

News release

New research into the unregulated legal market and wider provision of unreserved legal services

28 July 2022

We have commissioned independent research to take an in-depth look into the unreserved legal services market across England and Wales.

To be delivered by Frontier Economics, one of Europe's leading economic insight consultancies, and supported by BMG Research, the new research will seek to:

- better understand the size and scope of the market for unreserved legal activities – as provided by both regulated and unregulated providers
- identify potential risks and opportunities the unregulated sector may present for consumers

Researchers will conduct extensive online and offline research to identify as many existing providers as possible, conduct in-depth analysis into a representative cross sample of different providers and provider types, and talk directly to a wide range of consumer, legal and wider economic interest groups. Surveys, followed by in-depth interviews, will also be conducted directly with individual legal providers and consumers.

Findings from the final report, expected before the end of the year, will be used by the SRA, and wider stakeholders, to help develop future thinking on how best to improve access to legal services while still ensuring the proportionate levels of public protection are maintained.

Paul Philip, SRA Chief Executive, said: 'The market for unreserved legal activities is broad, with many different types of providers offering services to consumers on a wide range of topics. It's important that people have choice and can find help that is accessible and affordable, so we want to know more about what's available. This research will give us a better understanding of the options, especially around areas such as the variation in levels of protection, costs and accessibility.

'That will support us to look at the risks and opportunities across the market and consider whether the right balance is being struck between maximising opportunities for access to justice and ensuring appropriate levels of protection are in place.'

Alex Katz, Frontier Economics, said: 'Better understanding the size and scope of this market, and the potential ways it could evolve in

future, is essential to ensuring that consumers are able to benefit from good legal advice and are not put at risk from gaps in the market or consumer protection.'