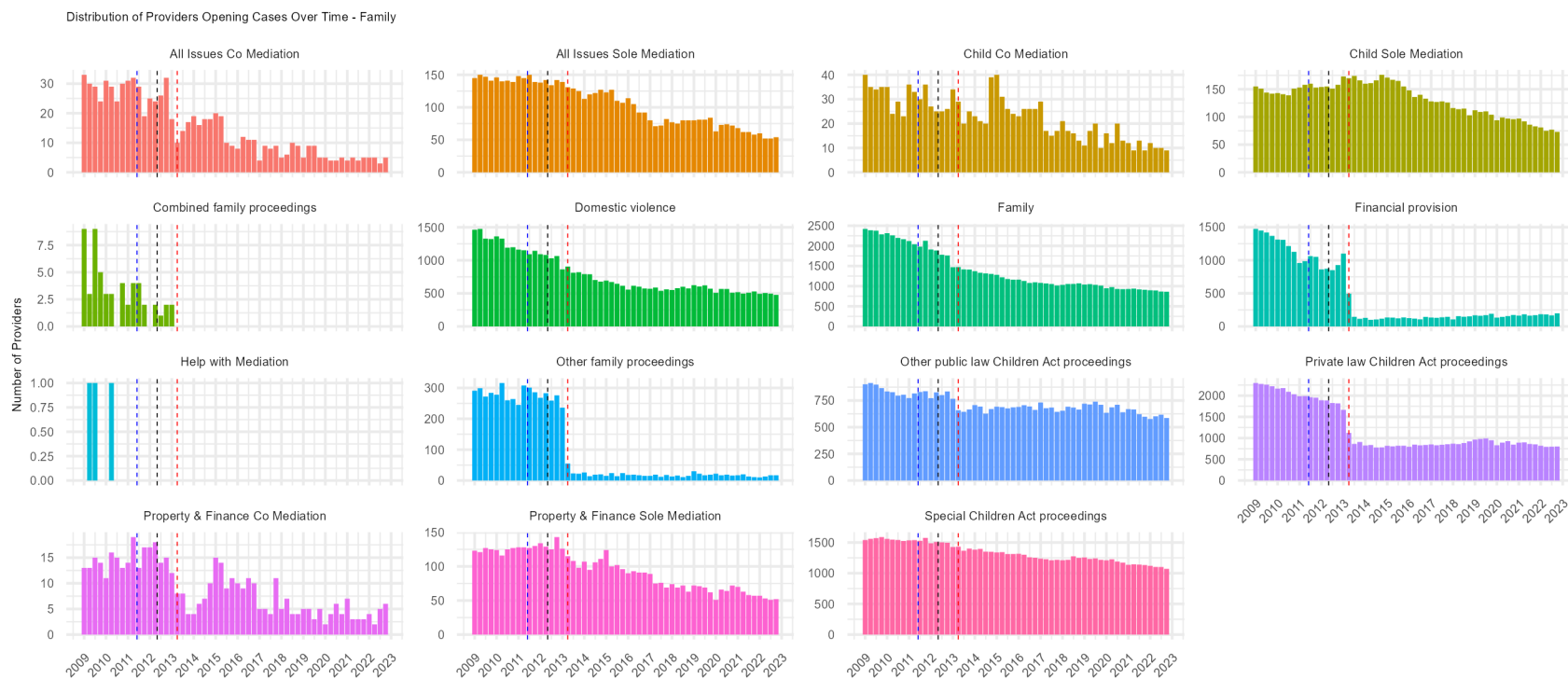


FIGURE 18: Number of Legal Aid Providers Opening Cases Each Quarter in Family Law, by Area of Law

Source: Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics.

Note: These graphs show the number of providers opening new legal aid cases in England and Wales, broken down by area of law. The classification as "Family Law" follows the classification listed in the ?? pages 48-49.

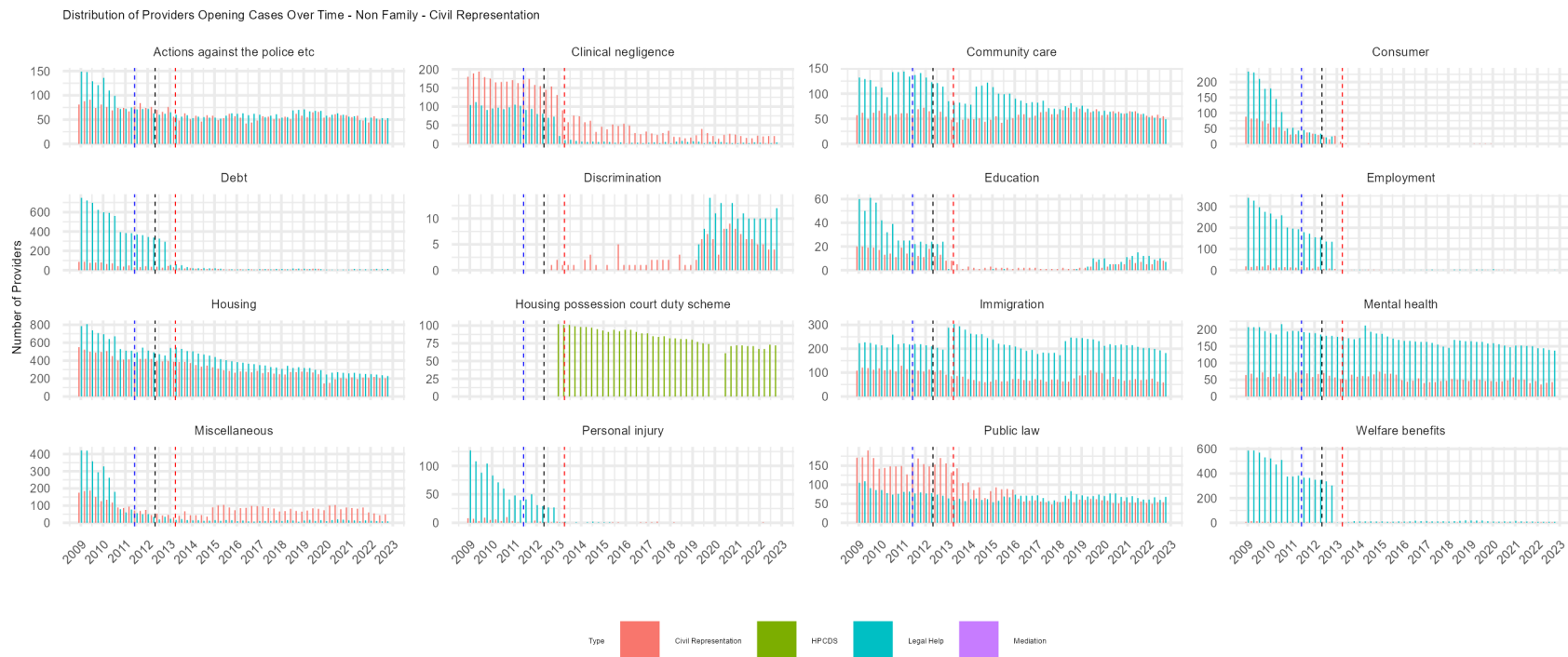


FIGURE 19: Number of Legal Aid Providers Opening Cases Each Quarter in Non-Family Civil Law, by Area of Law and Type of Assistance

Source: Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Statistics.

Note: These graphs show the number of providers opening new legal aid cases in England and Wales. Data is broken down by area of law and type of assistance: legal help, civil representation, or the Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS) — a scheme available only in possession proceedings, where a lawyer present in the courtroom can provide immediate advice and representation, regardless of legal aid eligibility.

## References

- Abel, L. and S. Vignola (2010). Economic and other benefits associated with the provision of civil legal aid. *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 9(1), 139–167.
- Abramson, B. (2022). The welfare effects of eviction and homelessness policies. Job Market Paper, Columbia Business School.
- Balmer, N., A. Patel, and M. Smith (2012). Just a phone call away: Is telephone advice enough? *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*.
- Berman, Y. and T. Hovland (2024). The impact of austerity on mortality and life expectancy. *LSE International Inequalities Institute Working Paper Series* (139), 1–54.
- Britto, D., L. Germinetti, F. Gerard, J. Naritomi, and B. Sampaio (2025). Access to justice and social protection. *AEA Papers and Proceedings* 115, 329–34.
- Burton, M. (2018). Justice on the line? a comparison of telephone and face-to-face advice in social welfare legal aid. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law* 40(2), 195–215.
- Caspi, A. and C. Rafkin (2024). Legal assistance for evictions: Impacts, mechanisms, and demand. Unpublished manuscript.
- Cassidy, M. and J. Curie (2022). The effects of legal representation on tenant outcomes in housing court: Evidence from new york city’s universal access program. *NBER Working Paper* 29836.
- Collinson, R., J. E. Humphries, N. Mader, D. Reed, D. Tannenbaum, and W. van Dijk (2024). Eviction and poverty in american cities. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 139(1), 57–120.
- Cunningham, J. and A. Goodman-Bacon (2025). Changes in family structure and welfare participation since the 1960s: The role of legal services. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 17(1), 369–401.
- Denary, W., A. Fenelon, P. Schlesinger, J. Purtle, K. M. Blankenship, and D. E. Keene (2021). Does rental assistance improve mental health? insights from a longitudinal cohort study. *Social Science & Medicine* 282, 114100.
- Denary, W., A. Fenelon, S. Whittaker, D. Esserman, K. J. Lipska, and D. E. Keene (2023). Rental assistance improves food security and nutrition: An analysis of national survey data. *Preventive Medicine* 169, 107453.
- Desmond, M. (2016). *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. Crown Publishers/Random House.
- Dobbie, W. and J. Song (2015). Debt relief and debtor outcomes: Measuring the effects of consumer bankruptcy protection. *American Economic Reviews* 105(3).



- Ellen, I., K. O'Regan, S. House, and R. Brenner (2021). Do lawyers matter? early evidence on eviction patterns after the rollout of nyc's universal access to counsel. *NYU Furman Center Housing Policy Debate* 31(3). Working Paper.
- Fenelon, A., K. J. Lipska, W. Denary, K. M. Blankenship, P. Schlesinger, D. Esserman, and D. E. Keene (2022). Association between rental assistance programs and hemoglobin a1c levels among us adults. *JAMA Network Open* 5(7), e2222385.
- Fetzer, T. (2019). Did austerity cause brexit? *American Economic Review* 109(11), 3849–86.
- Fetzer, T., S. Sen, and P. C. Souza (2023). Housing insecurity and homelessness: Evidence from the uk. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 21(2), 526–559.
- Fischer, S., H. Royer, and C. White (2018). The impacts of reduced access to abortion and family planning services on abortions, births, and contraceptive purchases. *Journal of Public Economics* 167, 43–68.
- Genn, H. (2019). When law is good for your health: Mitigating the social determinants of health through access to justice. *Current Legal Problems* 72, 159–202. Published: 24 June 2019.
- Goldsmith-Pinkham, P., I. Sorkin, and H. Swift (2020). Bartik instruments: What, when, why, and how. *American Economic Review* 110(8), 2528–2624.
- Greiner, J. and C. Pattanayak (2011). Randomized evaluation in legal assistance: What difference does representation (offer and actual use) make? *Yale Law Journal* 121.
- Greiner, J., C. Pattanayak, and J. Hennessy (2013). The limits of unbundled legal assistance: A randomized study in a massachusetts district court and prospects for the future. *Harvard Law Review* 126, 901.
- Keene, D. E., L. Niccolai, A. Rosenberg, P. Schlesinger, and K. M. Blankenship (2020). Rental assistance and adult self-rated health. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 31(1), 325–339.
- Leifheit, K. M., K. L. Chen, N. W. Anderson, C. Yama, A. Sriram, C. E. Pollack, A. Gemmill, and F. J. Zimmerman (2024). Tenant right-to-counsel and adverse birth outcomes in new york, new york. *JAMA Pediatrics*.
- Lindo, J., C. Myers, A. Schlosser, and S. Cunningham (2020). How far is too far? new evidence on abortion clinic closures, access, and abortions. *The Journal of Human Resources* 55(4), 1137–1160.
- Ministry of Justice of the United Kingdom (2011). Reform of legal aid in england and wales: Equality impact assessment (eia). Technical report, Ministry of Justice.
- National Audit Office (2014). Implementing reforms to civil legal aid. Technical report, National Audit Office.

- National Audit Office (2024). Government's management of legal aid. Technical report, National Audit Office.
- Newton, J., P. Arboleda, M. Connors, and V. Figueroa (2020). Civil gideon and nyc's universal access: Why comprehensive public benefits advocacy is essential to preventing evictions and creating stability. *Cuny Law Review* 23(1).
- OECD (2019). Legal needs surveys and access to justice. Technical report, OECD/Open Society Foundations, France.
- of Justice of the United Kingdom, M. (2019). Post-implementation review of part 1 of the legal aid, sentencing and punishment of offenders act 2012 (laspo). Technical report, Ministry of Justice.
- Pleasence, P. (2006). *Causes of Action: Civil Law and Social Justice*. The Stationery Office TSO.
- Pleasence, P., N. Balmer, and A. Buck (2008). The health cost of civil-law problems: Further evidence of links between civil-law problems and morbidity, and the consequential use of health services. *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* 5(2), 351–373.
- Pleasence, P., A. Buck, T. Goriely, J. Taylor, H. Perkins, and H. Quirk (2001). Local legal need. *Research Paper* (7).
- Roumiantseva, M. (2022). A nationwide movement: The right to counsel for tenants facing eviction proceedings. *Seton Hall Law Review* 52(5), 1351–1398.
- Seron, C., M. Frankel, G. Van Ryzin, and J. Kovath (2001). The impact of legal counsel on outcomes for poor tenants in new york city's housing court: Results of a randomized experiment. *Law & Society Review* 35(2), 419–434.
- Society, T. L. (2017). Access denied? laspo four years on: A law society review. Technical report, The Law Society of England and Wales.
- Stout Risius Ross, Inc. (2016). Report of stout risius ross, inc. Presented for: Pro Bono and Legal Services Committee of the New York City Bar Association. The Financial Cost and Benefits of Establishing a Right to Counsel in Eviction Proceedings Under Intro 214-A.
- Tobin-Tyler, E., K. N. Conroy, C.-M. Fu, and M. Sandel (2011). Housing: The intersection of affordability, safety and health. In Tobin-Tyler and Lawton (Eds.), *Poverty, Health and Law. Readings and Cases for Medical-Legal Partnership*. Carolina Academic Press.
- Uraz, J.-N. (2024). Exploring the impact of legal services using administrative benefits data. *Policy in Practice*. Forthcoming.

van Dijk, W., R. Collinson, J. E. Humphries, S. Kestelman, S. Nelson, and D. Waldinger (2024). Right-to-counsel and rental housing markets: quasi-experimental evidence from new york. Unpublished manuscript.

Wilding, J. (2021). *The Legal Aid Market*. Policy Press Bristol University Press.

World Bank (2019). A tool for justice a cost-benefit analysis of legal aid. Technical report, World Bank/International Bar Association, United States.

World Justice Project (2019). Global insights on access to justice: Findings from the world justice project general population poll in 101 countries. Technical report, World Justice Project, United States.

YouGov (2019). Legal needs of individuals in england and wales. Technical report, Legal Services Board and The Law Society.

YouGov (2024). Legal needs of individuals in england and wales. Technical report, Legal Services Board and The Law Society.