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International litigants in London rise by a third in three years

By [Katy Dowell](#) 7 May 2013 00:04

The number of international litigants turning to the Commercial Court to resolve disputes has increased by 30 per cent since March 2009, new research reveals, while the number of domestic litigants is on the wane.



The research shows that London's popularity as a litigation centre is higher than ever before, with the number of European-based litigants increasing by 165 per cent over the five year-period.

The survey of 705 judgments published by the Commercial Court between March 2008 and March 2013 by communications group Portland analyses from which jurisdiction litigants originate.

The research shows that of the 705 judgments there were in total 2,493 litigating parties. Of that total, 61.6 per cent of litigants were based outside England and Wales and 35 per cent of parties were domestic.

The number of European litigants has increased substantially, up 44.5 per cent from 110 out of a total of 444 in 2009, to 159 out of a total of 536 litigants in 2012.

However, it is US litigants who are increasingly turning to London's Commercial Court with 146 US-based litigants appearing over the five year period, compared with 86 apiece from Kazakhstan and Switzerland.

Despite much talk about the influx of Russian based litigants doing battle in London sparked by the bout between oligarchs Boris Berezovsky and Roman Abramovich ([31 August 2012](#)) the number of Russian and Kazakh parties in London has fallen since Mrs Justice Gloster spectacularly threw out Berezovsky's case.




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Portland's disputes practice head Idil Oyman, who led the project together with the school of law at Westminster University, said: "We undertook this research to inform the debate about the influx of foreign cases to the British courts, which was sparked by the blockbuster *Berezovsky v Abramovich* trial.

"While Russian and Kazakh parties together constitute about six per cent of foreign litigants, their share has decreased since 2011, so there's a question as to whether we'll see a sustained drop from the region after the definitive *Berezovsky* judgement."

Of the last five years 2011 saw the highest number of litigants come to the court. A total of 614 litigants were in court in that year, a rise of 38.2 per cent from 444 in 2009. However the number of parties then declined by 12.7 per cent to a total of 536 in 2012.

Regional breakdown of international litigants in London's Commercial Court:

Region	2009	2010	2011	2012
Europe	110	85	106	159
UK	179	186	183	158
Eurasia	12	29	71	43
North America	31	35	28	33
East Asia	15	8	13	25
Caribbean	18	30	49	24
MENA	18	31	45	20
Africa	14	23	30	14
South America	13	9	3	14
Unknown	12	1	20	13
Southeast Asia	6	9	35	11
Indian subcontinent	11	6	15	10
Central America	3	0	4	5
South Pacific Islands	1	2	4	4
British Crown Dependency	0	10	6	3
Australasia	1	1	2	0
Total	444	465	614	536



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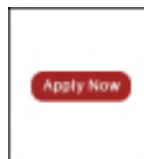
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