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July to September 2020

Research and Statistical Bulletin
Provisional Figures

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[Northern Ireland Court Service Statistical Publications](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers data from July to September 2020, so court activity during this period has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Figures published show that although courts continue to carry out urgent business and make more use of remote audio and video technology, the impact of COVID-19 is evident. It is expected that the limited operation of the county courts during the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to have an impact on many of the published figures in this and future releases.

- This bulletin provides information on throughput at County Courts in Northern Ireland during the period July to September 2020 and commentary on trends observed for this quarter in each year from 2011. On 31st October 2016, a single County Court Division called “The County Court of Northern Ireland” replaced the seven existing County Court Divisions. As a consequence of this change, data contained in the County Court Bulletin is now disaggregated by Court Office (Processing Office). During the period July to September 2020:
- There were 1,632 civil bills with a notice of intention to defend (NID) received, a 16% decrease on the same quarter last year (1,939). In total, 1,075 civil bills were disposed, a decrease of 45% on the number disposed during the same period in 2019 (1,946).
- 34 equity cases were received during July to September 2020, down by five cases compared to the 39 cases received during the period July to September 2019, while 7 equity cases were disposed, compared with 18 equity cases disposed during the same period last year.
- A total of 39 ejectment cases were received, down 85% on the 263 cases received during July to September 2019, with the number of ejectment cases disposed decreasing by 98%, from 214 in the same quarter last year to 5 this quarter.
- 895 small claims were received, down 62% on the 2,382 cases received during the same quarter last year. The number of small claims cases disposed decreased by 70% from 2,390 during July to September 2019 to 719 this quarter.
- No criminal damage cases were received, compared to seven received during the period July to September 2019. One criminal damage case was disposed during the quarter, the same as during the same quarter last year.
- A total of 154 divorce decrees were granted in the County Court, down 62% on the 402 granted during the same period last year.

- County Court and District Judges sat a total of 632 sitting days during the quarter, down 10% on the 705 days recorded during the period July to September 2019. Some 38% of time was spent on criminal business with 18% spent on civil business and 45% on family business (compared to 54%, 30% and 17% respectively during July to September 2019).

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE
1. Introduction	1
2. Methodology	2
3. Findings	4
3.1 Ordinary civil bills	4
3.2 Equity	5
3.3 Ejectment	5
3.4 Small Claims	7
3.5 Criminal Damage	8
3.6 Divorces	8
3.7 Licences	9
3.8 Sitting Days	10
Appendix 1 - Tables	12
Appendix 2 – Explanatory Notes	28

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 1: Civil bills with NID received: July to Sep 2011 to July to Sep 2020	4
Figure 2: Civil bills disposed, by method of disposal: July to Sep 2011 to July to Sep 2020	5
Figure 3: Ejectment cases received and disposed: July to Sep 2011 to July to Sep 2020	6
Figure 4: Small claims cases received: July to Sep 2011 to July to Sep 2020	7
Figure 5: Criminal Damage cases received and disposed: July to Sep 2011 to July to Sep 2020	8
Figure 6: Divorce petitions by number of decrees granted, by type: July to Sep 2011 to July to Sep 2020	9
Figure 7: County Court Sitting Days by Business Type: July to Sep 2020	10
Figure 8: County Court Sitting Days by Business Type: July to Sep 2011 to July to Sep 2020	11

TABLE	PAGE
Table 1: Number of ordinary civil bill cases and applications received	12
Table 2: Number of ordinary civil bill cases with NID received by Judicial Level	13
Table 3: Number of ordinary civil bill cases and applications disposed	14
Table 4: Number of ordinary civil bill cases by amount awarded	15

Table 5: Outstanding civil bills with NID but no COR	15
Table 6: Outstanding civil bills with COR	16
Table 7: Time intervals in weeks for civil bill cases	16
Table 8: Time intervals in weeks for civil bill applications	17
Table 9: Equity cases and applications received	17
Table 10: Equity cases and applications disposed	18
Table 11: Outstanding equity cases	18
Table 12: Time intervals in weeks for equity	19
Table 13: Ejectment cases received	19
Table 14: Ejectment cases disposed	20
Table 15: Outstanding ejectment cases with NID	20
Table 16: Time intervals in weeks for ejectment	20
Table 17: Number of small claims cases and applications received	21
Table 18: Number of small claims cases with NOD received	21
Table 19: Number of small claims cases and applications disposed	22
Table 20: Outstanding small claims with NOD	22
Table 21: Time intervals in weeks for small claims	23
Table 22: Number of criminal damage cases and applications received	23
Table 23: Number of criminal damage cases and applications disposed	23
Table 24: Outstanding criminal damage cases	24
Table 25: Time intervals in weeks for criminal damage	24
Table 26: Divorce petitions by number of decrees granted	24
Table 27: Divorce petitions by number of decrees absolute issued	25
Table 28: Matrimonial applications received	25
Table 29: Matrimonial applications disposed	26
Table 30: Time intervals in weeks for divorce petitions	26
Table 31: Time intervals in weeks for divorce applications	26
Table 32: Licences received and disposed	27
Table 33: County Court Judge & District Judge Sitting Days	27

1. Introduction

Civil cases are commenced in the County Court if the value of the case is less than £30,000. The financial limit in the County Court increased from £15,000 to £30,000 on the 25 February 2013. However, for claims concerning matrimonial property or compensation for criminal injuries or criminal damage to property, there is no financial limit. The County Court also has jurisdiction to hear applications for adoptions and undefended divorces. Applications for intoxicating liquor licences and certificates of registration for clubs are also made to the County Court. In addition to its original civil jurisdiction, the County Court hears appeals under a number of statutory provisions from the Magistrates' Courts or from other tribunals.

County courts can deal with a wide range of cases, but the most common ones are:-

- landlord and tenant disputes, for example, possession (eviction), rent arrears, repairs
- consumer disputes, for example, faulty goods or services
- personal injury claims (injuries caused by negligence), for example, traffic accidents, falling into holes in the pavement, accidents at work
- undefended divorce cases, but only in some county courts
- some domestic violence cases, but these may also be heard in the magistrates court
- race and sex discrimination cases
- debt problems, for example, a creditor seeking payment
- employment problems, for example, wages or salary owing or pay in lieu of notice.

The County Court also deals with small claims. In general, a small claim is one where the value of the claim is not more than £3,000. This limit was increased from £2,000 in May 2011.

The most common types of claim dealt with in the Small Claims Court are:

- compensation for faulty services provided, for example, by builders, dry cleaners and garages
- compensation for faulty goods, for example, televisions or washing machines which go wrong
- disputes between landlords and tenants, for example, rent arrears or compensation for not doing repairs
- wages owed or money in lieu of notice.

All claims arising from regulated credit agreements must be started in the County Court, whatever their value.

2. Methodology

2.1 Data sources

Data contained in Tables 1 to 31 and Table 33 uses information inputted into the Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS). This system was implemented across the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) over a two-year period from 2005 to 2007. While ICOS was introduced in the County Court during 2005, data derived from ICOS has been used as the source for official government statistics since 2007, when the implementation of ICOS across all court tiers was completed. ICOS is a live operating system used in each court tier to process every part of court business, from receipt of payments through to the production of final orders made. Data is inputted into this system, by court clerks on a daily basis and information is checked and confirmed by another member of staff to ensure data entries are correct. As data on licence applications received and disposed is not recorded on ICOS, these figures are compiled manually by each County Court Office and submitted on a quarterly basis.

2.2 Methodology for generating data

Analytical Services Group (ASG) statisticians based within the NICTS take a download of County Court information from ICOS on a monthly basis. The information is downloaded using a package called Sharepoint, which extracts all the relevant data from ICOS into text files, which are refreshed with up to date information each weekend. The text files are downloaded onto a secure internal facility that only specified statistical personnel have access to. The data contained in the files are identified only by numbers; names and addresses are not held. These statistical files are not transmitted outside the NICTS statistical team. ASG statisticians based in the NICTS import data into the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is then used to perform extensive data validations to identify potential errors in the data and to ensure data is reliable and robust.

2.3 Baseline and Time period

Data contained within this bulletin relates to the current calendar year 2020. The time series for this information dates back to 2007 when ICOS was adopted as the source of County Court data, however, within this publication, comparisons of trends are viewed over a 10-year period.

2.4 Frequency of Publication

This bulletin is published on a quarterly basis. The next bulletin will cover the fourth quarter of 2020 and will be published on 12th February 2021.

2.5 Data quality and validation

ASG statisticians based in the NICTS have invested significant time and effort creating an extensive computer programme within SPSS to validate the information downloaded from ICOS. The programme includes over 100 checks against downloaded court data to (i)

check consistency over time and between variables, (ii) assess the reliability of data using logic checks, (iii) check that variables fall within accepted ranges, and (iv) check with the ICOS Support Team in the event of any major discrepancies that have occurred since the last download. The validation program produces user friendly tables highlighting potential problems which are circulated to each County Court venue as a validation report.

The NICTS statistics team then ensure that all validations relating to the reporting period are amended prior to publication. Once these amendments have been checked, SPSS syntax programming is then used to generate the tables in the publication. Data contained in this bulletin are currently provisional and will undergo further validation before being published in their final form within the relevant edition of Judicial Statistics (published in June of each year for the previous calendar year).

2.6 Counting rules

Receipts are counted from the date the case is entered onto ICOS and the fees are receipted. Disposals are counted from the result date that a final order was made against the case changing the case status to 'dealt with'. On 31st October 2016, a single County Court Division called "The County Court of Northern Ireland" replaced the seven existing County Court Divisions. As a consequence of this change, data contained in the County Court Bulletin is now disaggregated by Court Office (Processing Office) as at the time of data download.

2.7 Interpreting trends

Care should be taken when comparing data trends before and after 2005, when ICOS was introduced as the source for the majority of County Court data. Additionally, due to on-going changes to the legal jurisdiction of the County Court, users should be cautious of comparing trends in small claims and ordinary civil bills. Changes made to the upper limit of small claims in May 2011 (from £2,000 to £3,000) will have resulted in some claims that would have previously been ordinary civil bills becoming small claims. Also, changes to jurisdiction to increase the upper limit of ordinary civil bills during February 2013 (from £15,000 to £30,000) will have resulted in some cases that were previously High Court writs becoming ordinary civil bills. For further advice on differences in data between years, please contact the statistician responsible for this bulletin.

2.8 Revisions

Any revision to data will be applied in light of the ASG (NICTS) Statistical Note 'Policy Statement on Revisions,' which can be found at, [Northern Ireland Court Service Statistical Publications](#)

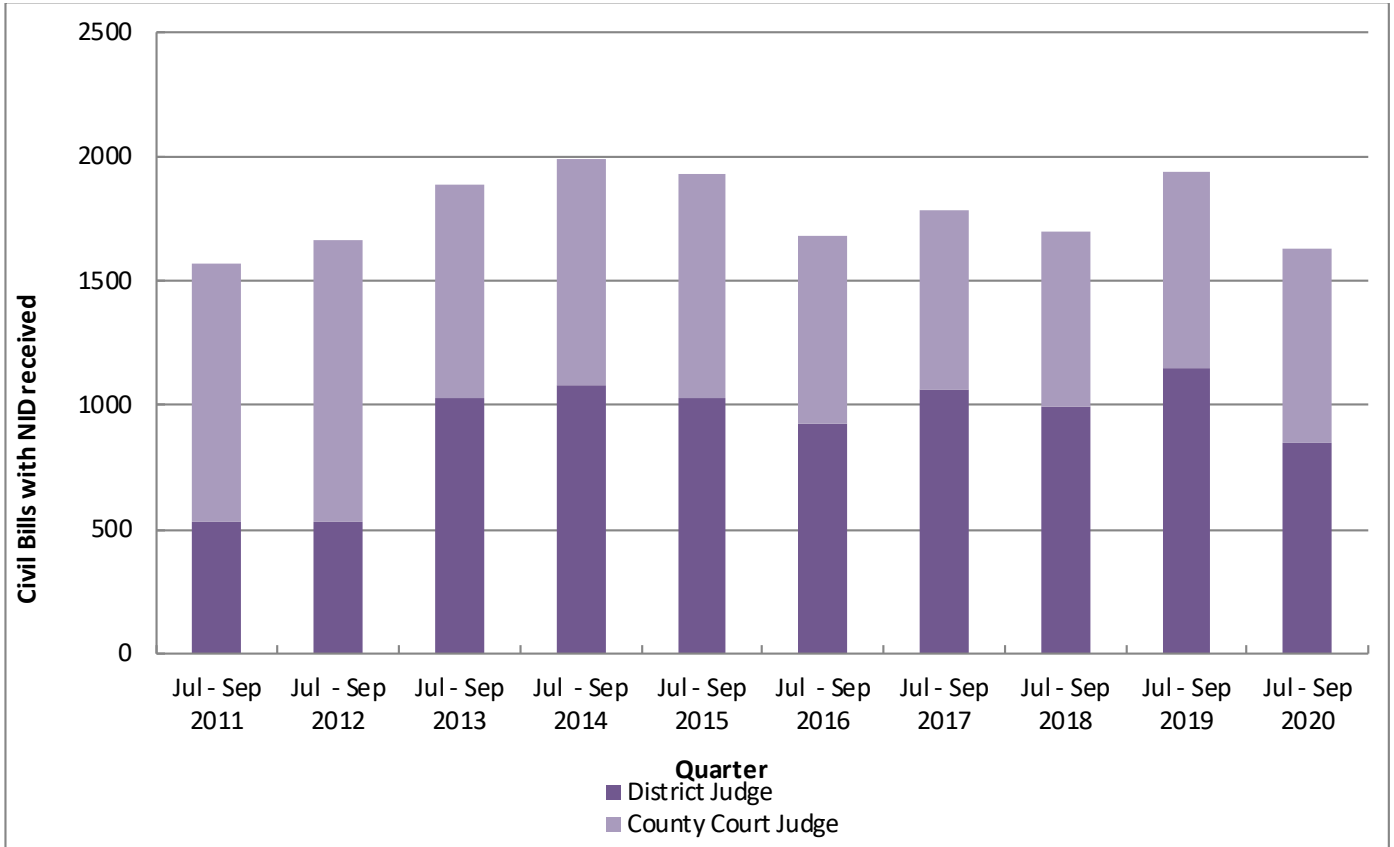
Incorrect figures of changes to this publication will be published on the web in a formal Statistical Notice.

3. Findings

3.1 Ordinary civil bills

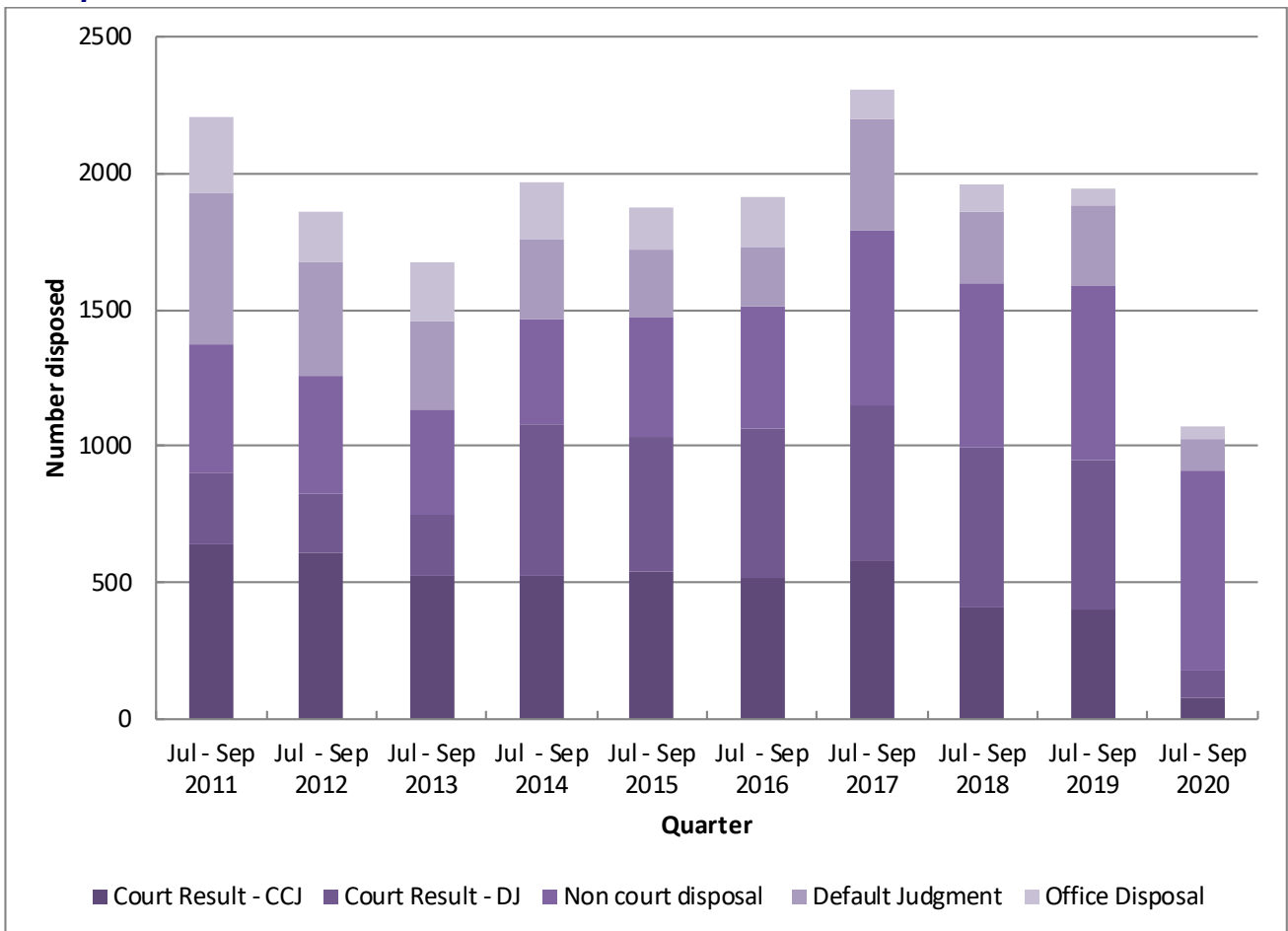
There were 1,632 civil bills with a notice of intention to defend (NID) received, a 16% decrease on the same quarter last year (1,939) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Civil bills with NID received – July to September 2011 to July to September 2020



In total, 1,075 civil bills were disposed, a 45% decrease on the 1,946 disposed during the same period in 2019 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Civil bills disposed, by method of disposal – July to September 2011 to July to September 2020



The average time taken from issue to disposal of a civil bill was 58 weeks, compared to the 52 weeks reported for the same quarter in 2019.

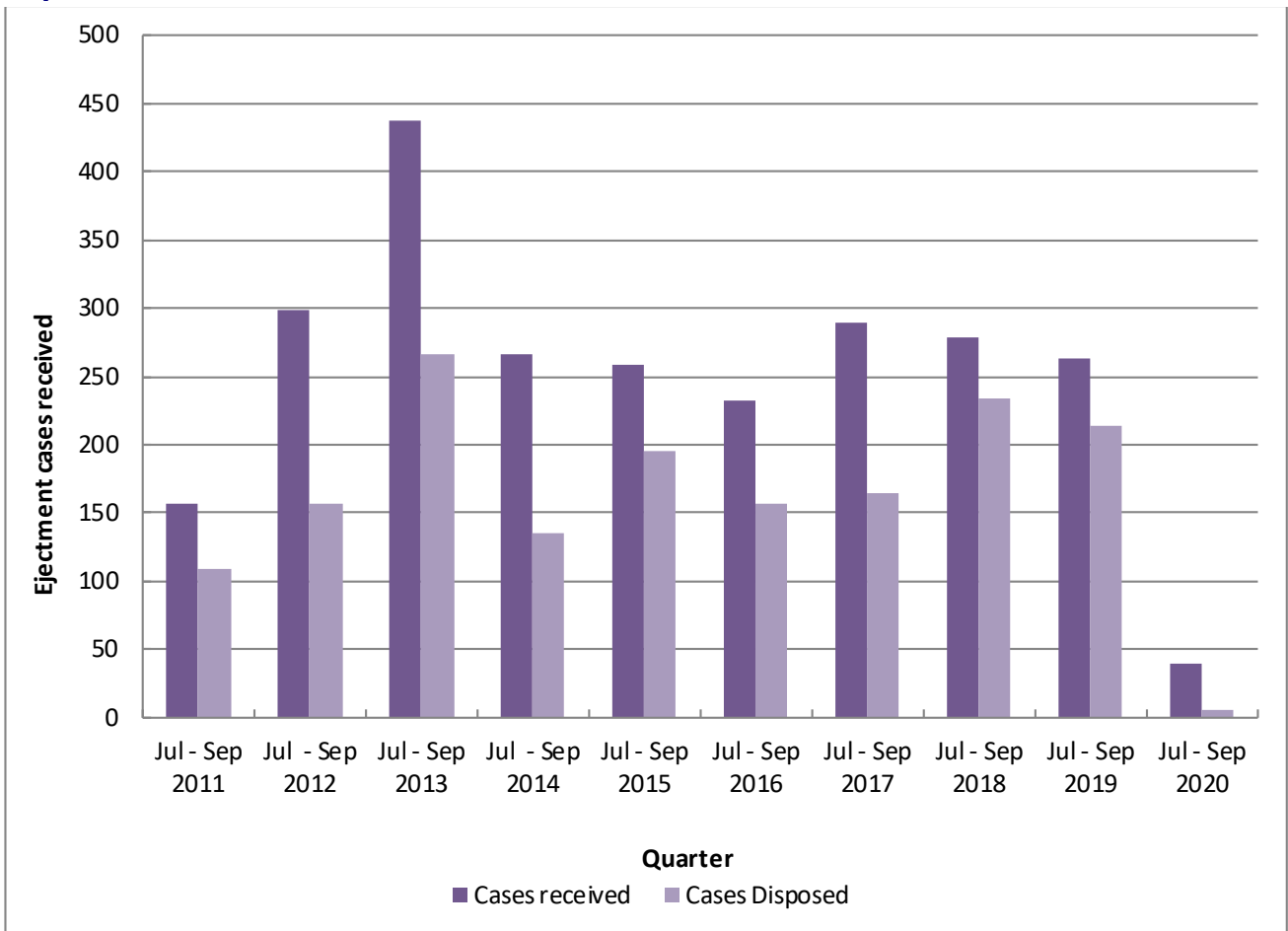
3.2 Equity

A total of 34 equity cases were received during July to September 2020, five less than the number received during the period July to September 2019 (39). The number of equity cases disposed decreased from 18 during the period July to September 2019, to 7 this quarter. The average time taken from issue to disposal of equity cases was 64 weeks, down from 67 weeks during the same period last year. The relatively small number of equity cases disposed each quarter can lead to significant changes in average times observed from issue to disposal.

3.3 Ejectment

A total of 39 ejectment cases were received, down 85% on the 263 cases received during July to September 2019, with the number of ejectment cases disposed decreasing by 98%, from 214 in the same quarter last year to 5 this quarter (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Ejectment cases received and disposed – July to September 2011 to July to September 2020

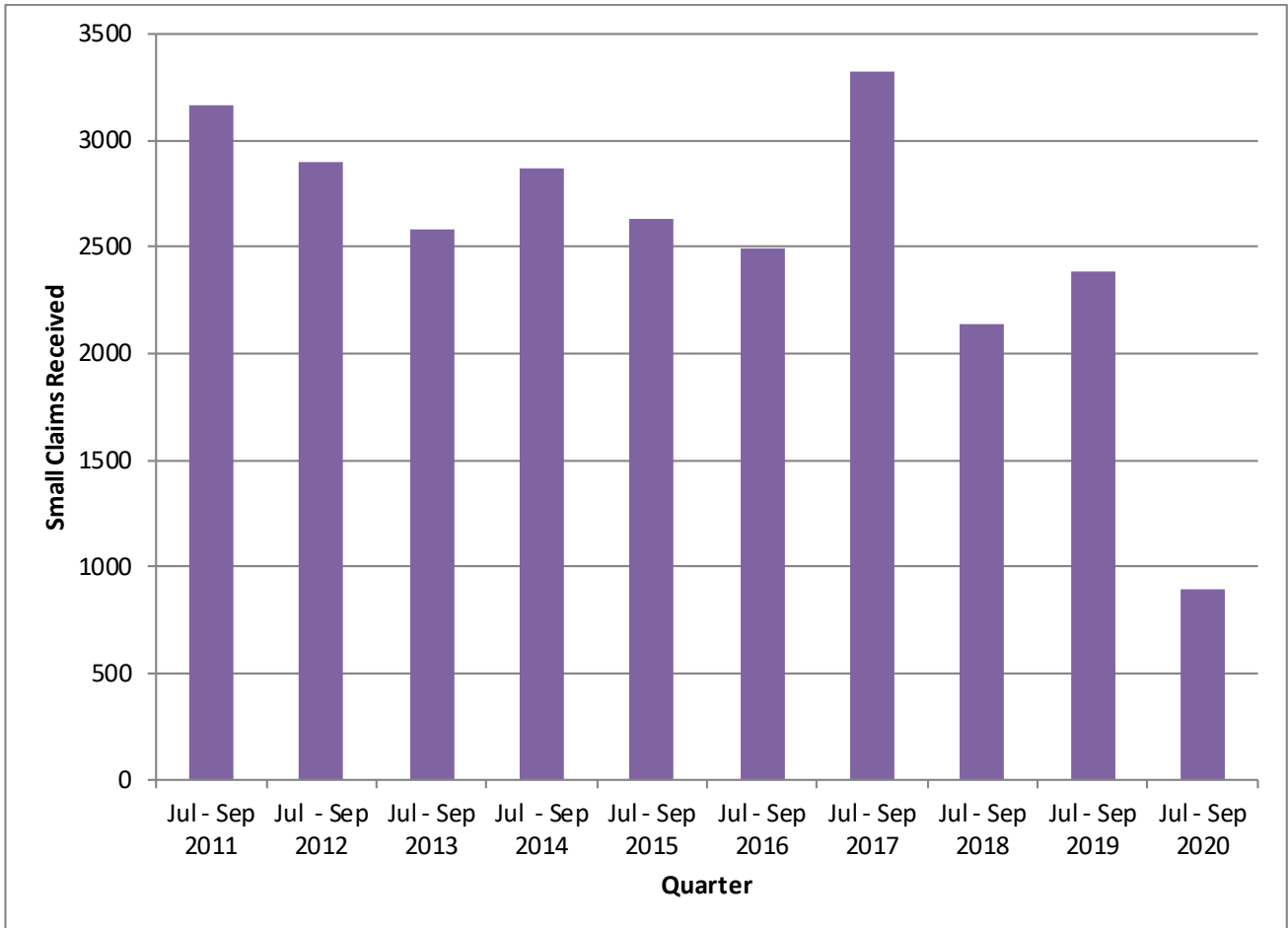


The average time taken from issue to disposal for ejectment cases was 39 weeks, an increase on the 23 weeks taken during the July to September quarter in 2019

3.4 Small claims

895 small claims were received, down 62% on the 2,382 received during the same quarter last year (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Small claims cases received – July to September 2011 to July to September 2020



The number of small claims cases disposed decreased by 70% from 2,390, during July to September 2019 to 719 this quarter. Of the 719 small claims disposed during the quarter, the majority (68%) were disposed by way of default judgment.

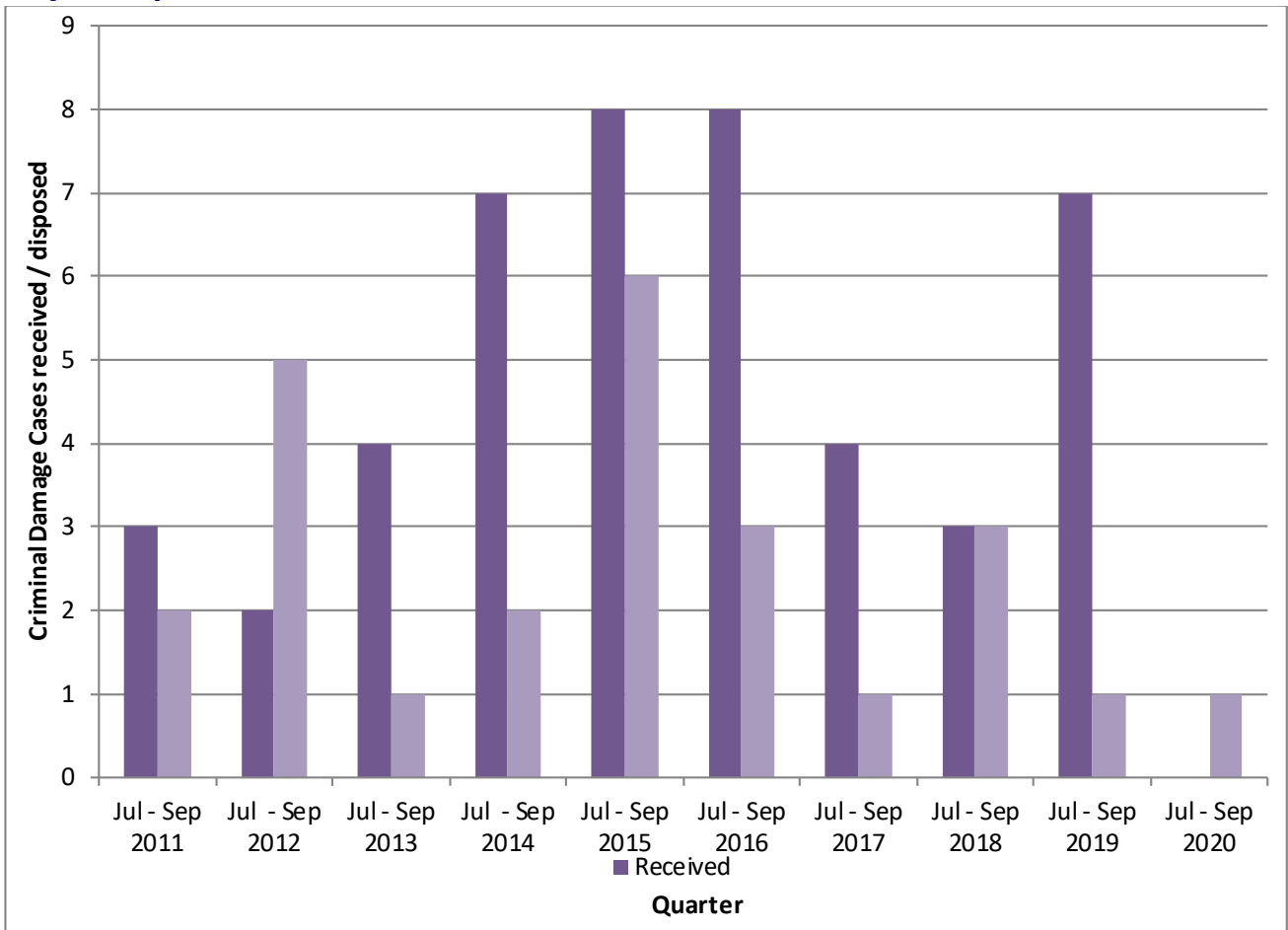
The average number of weeks from issue to disposal for small claims cases was 3 weeks, a decrease on the 25 weeks taken in the corresponding quarter last year.

There were no small claims court disposals during the period July to September 2020.

3.5 Criminal Damage

No criminal damage cases were received, with one disposed during the quarter. This compares with seven cases received and one case disposed during the same quarter in 2019 (Figure 5)

Figure 5: Criminal Damage cases received and disposed – July to September 2011 to July to September 2020



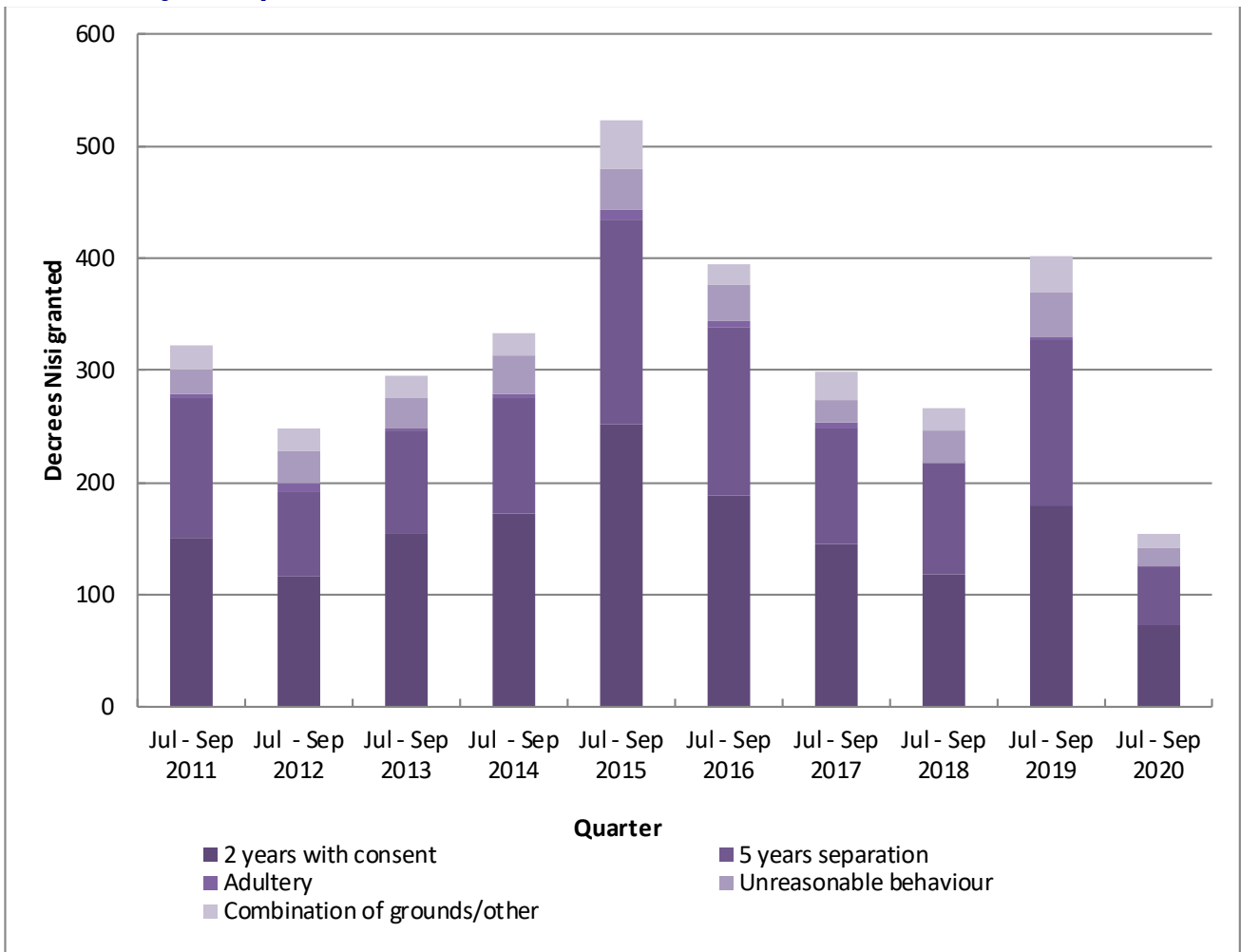
3.6 Divorces

While all divorces are received in the High Court, divorce decrees are also granted and decrees absolute are also issued in the County Court for less contentious and undefended cases.

A total of 154 divorce decrees were granted in the County Court, down 62% on the 402 granted during the same period last year.

The main type of divorce decree granted was '2 years with consent' accounting for 47% of decrees (72), followed by '5 years separation', accounting for 34% of decrees (53) (Figure 6)

Figure 6: Divorce petitions by number of decrees granted, by type – July to September 2011 to July to September 2020



A total of 321 decrees absolute were issued in the County Court, an increase of 3% on the 311 issued during the period July to September 2019. The most common type of decree absolute was ‘2 years with consent’, accounting for 47% (152) of cases.

The average time taken from issue to the date a divorce decree was granted was 40 weeks, with an average of nine weeks from the date the decree was granted until the date the decree absolute was issued. This compares to 34 weeks and eight weeks during the same period last year.

3.7 Licences

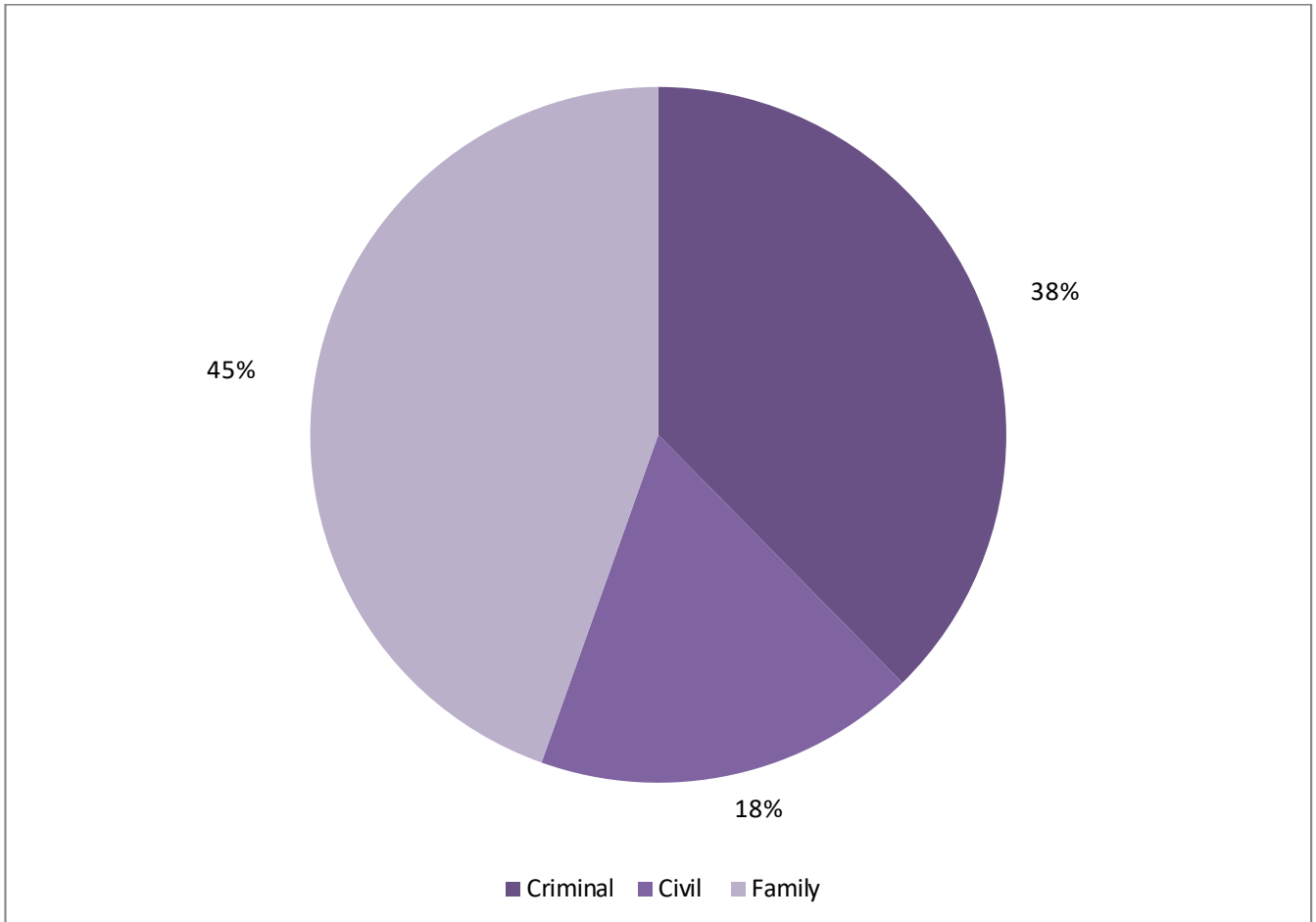
There were 32 licence applications received and 23 disposed, compared to the 38 received and 23 disposed during the same quarter last year.

3.8 Sitting Days

County Court and District Judges sat a total of 632 sitting days during the quarter, down 10% on the 705 sitting days recorded during the period July to September 2019.

Within these 632 sitting days, 38% of time was spent on criminal business, 18% of time was spent on civil business and 45% of time was spent on family business (Figure 7).

Figure 7: County Court Sitting Days by Business Type – July to September 2020

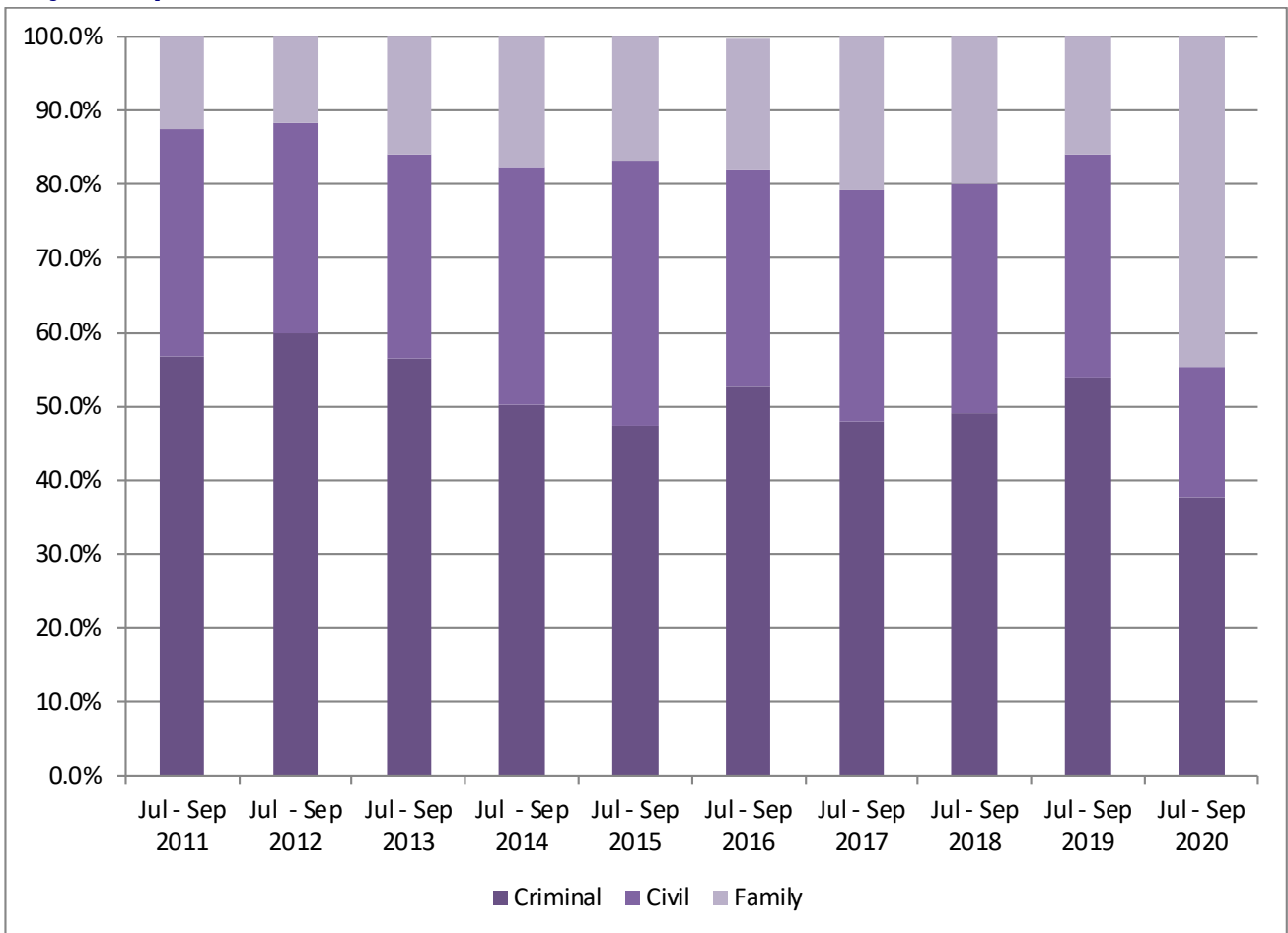


Due to rounding, the percentages may not add up to 100%

The proportion of time spent on criminal business has fluctuated during July to September quarter since 2007, peaking at 60% during the quarter July to September 2012. This is largely reflective of County Court Judges dealing with increased volumes of cases in the Crown Court over that particular period. The proportion of time spent on criminal business then decreased to 47% during July to September 2015, which was reflective of the action taken by a number of solicitors and counsel who withdrew their representation from a number of Crown Court cases in response to the introduction, in May 2015, of new rules in relation to legal aid remuneration.

Following resolution of this dispute in February 2016, activity in the Crown Court has fluctuated slightly with the proportion of time spent by County Court Judges on criminal business increasing to 53% of sittings during July to September 2016, while the backlog of cases arising from the dispute was being addressed. Progress made in addressing the backlog has meant the proportion of time spent on criminal business fell below 50% in both 2017 and 2018. The proportion of time spent on criminal business (38%) this quarter is the lowest since the time series began.

Figure 8: County Court Sitting Days by Business Type – July to September 2011 to July to September 2020



APPENDIX 1 – TABLES.

Civil Bills

Table 1 - Number of ordinary civil bill cases and applications received

Case	Laganside Courts	531
	Newtownards Court Office	94
	Downpatrick Court Office	65
	Craigavon Court Office	50
	Armagh Court Office	14
	Banbridge Court Office	1
	Omagh Court Office	33
	Strabane Court Office	1
	Antrim Court Office	31
	Londonderry Court Office	52
	Enniskillen Court Office	13
	Coleraine Court Office	49
	Newry Court Office	91
	Limavady Court Office	1
	Magherafelt Court Office	12
	Ballymena Court Office	32
	Lisburn Court Office	54
	Dungannon Court Office	54
	Civil Processing Centre	982
Total	2160	
Application	Laganside Courts	138
	Newtownards Court Office	31
	Downpatrick Court Office	22
	Craigavon Court Office	18
	Armagh Court Office	4
	Omagh Court Office	36
	Antrim Court Office	4
	Londonderry Court Office	27
	Coleraine Court Office	18
	Newry Court Office	45
	Ballymena Court Office	1
	Lisburn Court Office	9
	Civil Processing Centre	322
	Total	675

Table 2 - Number of ordinary civil bill cases with NIDs received by judicial level

	District judge	County court judge	Total
Laganside Courts	287	369	656
Newtownards Court Office	92	19	111
Downpatrick Court Office	28	60	88
Craigavon Court Office	38	25	63
Armagh Court Office	8	8	16
Banbridge Court Office	1	0	1
Omagh Court Office	27	14	41
Strabane Court Office	0	5	5
Antrim Court Office	18	17	35
Londonderry Court Office	48	19	67
Enniskillen Court Office	10	7	17
Coleraine Court Office	30	25	55
Newry Court Office	66	51	117
Limavady Court Office	1	0	1
Magherafelt Court Office	6	3	9
Ballymena Court Office	26	18	44
Lisburn Court Office	38	27	65
Dungannon Court Office	36	38	74
Civil Processing Centre	85	82	167
Total	845	787	1632

Table 3 - Number of ordinary civil bills cases and applications disposed

		Court result - CCJ	Court result - DJ	Non court disposals	Default judgement	Office disposal	Total
Case	Laganside Courts	35	30	298	6	16	385
	Newtownards Court Office	2	11	55	6	2	76
	Downpatrick Court Office	9	1	59	0	3	72
	Craigavon Court Office	3	6	38	0	3	50
	Armagh Court Office	0	0	6	0	0	6
	Omagh Court Office	8	14	36	1	4	63
	Strabane Court Office	0	0	2	0	0	2
	Antrim Court Office	0	2	17	0	2	21
	Londonderry Court Office	0	19	26	1	4	50
	Enniskillen Court Office	0	1	8	0	0	9
	Coleraine Court Office	2	6	42	1	2	53
	Newry Court Office	14	2	59	0	0	75
	Limavady Court Office	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Magherafelt Court Office	0	0	3	0	1	4
	Ballymena Court Office	0	3	12	0	0	15
	Lisburn Court Office	2	3	24	1	1	31
	Dungannon Court Office	1	1	11	0	0	13
	Civil Processing Centre	0	1	35	100	13	149
	Total	76	100	732	116	51	1075
	Application	Laganside Courts	16	8	68	0	0
Newtownards Court Office		2	1	26	0	0	29
Downpatrick Court Office		9	0	16	0	0	25
Craigavon Court Office		0	0	14	0	0	14
Armagh Court Office		0	0	1	0	0	1
Omagh Court Office		4	0	17	0	0	21
Antrim Court Office		0	0	3	0	0	3
Londonderry Court Office		0	0	9	0	0	9
Coleraine Court Office		2	0	12	0	0	14
Newry Court Office		5	2	13	0	0	20
Ballymena Court Office		0	0	2	0	0	2
Lisburn Court Office		0	0	12	0	0	12
Civil Processing Centre		0	1	24	0	0	25
Total		38	12	217	0	0	267

Table 4 - Number of ordinary civil bills cases by amount awarded

			No value	Less than £3000	£3000-14999	£15000-29999	£30000 and over	Total
Case	Processing Office	Laganside Courts	17	16	30	2	0	65
		Newtownards Court Office	2	3	8	0	0	13
		Downpatrick Court Office	2	3	4	1	0	10
		Craigavon Court Office	3	2	4	0	0	9
		Omagh Court Office	3	7	9	2	1	22
		Antrim Court Office	0	2	0	0	0	2
		Londonderry Court Office	3	6	10	0	0	19
		Enniskillen Court Office	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Coleraine Court Office	3	0	5	0	0	8
		Newry Court Office	1	1	12	2	0	16
		Ballymena Court Office	1	1	1	0	0	3
		Lisburn Court Office	1	3	1	0	0	5
		Dungannon Court Office	0	0	1	1	0	2
		Civil Processing Centre	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Total		36	46	85	8	1

Excludes cases that were adjourned generally, default judgements or had office disposals

Table 5 - Outstanding civil bills with NID but no COR

	District judge	County court judge	Total
Laganside Courts	1060	1606	2666
Newtownards Court Office	166	22	188
Downpatrick Court Office	37	181	218
Craigavon Court Office	112	111	223
Armagh Court Office	28	31	59
Banbridge Court Office	1	0	1
Omagh Court Office	180	195	375
Strabane Court Office	3	6	9
Antrim Court Office	52	55	107
Londonderry Court Office	163	119	282
Enniskillen Court Office	18	16	34
Coleraine Court Office	125	133	258
Newry Court Office	141	150	291
Limavady Court Office	1	0	1
Magherafelt Court Office	13	10	23
Ballymena Court Office	85	57	142
Lisburn Court Office	97	78	175
Dungannon Court Office	70	74	144
Civil Processing Centre	184	171	355
Total	2536	3015	5551

Table 6 - Outstanding civil bills with COR

	District judge	County court judge	Total
Laganside Courts	393	543	936
Newtownards Court Office	118	5	123
Downpatrick Court Office	5	53	58
Craigavon Court Office	54	31	85
Armagh Court Office	15	15	30
Omagh Court Office	78	91	169
Strabane Court Office	1	4	5
Antrim Court Office	22	23	45
Londonderry Court Office	68	54	122
Enniskillen Court Office	8	4	12
Coleraine Court Office	60	51	111
Newry Court Office	88	72	160
Limavady Court Office	2	1	3
Magherafelt Court Office	12	9	21
Ballymena Court Office	30	22	52
Lisburn Court Office	55	31	86
Dungannon Court Office	21	7	28
Civil Processing Centre	13	9	22
Total	1043	1025	2068

Table 7 -Time intervals in weeks for civil bill cases

Case	Issue to disposal
Laganside Courts	54
Newtownards Court Office	49
Downpatrick Court Office	67
Craigavon Court Office	45
Omagh Court Office	75
Antrim Court Office	43
Londonderry Court Office	63
Enniskillen Court Office	81
Coleraine Court Office	44
Newry Court Office	63
Ballymena Court Office	67
Lisburn Court Office	55
Dungannon Court Office	38
Civil Processing Centre	4
Total	58

Excludes default judgements and office disposals

Table 8 -Time intervals in weeks for civil bill applications

			Issue to disposal
Application	Processing Office	Laganside Courts	15
		Newtownards Court Office	17
		Downpatrick Court Office	13
		Omagh Court Office	12
		Coleraine Court Office	6
		Newry Court Office	26
		Civil Processing Centre	27
	Total		16

Excludes default judgements and office disposals

Equity

Table 9 -Equity cases and applications received

Case	Laganside Courts	7
	Newtownards Court Office	1
	Downpatrick Court Office	1
	Craigavon Court Office	2
	Omagh Court Office	5
	Coleraine Court Office	1
	Newry Court Office	3
	Ballymena Court Office	3
	Dungannon Court Office	1
	Civil Processing Centre	10
	Total	34
Application	Laganside Courts	3
	Downpatrick Court Office	2
	Craigavon Court Office	1
	Omagh Court Office	4
	Londonderry Court Office	1
	Coleraine Court Office	3
	Civil Processing Centre	2
	Total	16

Table 10 - Equity cases and applications disposed

		Court result - CCJ	Non court disposals	Total
Case	Armagh Court Office	1	0	1
	Omagh Court Office	4	0	4
	Dungannon Court Office	1	0	1
	Civil Processing Centre	0	1	1
	Total	6	1	7
Application	Laganside Courts	0	1	1
	Downpatrick Court Office	0	2	2
	Omagh Court Office	2	0	2
	Coleraine Court Office	1	0	1
	Total	3	3	6

Table 11 - Outstanding equity cases

Case	Laganside Courts	60
	Newtownards Court Office	5
	Downpatrick Court Office	18
	Craigavon Court Office	12
	Armagh Court Office	3
	Omagh Court Office	65
	Strabane Court Office	1
	Londonderry Court Office	26
	Enniskillen Court Office	3
	Coleraine Court Office	21
	Newry Court Office	33
	Ballymena Court Office	5
	Lisburn Court Office	6
	Dungannon Court Office	7
	Civil Processing Centre	29
Total	294	

Table 12 - Time intervals in weeks for equity

		Issue to disposal
Case	Armagh Court Office	91
	Omagh Court Office	72
	Dungannon Court Office	9
	Total	64
Application	Omagh Court Office	0
	Coleraine Court Office	9
	Total	3

Ejectment

Table 13 - Ejectment cases received

Case	Laganside Courts	5
	Newtownards Court Office	1
	Londonderry Court Office	1
	Newry Court Office	2
	Civil Processing Centre	30
	Total	39

Table 14 - Ejectment cases disposed

		Court result - DJ	Non court disposals	Total
Case	Laganside Courts	2	0	2
	Craigavon Court Office	0	1	1
	Londonderry Court Office	1	0	1
	Coleraine Court Office	1	0	1
	Total	4	1	5

Table 15 - Outstanding ejectment cases with NID

Case	Laganside Courts	17
	Downpatrick Court Office	3
	Craigavon Court Office	4
	Omagh Court Office	4
	Londonderry Court Office	6
	Enniskillen Court Office	1
	Coleraine Court Office	2
	Newry Court Office	6
	Ballymena Court Office	1
	Civil Processing Centre	7
Total	51	

Table 16: Time intervals in weeks for ejectment

		Issue to disposal
Case	Laganside Courts	42
	Londonderry Court Office	35
	Coleraine Court Office	38
	Total	39

Excludes default judgements, non court disposals and office disposals

Small Claims

Table 17 - Number of small claims cases and applications received

Case	Laganside Courts	36
	Newtownards Court Office	17
	Downpatrick Court Office	1
	Craigavon Court Office	9
	Omagh Court Office	6
	Londonderry Court Office	9
	Enniskillen Court Office	1
	Coleraine Court Office	9
	Newry Court Office	6
	Ballymena Court Office	3
	Lisburn Court Office	16
	Civil Processing Centre	782
	Total	895
Application	Laganside Courts	2
	Newtownards Court Office	3
	Lisburn Court Office	1
	Civil Processing Centre	7
	Total	13

Table 18 - Number of small claims cases with NODs receive

Case	Laganside Courts	26
	Newtownards Court Office	15
	Downpatrick Court Office	1
	Craigavon Court Office	6
	Omagh Court Office	5
	Londonderry Court Office	7
	Coleraine Court Office	7
	Newry Court Office	7
	Ballymena Court Office	3
	Lisburn Court Office	16
	Civil Processing Centre	56
Total	149	

Table 19 - Number of small claims cases and applications disposed

		Court disposal	Non court disposal	Office disposal	Default judgement	Total
Case	Laganside Courts	0	0	5	2	7
	Newtownards Court Office	0	4	0	1	5
	Craigavon Court Office	0	0	1	0	1
	Omagh Court Office	0	0	1	0	1
	Newry Court Office	0	0	2	0	2
	Lisburn Court Office	0	0	5	0	5
	Civil Processing Centre	0	0	215	483	698
	Total	0	4	229	486	719
Application	Laganside Courts	1	0	0	0	1
	Newtownards Court Office	0	3	0	0	3
	Lisburn Court Office	0	1	0	0	1
	Civil Processing Centre	0	1	0	0	1
	Total	1	5	0	0	6

Table 20 - Outstanding small claims with NOD

Laganside Courts	184
Newtownards Court Office	44
Downpatrick Court Office	7
Craigavon Court Office	25
Armagh Court Office	6
Omagh Court Office	26
Antrim Court Office	1
Londonderry Court Office	22
Enniskillen Court Office	2
Coleraine Court Office	35
Newry Court Office	39
Ballymena Court Office	9
Lisburn Court Office	33
Civil Processing Centre	107
Total	540

Table 21 - Time intervals in weeks for small claims

		Issue to disposal
Application	Laganside Courts	3
	Total	3

Criminal Damage

Table 22: Number of criminal damage cases and applications received

Due to COVID-19 there have been no criminal damage cases and applications received.

Table 23 - Number of criminal damage cases and applications disposed

		Non court disposal	Total
Case	Dungannon Court Office	1	1
	Total	1	1

Table 24 - Outstanding criminal damage cases

Laganside Courts	17
Newtownards Court Office	1
Omagh Court Office	8
Londonderry Court Office	4
Newry Court Office	2
Dungannon Court Office	1
Total	33

Table 25: Time intervals in weeks for criminal damage

Due to COVID-19 there have been no court disposals during the period, and therefore it has not been possible to produce the time interval calculations as they are based on court disposals, and DJ and non-court disposals are excluded.

Divorces

Table 26 - Divorce petitions by number of decrees granted

	2 years with consent	5 years separation	Adultery	Unreasonable behaviour	Combination of grounds/other	Total
Laganside Courts	33	19	0	5	5	62
Downpatrick Court Office	2	2	0	0	0	4
Craigavon Court Office	18	10	1	0	1	30
Armagh Court Office	1	0	0	0	0	1
Omagh Court Office	1	2	0	0	1	4
Londonderry Court Office	4	8	0	4	2	18
Coleraine Court Office	2	4	0	0	1	7
Newry Court Office	10	6	0	5	1	22
Dungannon Court Office	1	2	0	2	1	6
Total	72	53	1	16	12	154

Table 27 - Divorce petitions by number of decrees absolute issued

	2 years with consent	5 years separation	Adultery	Unreasonable behaviour	Combination of grounds/other	Total
Laganside Courts	38	38	0	8	4	88
Dow npatrick Court Office	26	14	0	1	4	45
Craigavon Court Office	20	12	0	5	1	38
Omagh Court Office	11	17	0	2	3	33
Londonderry Court Office	12	12	1	5	3	33
Coleraine Court Office	31	17	1	10	1	60
Newry Court Office	12	6	0	2	0	20
Lisburn Court Office	1	0	0	0	0	1
Dungannon Court Office	1	1	0	1	0	3
Total	152	117	2	34	16	321

Table 28 - Matrimonial applications received

	Ancillary relief	Matrimonial application to a master	Other	Total
Laganside Courts	10	1	1	12
Newtownards Court Office	2	0	0	2
Craigavon Court Office	0	0	2	2
Omagh Court Office	3	0	0	3
Londonderry Court Office	3	0	2	5
Coleraine Court Office	11	0	0	11
Newry Court Office	4	0	0	4
Total	33	1	5	39

Table 29 - Matrimonial applications disposed

	Ancillary relief	Other	Total
Laganside Courts	8	0	8
Craigavon Court Office	1	1	2
Omagh Court Office	1	0	1
Coleraine Court Office	8	0	8
Ballymena Court Office	1	0	1
Dungannon Court Office	1	0	1
Total	20	1	21

Table 30 - Time intervals in weeks for divorce petitions

	Issue to date decree granted	Date decree granted to date absolute issued
Laganside Courts	39	9
Downpatrick Court Office	32	-
Craigavon Court Office	36	9
Armagh Court Office	41	-
Omagh Court Office	36	-
Londonderry Court Office	55	10
Coleraine Court Office	28	9
Newry Court Office	43	-
Dungannon Court Office	36	10
Total	40	9

Table 31 - Time intervals in weeks for divorce applications

	Issue to disposal
Laganside Courts	65
Omagh Court Office	1
Dungannon Court Office	30
Total	45

Licenses

Table 32 - Licences received and disposed

Court Office	Licences Received	Licences Disposed
Coleraine	5	5
Newtownards	4	7
Newry	5	0
Laganside Courts	9	5
Craigavon	2	2
Omagh	5	3
Londonderry	2	1
Total	32	23

County Court and District Judge Sitting Days

Table 33 - County Court Judge & District Judge Sitting Days

	Number of sitting days	Total time		Total criminal time	Total civil time	Total family time
		Average sitting	Total time			
Antrim	33	1:45:52	58:14:00	38:47:00	19:27:00	0:00:00
Laganside	296	1:50:05	543:08:57	231:47:57	66:00:00	245:21:00
Armagh	45	2:33:36	115:12:00	3:25:00	24:12:00	87:35:00
Dungannon	58	1:51:31	107:48:00	61:59:00	5:56:00	39:53:00
Downpatrick	19	1:26:56	27:32:00	0:22:00	27:10:00	0:00:00
Craigavon	56	2:23:32	133:58:00	50:07:00	5:10:00	78:41:00
Omagh	27	1:55:51	52:08:00	1:30:00	36:42:00	13:56:00
Enniskillen	5	1:30:00	7:30:00	3:30:00	3:20:00	0:40:00
Londonderry	52	1:55:13	99:52:00	38:31:00	4:18:00	57:03:00
Newtownards	8	1:23:07	11:05:00	0:00:00	11:00:00	0:05:00
Newry	33	0:33:38	18:30:00	14:23:00	2:56:00	1:11:00
Total	632	1:51:32	1174:57:57	444:21:57	206:11:00	524:25:00

A court sitting day is counted as any day where the judiciary sit in court. It does not include time in chambers or days where the judiciary are sitting in chambers

APPENDIX 2 - EXPLANATORY NOTES

Amount awarded

This relates to the monetary value awarded in cases such as small claims and ordinary civil bills. On occasion, the amount awarded may be unliquidated which means that the claim was not made for a specific amount of money, but rather, for example, damage caused to a property, for repairs for damage caused or for faulty workmanship.

Application

The act of applying to a civil court to ask it to do something, for example to start proceedings or make an order.

Case

The proceedings, arguments and evidence in court and the court hearing.

Certificate of Readiness (COR)

When a small claim or civil bill is contested by the respondent, the matter will proceed to the county court for judgment. Before the case can be heard, both parties must contribute to the completion of a Certificate of Readiness (COR) which informs the court that the case is ready to heard and can therefore be listed by the court for hearing.

County Court Judge (CCJ)

This is a judge who sits in the County Court and the Crown Court. In the County Court, they will sit on business such as ordinary civil bills (with a value over £10,000 and up to £30,000), criminal damage, licences, equity, ejectment and divorces.

Court Disposal

Includes all cases issued with a final order by County Court Judge or District Judge.

Criminal Damage

These are cases in which there is an allegation that a property has been destroyed or damaged or where a person is alleged to have made threats, had intent, or was found to have anything on their property with intent to cause damage to another property.

Default Judgment

This is a judgment in favour of one party due to some failure to take action by the other party. In most cases, this will be a judgment in favour of the applicant due to the failure of the respondent to contest the claim brought against them. The failure to take action is the default. The default judgment is the relief requested in the party's original petition.

Disposed

The date a case is finally dealt with via a court or non-court result and the case is no longer in the court process.

District Judge (DJ)

This is a judge who sits in the County Court or Magistrates' Court. In the County Court they will sit on business such as small claims and ordinary civil bills (with a value up to £10,000).

Divorces

These are proceedings initiated in order to dissolve a marriage. Dissolutions of civil partnerships are also included within these figures. Following the issue of a divorce petition in the High Court, if it is a defended case it will be heard in the High Court and if it is an undefended case it may be heard either in the High Court or the County Court (depending on the choice of the individuals involved). Initially a Decree Nisi, judicial separation or nullity is granted, which is an initial order for divorce. Providing that no reason is provided to the court to challenge the nisi, a Decree Absolute, which is a final order for divorce that dissolves a marriage and permits an individual party to remarry, is made. A defended divorce is a proceeding in which an individual (the petitioner) applies for a divorce and the other party (the respondent) indicates that they wish to contest a divorce being granted at all, or on the reasons stated by the petitioner.

Equity

Any type of proceeding which seeks a court judgement on disputes relating to property disputes i.e. who owns it, and should damages be paid.

Ejectment

A legal document which seeks to recover possession of land and/or a dwelling house (e.g. where a tenant has stopped paying rent). Similar matters relating to properties owned with a mortgage are dealt with through proceedings within the Chancery Division of the High Court.

Issue

This is the process by which a complaint or claim is lodged with the court. It can also be described as the 'Received Date'.

Licences

These are applications for intoxicating liquor licences and certificates of registration for public houses and clubs, enabling their legal operation.

Matrimonial Application

These are applications attached to divorce proceedings such as Ancillary Relief applications that relate to financial relief to one or both parties following a petition for divorce, for example, maintenance and the division of property/finances.

Notice of Dispute (NOD)

When a small claim is taken by an applicant against a respondent, the respondent may contest the claim and signal their intention to dispute the claim through a Notice of Dispute. This means that the case will then be listed before a judge in court for resolution.

Non court disposal

Includes all disposals not completed in court, for example settlements or withdrawals.

Notice of Intention to Defend (NID)

When a civil bill is taken by an applicant against a respondent, the respondent may contest the claim and signal their intention to dispute the claim through a Notice of Intention to Defend. This means that the case will then be listed before a judge in court for resolution.

Ordinary civil bills

A legal document which seeks to recover damages for (i) personal injury claims (injuries caused by negligence), for example, traffic accidents, falls on pavements and accidents at work and (ii) consumer disputes, for example, faulty goods or services. There have been a number of changes in the threshold for ordinary civil bills in recent years. Until 25 February 2013 ordinary civil bills related to cases seeking damages between £3,000 and £15,000 (prior to May 2011, the lower limit was £2,000). Following changes made on 25 February 2013, the upper limit for civil bills was extended to include cases seeking damages between £3,000 and £30,000.

Outstanding case

A case that is currently active within the County Court system, for example, live cases not yet disposed.

Received

The date the papers are lodged with the court and the fees receipted.

Sitting Days

A court sitting day is counted as any day where the judiciary sit in court. It is a period of work by a judge on a single day. Multiple sittings on one calendar date will be aggregated into one sitting day based on the Judicial Officer, venue and sitting date. Several types of business may be heard within one sitting day.

Days are classified on the basis of the majority business undertaken, except for the Magistrates' Court, when it is based in the first instance, on the earliest scheduled sitting. Where the start time for two or more sittings is the same, the days are classified on the majority of business undertaken. It does not include time in chambers or days where the judiciary are sitting in chambers.

Small claims

Small claims allow certain types of claims to be decided informally by the County Court, usually without the need of a solicitor or barrister. In general a small claim is one where the value to be claimed is not more than £3,000 (before May 2011 the upper limit was £2,000). Examples of small claims are (i) compensation for faulty services by, for example, builders, dry cleaners and garages (ii) compensation for faulty goods such as electrical goods (iii) disputes between landlords and tenants for rent arrears or compensation for not doing repairs and (iv) debts or wages owed or money in lieu of notice.

Time intervals

This is the time taken (in weeks) between the case, application or claim being received by the court and the date it is finally resolved, by either the court, an arrangement between parties out of court or by being withdrawn by the applicant.

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