

Judicial Facts and Figures

Judicial Facts and Figures is a set of tables containing historical caseload data primarily for the fiscal years 1990, 1995 and 2000 through 2005. All tables are in PDF. This publication includes data on the U.S. Courts of Appeals, the U.S. District Courts, and the U.S. Bankruptcy Courts.

The sources for the data were the *Annual Report of the Director*, the *Judicial Business of the United States Courts*, *Federal Court Management Statistics* and a few unpublished statistical tables. Specific data sources are noted on each table for easy reference. Except where specifically stated, data were compiled from the published report of the fiscal year noted (i.e., 1995 data are from the 1995 *Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts*). There have been minor revisions to some numbers in subsequent publications. For example, pending data are frequently revised in the subsequent publication. In addition, when the reporting period was changed in 1992 from the twelve month period ending June 30 to September 30, a number of filing totals for the previous years were revised in the *Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts*. Several tables in this report include data that reflect the revisions.

Judicial Facts and Figures does not offer an analysis of the federal caseload changes, although significant fluctuations in the data and corresponding explanations are noted on the tables. More detailed information can be found in the *Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts* for the year(s) in which the fluctuation(s) occurred. Questions concerning this report can be referred to the Judgeship Analysis Staff at 202-502-1180.

[Download all the Judicial Facts & Figures tables \(pdf\).](#)
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Table 4.4
U.S. District Courts. Civil Cases Filed by Nature of Suit

Nature of Suit	Fiscal Year							
	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TOTAL	217,013	248,335	259,517	250,907	274,841	252,962	281,338	253,273
CONTRACT ACTIONS, TOTAL	44,481	31,182	53,625	43,148	35,843	31,263	29,404	28,020
Insurance	7,104	7,540	7,517	7,874	8,793	8,629	8,460	7,804
Marine	3,286	2,622	2,446	2,505	2,122	1,912	1,676	1,435
Miller Act	1,458	775	769	560	528	442	386	387
Negotiable Instruments	2,993	1,536	495	605	595	524	440	447
Recovery of Overpayments and Enforcement of Judgments, Total	9,449	1,822	24,838	13,409	5,651	3,073	2,830	3,309
Medicare Benefits	104	66	114	117	135	193	101	126
Student Loans (1)	4,471	1,142	24,404	12,952	5,212	2,525	2,438	2,883
Veterans' Benefits (2)	4,381	253	43	118	98	84	18	8
Other	493	361	277	222	206	271	273	292
Other Contract Actions	20,191	16,887	17,560	18,195	18,154	16,683	15,612	14,638
REAL PROPERTY ACTIONS, TOTAL	9,603	6,869	6,711	7,290	8,059	7,373	5,845	4,561
Condemnation of Land	474	334	1,243	1,506	938	408	197	251
Foreclosure	7,188	4,972	4,209	4,458	5,592	5,319	4,306	3,012
Rent, Lease, and Ejectments	348	310	175	196	216	160	169	154
Torts to Land	488	401	377	388	353	791	385	380
Other Real Property Actions	1,105	852	707	742	960	695	788	764
TORT ACTIONS, TOTAL	44,041	53,986	36,586	33,663	62,919	45,054	55,023	51,335
Personal Injury, Total (3)	40,815	50,565	32,621	29,789	58,997	39,563	50,594	47,364
Personal Injury Product Liability	18,839	27,547	14,428	12,307	41,135	21,611	34,100	29,537
Other Personal Injury, Total	21,976	23,018	18,193	17,482	17,862	17,952	16,494	17,827
Airplane	873	683	747	714	846	659	483	351
Marine	2,937	2,277	2,006	2,164	1,978	1,814	1,841	1,667
Motor Vehicle	6,105	5,374	4,690	4,535	4,525	4,480	4,229	4,091
Assault, Libel and Slander	670	826	801	623	693	892	668	647
Fed Employers' Liability Act	2,703	1,903	1,108	1,067	944	975	782	748
Medical Malpractice	1,346	1,328	1,526	1,429	1,463	1,607	1,313	1,221
Other	7,342	10,627	7,315	6,950	7,413	7,525	7,178	9,102
Personal Property Damage, Total	3,226	3,421	3,965	3,874	3,922	5,491	4,429	3,971
Fraud, Including Truth in Lending	1,561	1,881	2,265	2,224	2,359	3,860	2,909	2,465
Other Personal Property Damage	1,665	1,540	1,700	1,650	1,563	1,631	1,520	1,506
ACTIONS UNDER STATUTES, TOTAL	118,762	156,209	162,583	166,792	168,010	169,253	191,017	169,265
Antitrust	527	781	858	723	826	762	752	818
Bankruptcy, Total	5,179	5,046	3,361	2,950	4,100	3,305	4,145	3,000
Appeal (28 USC 158)	4,330	4,312	2,785	2,519	2,636	2,658	2,822	2,435
Withdrawal (28 USC 157)	849	734	576	431	1,464	647	1,323	565
Banks and Banking	701	432	205	214	251	223	366	258

Table 4.4 (Continued)

U.S. District Courts. Civil Cases Filed by Nature of Suit

Nature of Suit	Fiscal Year							
	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Civil Rights, Total (4)	18,922	36,600	40,908	40,910	40,420	40,516	40,239	36,096
Voting	140	208	167	195	234	147	173	166
Employment	8,273	19,059	21,032	21,157	20,955	20,507	19,746	16,930
Accommodations	364	735	1,284	1,249	1,313	1,315	1,222	885
Welfare	137	116	80	61	71	65	61	54
Other Civil Rights	10,008	16,482	18,345	18,248	17,847	18,482	19,037	18,061
Environmental Matters	1,004	1,081	886	1,807	790	947	978	714
Deportation	66	106	213	217	325	278	316	201
Prisoner Petitions	43,199	63,550	58,257	58,805	55,295	54,378	55,330	61,238
Forfeiture and Penalty, Total	6,021	2,517	2,320	1,938	2,119	2,073	2,146	2,298
Agricultural Acts	87	155	57	46	47	49	43	27
Food and Drug Act	2,663	197	110	58	69	72	42	49
Drug Related Seizure of Property	-	1,042	1,117	953	1,200	1,217	1,292	1,359
Air Traffic Regulations	49	11	7	4	6	19	6	6
Occupational Safety and Health Act	58	33	4	1	5	6	7	5
Other Forfeiture and Penalty Suits	3,164	1,079	1,025	876	792	710	756	852
Labor Laws, Total	14,068	14,954	14,142	15,195	18,285	17,318	18,330	18,322
Fair Labor Standards Act	1,257	1,580	1,935	1,960	3,904	2,751	3,617	4,039
Labor Management Relations Act	2,272	1,984	1,542	1,445	1,529	1,618	1,641	1,674
Labor Management Reporting & Disclosure Act	165	161	101	129	84	101	81	88
Railway Labor Act	197	172	137	115	126	101	111	104
E.R.I.S.A.	*	9,517	9,124	10,292	11,232	11,304	11,421	11,171
Other Labor Litigation	10,177	1,540	1,303	1,254	1,410	1,443	1,459	1,246
Protected Property Rights	5,738	6,866	8,738	8,314	8,254	8,934	9,590	12,184
Securities, Commodities, and Exchanges	2,645	1,906	2,678	3,538	3,465	3,189	3,094	2,038
Social Security Laws, Total (5)	6,895	9,354	15,829	17,074	18,322	17,127	15,873	15,487
Health Insurance	119	81	70	70	86	70	61	58
Black Lung Cases	28	11	20	16	20	10	4	20
Disability Insurance	4,743	5,501	8,122	8,623	8,739	7,931	7,061	7,024
Supplemental Security Income	1,774	3,347	6,762	7,361	8,313	7,792	7,916	7,675
Retirement and Survivors Benefits	231	414	855	1,004	1,164	1,324	831	710
RICO	**	900	829	724	760	743	777	781
State Reapportionment Suits	3	7	2	13	24	1	5	8
Tax Suits	2,672	2,202	907	1,020	1,151	1,244	1,314	1,385
Customer Challenge	39	33	12	16	7	11	16	21
Freedom of Information Act	411	467	341	325	271	283	315	404
Constitutionality of State Statutes	304	309	288	254	256	267	317	310
Other Statutory Actions (6)	10,368	9,098	11,809	12,755	13,089	17,654	37,114	13,702
OTHER ACTIONS, TOTAL	126	89	12	14	10	19	49	92

* Employee Retirement Income Security Act filings were included in "other labor litigation".

** Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization Act data not reported.

Table 4.4 (Continued)
U.S. District Courts. Civil Cases Filed by Nature of Suit

FOOTNOTES

(1) Filings for recovery of defaulted student loans decreased from 1990 to 1995 due to a change in Department of Education (DOE) policy on collection of delinquent loans. Renewed growth peaked in 2000 as a result of streamlining of the loan processing system. In 2001, DOE implemented new administrative measures that caused fewer student loan cases to be filed in federal courts, as reflected in the 88% drop in these cases.

(2) Filings for recovery of overpayments of veterans benefits have decreased significantly as the Department of Veterans Affairs has used administrative actions and the Internal Revenue Service to recover overpayments rather than filing suit in district court. For additional information, see the 1991 Annual Report of the Director, page 86.

(3) The increase in personal injury filings between 1990 and 1995 was mostly attributable to breast implant cases and a large number of oil refinery cases filed in the Middle District of Louisiana. In 2002, personal injury product liability filings more than tripled due to a large number of plaintiffs seeking relief in the expectation that new laws may be enacted making it more difficult to file cases related to injuries involving asbestos. A significant increase in filings involving plaintiffs seeking relief due to the injurious side effects of the anti-cholesterol drug Baycol also contributed to the increase. The 58 percent increase in personal injury product liability filings in 2004 resulted from the transfer of several thousand cases to the Northern District of Ohio as part of multidistrict litigation involving welding products that contained manganese. In addition, a number of district courts experienced an influx of cases related to multidistrict litigation involving either Baycol or Phentermine\Fenfluramine\Dexfenfluramine (Fen-phen).

(4) Civil rights filings increased significantly after 1990 largely because of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Filings in all categories of civil rights were down in 2005, resulting in a 10 percent decline from 2004.

(5) Social security filings peaked in 2002 due to a change in the processing of backlogged cases by the Social Security Administration, but have since declined slightly. For additional information, see the 1997 Annual Report of the Director, pages 16 and 17.

(6) In 2004, approximately 20,000 filings related to one case in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of South Carolina.

Source: Statistical Table C-2. For Civil Actions Filed for Recovery of Overpayments and Enforcement of Judgments -- Published Statistical Table S-8

Table 4.6
U.S. District Courts. Prisoner Petitions Filed by Nature of Suit

Fiscal Year	Grand Total	U.S. Cases				Private Cases				
		Motions to Vacate Sentence	Habeas Corpus General*	Prison Conditions & Civil	Mandamus and Other	Total	Habeas Corpus General	Death Penalty	Prison Conditions & Civil	Mandamus and Other
1990	43,209	3,087	2,333	1,130	553	36,106	10,656	79	25,030	341
1995	63,550	5,988	1,343	1,110	510	54,599	13,462	170	40,569	398
2000	58,257	6,341	3,870	1,041	628	46,377	21,090	259	24,464	564
2001	58,805	8,644	4,440	1,019	516	44,186	20,254	192	23,099	641
2002	55,292	6,107	4,483	1,046	554	43,102	19,390	225	22,918	569
2003	54,378	5,832	4,341	1,257	551	42,397	18,744	228	22,816	609
2004	55,330	7,137	4,923	1,334	514	41,422	18,432	214	22,115	661
2005	61,238	10,361	5,683	1,286	680	43,228	18,961	229	23,328	710

*includes U.S. death penalty cases.

NOTE: Prisoner petitions increased 47 percent between 1990 and 1995. Since 1995, there have been fluctuations in prisoner petitions as a result of legislation (the Prison Litigation Reform Act and Title I of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, both of which were passed in April 1996) and Supreme Court decisions (*Bailey v. U.S.* in 1995; *Apprendi v. New Jersey* in 2000; and *U.S. v. Booker* in 2005). The 45 percent increase in motions to vacate sentence in 2005

Source: Statistical Table C-3. Total prisoner petitions do not match exactly the data reported on the C-3 Table for 1990 because the data for this table were