

# Magistrates' Court Bulletin

## July to September 2010

*serving the community through the administration of justice*

### Document Details

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## Summary

### During Jul – Sep 2010:

There were 1,182 scheduled magistrates' sittings of which:

Criminal	787
Youth	136
Family	259

There were 54 additional magistrates' sittings of which:

Criminal	47
Youth	1
Family	6

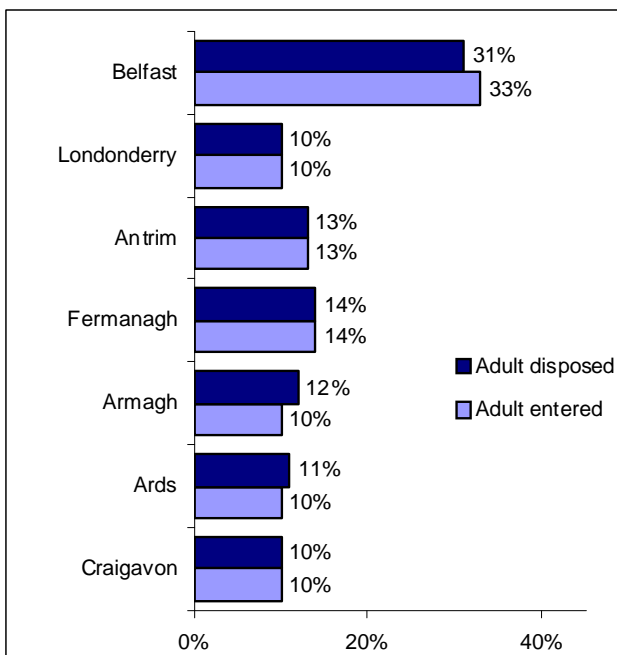
There were 59 special magistrates' sittings of which:

Criminal	59
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13,872 new adult criminal defendants were received in court and 13,351 adult defendants were disposed of during the period. (Figure 1)

The majority of prosecutions disposed in the adult court were brought by PSNI/ PPS.

**Figure 1: Percentage of adults entered and disposed of in the court divisions**



The volume of adult business was highest in the Division of Belfast.

The average waiting time in the adult criminal court from first hearing to disposal was 6 weeks. (Figure 2)

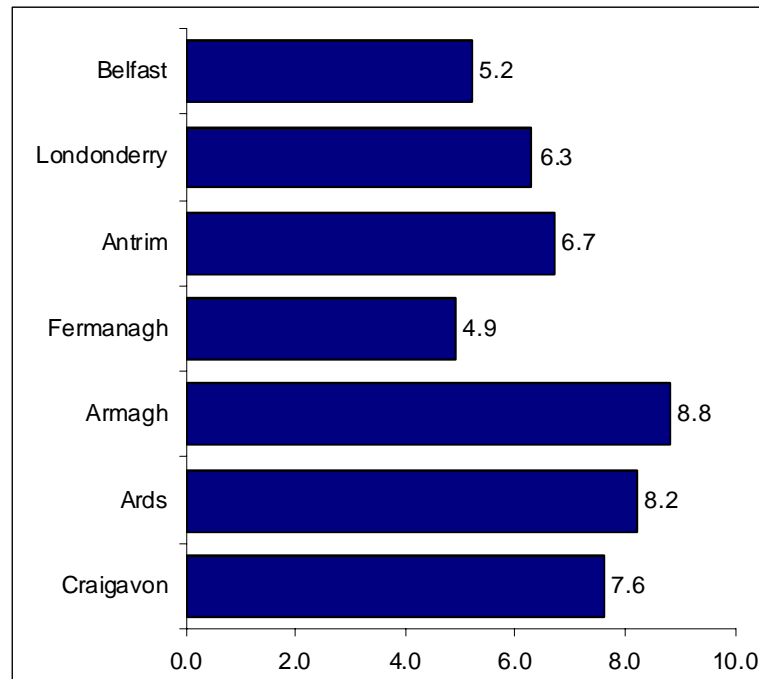
979 new defendants were entered in the youth court and 849 youth defendants were disposed of in the youth court.

The average waiting time in the youth court from first hearing to disposal was 12 weeks.

1,573 new civil applications were entered and 1,388 civil applications were disposed of.

The average length of time for a case to progress through the civil court was 9 weeks from date of issue to disposal.

**Figure 2: Waiting times in weeks in adult magistrates' courts (1st hearing to disposal)**



**Table 1.1: Scheduled court sitting days & average court sitting times in the magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		Adult criminal day		Youth criminal day		Family day	
		Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time
Belfast	Laganside	257	03:23:57	39	04:02:41	68	03:26:45
	Total	257	03:23:57	39	04:02:41	68	03:26:45
Londonderry	Limavady	13	04:26:32		.		.
	Magherafelt	18	02:48:53	6	00:52:30	3	00:46:40
	Londonderry	54	05:02:46	9	03:39:26	20	03:39:30
	Total	85	04:28:52	15	02:32:40	23	03:16:57
Antrim	Antrim	20	04:17:42	6	02:40:50	6	03:36:40
	Ballymena	23	03:42:36	6	02:01:40	17	03:26:28
	Larne	13	03:56:32	3	01:00:00	5	03:06:00
	Coleraine	37	05:12:25	6	03:25:50	12	04:16:15
	Total	93	04:27:50	21	02:28:05	40	03:40:22
Fermanagh & Tyrone	Dungannon	39	04:12:49	6	02:29:10	10	05:04:30
	Strabane	24	02:37:42	3	00:55:00	3	01:25:00
	Omagh	29	03:38:26	6	03:55:00	13	03:53:32
	Enniskillen	22	04:50:27	6	02:44:10	3	02:16:40
	Total	114	03:51:18	21	02:44:31	29	03:52:37
Armagh & South Down	Armagh	20	03:56:45	6	02:19:10	3	01:50:00
	Banbridge @Newry	15	04:15:40	1	04:30:00	2	02:22:30
	Newry	38	03:36:18	5	02:43:00	16	03:33:07
	Total	73	03:50:00	12	02:40:00	21	03:11:40
Ards	Bangor	20	03:39:30		.	6	02:16:40
	Downpatrick	25	04:52:36	6	04:16:40	3	04:10:00
	Newtownards	47	02:55:19	11	02:28:38	38	02:15:07
	Total	92	03:36:47	17	03:06:45	47	02:22:39
Craigavon	Lisburn	14	04:54:38	2	02:50:00	5	05:49:00
	Craigavon	37	03:26:04	5	03:19:00	18	01:50:50
	Lisburn @ Craigavon	22	03:46:08	4	03:26:15	8	03:15:00
	Total	73	03:49:06	11	03:16:21	31	02:50:58

**Table1.1a: Scheduled court sitting days & average court sitting times in the magistrates' courts for Northern Ireland**

	Adult criminal day		Youth criminal day		Family day	
	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time
Northern Ireland	787	03:48:43	136	03:08:03	259	03:13:44

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.

**Table 1.2: Additional court sitting days & average court sitting times in the magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		Adult criminal day		Youth criminal day		Family day	
		Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time
Belfast	Laganside		.		.	1	04:10:00
	Total		.		.	1	04:10:00
Londonderry	Londonderry	2	00:55:00		.		.
	Total	2	00:55:00		.		.
Antrim	Antrim		.		.	1	00:15:00
	Larne		.		.	2	02:07:30
	Coleraine	2	04:55:00		.		.
	Total	2	04:55:00		.	3	01:30:00
Fermanagh & Tyrone	Dungannon	2	03:50:00		.		.
	Omagh		.		.	1	00:12:00
	Enniskillen	3	03:03:20		.		.
	Total	5	03:22:00		.	1	00:12:00
Armagh & South Down	Armagh	6	03:59:10		.		.
	Banbridge @ Newry	2	01:55:00		.		.
	Newry	6	03:07:40	1	00:30:00		.
	Total	14	03:19:21	1	00:30:00		.
Ards	Downpatrick	5	05:05:00		.		.
	Newtownards	11	01:51:21		.	1	03:30:00
	Total	16	02:51:52		.	1	03:30:00
Craigavon	Lisburn	2	03:15:00		.		.
	Craigavon	6	01:37:30		.		.
	Total	8	02:01:52		.		.

**Table 1.2a: Additional court sitting days & average court sitting times in the magistrates' courts for Northern Ireland**

	Adult criminal day		Youth criminal day		Family day	
	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time
Northern Ireland	47	02:55:01	1	00:30:00	6	02:03:40

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.

**Table 1.3: Special court sitting days & average court sitting times in the magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		Adult criminal day	
		Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time
Londonderry	Londonderry	8	00:46:15
	Total	8	00:46:15
Antrim	Antrim	8	00:29:22
	Ballymena	2	00:27:30
	Total	10	00:29:00
Fermanagh & Tyrone	Omagh	12	01:16:10
	Total	12	01:16:10
Armagh & South Down	Newry	9	01:00:33
	Total	9	01:00:33
Ards	Newtownards	9	00:35:00
	Total	9	00:35:00
Craigavon	Lisburn	4	01:07:30
	Craigavon	7	00:52:51
	Total	11	00:58:10

**Table 1.3a: Special court sitting days & average court sitting times in the magistrates' courts for Northern Ireland**

	Adult criminal day	
	Number of court sitting days	Average court sitting time
Northern Ireland	59	00:52:06

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.

**Table 2.1 Adult criminal defendants received in the magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed penalty	Total
Belfast	Laganside Courts	3560	980	77	4617
	Division total	3560	980	77	4617
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	617	119	12	748
	Limavady Court Office	227	76	5	308
	Magherafelt Court Office	223	53	16	292
	Division total	1067	248	33	1348
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	553	136	12	701
	Coleraine Court Office	531	151	19	701
	Ballymena Court Office	138	54		192
	Larne Court Office	100	43	1	144
	Division total	1322	384	32	1738
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	423	92	36	551
	Strabane Court Office	179	63	11	253
	Enniskillen Court Office	346	102	15	463
	Dungannon Court Office	529	149	4	682
	Division total	1477	406	66	1949
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	197	99	21	317
	Banbridge Court Office	211	40	8	259
	Newry Court Office	571	224	30	825
	Division total	979	363	59	1401
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	507	62	14	583
	Downpatrick Court Office	399	80	8	487
	Bangor Court Office	311	39	7	357
	Division total	1217	181	29	1427
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	721	87	17	825
	Lisburn Court Office	327	216	24	567
	Division total	1048	303	41	1392

**Table 2.1 Adult criminal defendants received in the magistrates' courts in Northern Ireland**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed penalty	Total
Northern Ireland	10670	2865	337	13872

**Table 2.2 Adult criminal defendants disposed of in the magistrates' court by division & venue**

		PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed penalty	Total
Belfast	Laganside Courts	3145	871	73	4089
	Division total	3145	871	73	4089
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	648	140	12	800
	Limavady Court Office	211	65	5	281
	Magherafelt Court Office	208	57	16	281
	Division total	1067	262	33	1362
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	425	141	11	577
	Coleraine Court Office	534	149	19	702
	Ballymena Court Office	197	65		262
	Larne Court Office	97	39	1	137
	Division total	1253	394	31	1678
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	373	90	36	499
	Strabane Court Office	206	46	11	263
	Enniskillen Court Office	294	86	15	395
	Dungannon Court Office	512	135	4	651
	Division total	1385	357	66	1808
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	218	88	21	327
	Banbridge Court Office	231	40	7	278
	Newry Court Office	761	216	29	1006
	Division total	1210	344	57	1611
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	513	70	13	596
	Downpatrick Court Office	389	71	8	468
	Bangor Court Office	305	36	7	348
	Division total	1207	177	28	1412
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	629	89	17	735
	Lisburn Court Office	409	223	24	656
	Division total	1038	312	41	1391

**Table 2.2 Adult criminal defendants disposed of in the magistrates' court in Northern Ireland**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed penalty	Total
Northern Ireland	10305	2717	329	13351

**Table 2.3: Average waiting times in the adult magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		Summons to first hearing (weeks)	First hearing to finding (weeks)	Finding to disposal (weeks)	First hearing to disposal (weeks)
Belfast	Laganside Courts	5.45	4.69	.54	5.23
	Total	5.45	4.69	.54	5.23
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	4.18	6.31	.92	7.23
	Limavady Court Office	4.49	3.14	.48	3.62
	Magherafelt Court Office	5.21	5.65	.77	6.42
	Total	4.46	5.51	.80	6.30
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	4.91	3.17	.41	3.57
	Coleraine Court Office	4.77	7.91	.60	8.52
	Ballymena Court Office	6.42	10.00	.43	10.43
	Larne Court Office	3.65	3.35	.24	3.59
	Total	4.96	6.17	.48	6.65
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	6.69	3.77	.20	3.98
	Strabane Court Office	4.65	3.72	.64	4.37
	Enniskillen Court Office	8.65	3.38	.46	3.83
	Dungannon Court Office	4.83	5.19	1.14	6.33
	Total	6.16	4.19	.66	4.85
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	4.66	6.92	.44	7.36
	Banbridge Court Office	3.88	6.89	.49	7.37
	Newry Court Office	5.59	9.38	.30	9.68
	Total	5.10	8.45	.36	8.81
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	5.90	5.85	.63	6.47
	Downpatrick Court Office	5.47	10.49	.50	10.99
	Bangor Court Office	5.89	6.54	.98	7.52
	Total	5.76	7.52	.67	8.20
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	5.55	5.24	.73	5.97
	Lisburn Court Office	6.20	8.72	.74	9.45
	Total	5.85	6.85	.73	7.59

Bench warrants, adjourned generally and deferred sentences excluded

**Table 2.3: Average waiting times in the adult magistrates' courts in Northern Ireland**

	Summons to first hearing (weeks)	First hearing to finding (weeks)	Finding to disposal (weeks)	First hearing to disposal (weeks)
Northern Ireland	5.42	5.87	.59	6.46

Bench warrants, adjourned generally and deferred sentences excluded

**Table 2.4: Number and type of charges brought for adult defendants disposed of by business area**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed penalty	Total
All Offences Against the Person	965	14		979
All Sexual Offences	189			189
All Burglary Offences	137			137
All Robbery Offences	28			28
All Theft Offences	684			684
All Fraud and Forgery Offences	93	159		252
All Criminal Damage Offences	246			246
All Offences Against the State	18			18
All Other Offences	733	197		930
All Drug Offences	359	3		362
All Motoring Offences	4537	138		4675
All Non-Police Offences	61	2073	329	2463
All Breach	115	54		169
Combination of charges	2140	79		2219
Total	10305	2717	329	13351

**Table 2.5: Outcome of adult defendants disposed of by business area**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed penalty	Total
Committed to the Crown Court	488			488
Plea of guilty on all charges	4718	731		5449
All charges withdrawn	1958	748	3	2709
Fixed penalty default			326	326
Plea not guilty - found guilty on at least one charge	2756	1185		3941
Plea not guilty - acquitted on all charges	385	53		438
Total	10305	2717	329	13351

**Table 3.1 Youth defendants received in the magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed Penalty	Total
Belfast	Laganside Courts	387	1		388
	Division total	387	1		388
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	71			71
	Limavady Court Office	9			9
	Magherafelt Court Office	16			16
	Division total	96			96
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	77	3	3	83
	Coleraine Court Office	51	2		53
	Ballymena Court Office	4			4
	Larne Court Office	5		1	6
	Division total	137	5	4	146
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	22			22
	Strabane Court Office	15			15
	Enniskillen Court Office	34			34
	Dungannon Court Office	30	1		31
	Division total	101	1		102
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	16			16
	Banbridge Court Office	9			9
	Newry Court Office	25			25
	Division total	50			50
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	49			49
	Downpatrick Court Office	28			28
	Bangor Court Office	40			40
	Division total	117			117
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	64			64
	Lisburn Court Office	16			16
	Division total	80			80

**Table 3.1 Youth defendants received in the magistrates' courts in Northern Ireland**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed Penalty	Total
Northern Ireland	968	7	4	979

**Table 3.2 Youth defendants disposed of in the magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed Penalty	Total
Belfast	Laganside Courts	265	1		266
	Division total	265	1		266
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	59			59
	Limavady Court Office	5			5
	Magherafelt Court Office	14			14
	Division total	78			78
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	42	3	3	48
	Coleraine Court Office	67	3		70
	Ballymena Court Office	23			23
	Larne Court Office	2	1	1	4
	Division total	134	7	4	145
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	33			33
	Strabane Court Office	20			20
	Enniskillen Court Office	34			34
	Dungannon Court Office	43	1		44
	Division total	130	1		131
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	14			14
	Banbridge Court Office	10			10
	Newry Court Office	28			28
	Division total	52			52
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	46			46
	Downpatrick Court Office	34			34
	Bangor Court Office	24			24
	Division total	104			104
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	45			45
	Lisburn Court Office	28			28
	Division total	73			73

**Table 3.2 Youth defendants disposed of in the magistrates' courts in Northern Ireland**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed Penalty	Total
Northern Ireland	836	9	4	849

**Table 3.3: Average waiting times in the youth magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		Summons to first hearing (weeks)	First hearing to finding (weeks)	Finding to disposal (weeks)
Belfast	Laganside Courts	3.68	5.82	3.85
	Total	3.68	5.82	3.85
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	3.58	7.85	4.57
	Limavady Court Office	5.29	3.50	.00
	Magherafelt Court Office	5.71	7.76	1.62
	Total	4.15	7.55	3.64
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	6.33	4.17	1.34
	Coleraine Court Office	3.90	11.00	3.86
	Ballymena Court Office	3.75	12.79	1.28
	Larne Court Office	7.43	4.29	.00
	Total	4.75	8.89	2.60
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	6.01	9.70	2.25
	Strabane Court Office	3.18	10.21	3.51
	Enniskillen Court Office	4.68	8.43	1.71
	Dungannon Court Office	4.78	9.98	4.11
	Total	4.82	9.54	2.90
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	3.80	10.14	3.40
	Banbridge Court Office	2.71	13.13	1.63
	Newry Court Office	2.76	7.41	2.98
	Total	3.01	9.19	2.82
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	4.03	8.95	5.08
	Downpatrick Court Office	4.89	15.43	2.64
	Bangor Court Office	6.60	4.68	5.16
	Total	4.95	9.75	4.38
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	4.89	6.24	2.72
	Lisburn Court Office	4.11	14.86	3.11
	Total	4.57	9.75	2.88

Bench warrants, adjourned generally and deferred sentences excluded

**Table 3.3: Average waiting times in the youth magistrates' courts in Northern Ireland**

	Summons to first hearing (weeks)	First hearing to finding (weeks)	Finding to disposal (weeks)
Northern Ireland	4.31	8.25	3.37

Bench warrants, adjourned generally and deferred sentences excluded

**Table 3.4: Number and type of charges brought for youth defendants disposed of by business area**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed Penalty	Total
All Offences Against the Person	153			153
All Sexual Offences	5			5
All Burglary Offences	25			25
All Robbery Offences	11			11
All Theft Offences	75			75
All Criminal Damage Offences	74			74
All Offences against the State	1			1
All Other Offences	122	1		123
All Drug Offences	16			16
All Motoring Offences	97			97
All Non-Police Offences	2	6	4	12
All Breach	4	1		5
Combination of charges	251	1		252
Total	836	9	4	849

**Table 3.5: Outcome of youth defendants disposed of by business area**

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed Penalty	Total
Committed to the Crown Court	17			17
Plea of guilty on all charges	308	6		314
All charges withdrawn	316	1		317
Fixed Penalty default			4	4
Plea not guilty - found guilty on at least one charge	151	1		152
Plea not guilty - acquitted on all charges	44	1		45
<b>Total</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>849</b>

**Table 4.1 Number of civil applications received in the magistrates' court by division & venue**

		Current Business Area		Total
		Domestic Proceedings	Family Homes and Domestic Violence	
Belfast	Laganside Courts	26	469	495
	Division total	26	469	495
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	6	107	113
	Limavady Court Office		13	13
	Magherafelt Court Office	2	18	20
	Division total	8	138	146
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	11	108	119
	Coleraine Court Office	6	95	101
	Ballymena Court Office	1	23	24
	Larne Court Office		22	22
	Division total	18	248	266
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	3	34	37
	Strabane Court Office	3	22	25
	Enniskillen Court Office	2	28	30
	Dungannon Court Office	9	44	53
	Division total	17	128	145
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	4	38	42
	Banbridge Court Office	5	8	13
	Newry Court Office	24	123	147
	Division total	33	169	202
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	15	116	131
	Downpatrick Court Office	2	42	44
	Bangor Court Office	1	35	36
	Division total	18	193	211
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	7	46	53
	Lisburn Court Office	8	47	55
	Division total	15	93	108

**Table 4.1 Number of civil applications received in the magistrates' court in Northern Ireland**

	Current Business Area		Total
	Domestic Proceedings	Family Homes and Domestic Violence	
Northern Ireland	135	1438	1573

**Table 4.2 Number of civil applications disposed in the magistrates' court by division & venue**

		Current Business Area		Total
		Domestic Proceedings	Family Homes and Domestic Violence	
Belfast	Laganside Courts	35	398	433
	Division total	35	398	433
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	8	85	93
	Limavady Court Office		9	9
	Magherafelt Court Office		20	20
	Division total	8	114	122
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	7	71	78
	Coleraine Court Office	12	109	121
	Ballymena Court Office	5	22	27
	Larne Court Office	1	19	20
	Division total	25	221	246
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	6	44	50
	Strabane Court Office	3	21	24
	Enniskillen Court Office	3	22	25
	Dungannon Court Office	2	40	42
	Division total	14	127	141
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	3	32	35
	Banbridge Court Office	2	5	7
	Newry Court Office	18	108	126
	Division total	23	145	168
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	16	107	123
	Downpatrick Court Office	7	37	44
	Bangor Court Office	4	28	32
	Division total	27	172	199
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	3	26	29
	Lisburn Court Office	4	46	50
	Division total	7	72	79

**Table 4.2 Number of civil applications disposed in the magistrates' court in Northern Ireland**

	Current Business Area		Total
	Domestic Proceedings	Family Homes and Domestic Violence	
Northern Ireland	139	1249	1388

**Table 4.3: Average waiting times in the civil magistrates' courts by division & venue**

		Date of issue to first hearing (weeks)	First hearing to disposal (weeks)
Belfast	Laganside Courts	1.81	5.75
	Total	1.81	5.75
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	1.99	4.41
	Limavady Court Office	.83	.00
	Magherafelt Court Office	2.11	2.96
	Total	1.93	3.85
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	1.16	2.75
	Coleraine Court Office	11.55	7.69
	Ballymena Court Office	2.71	10.68
	Larne Court Office	1.74	2.45
	Total	6.49	6.03
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	2.67	6.45
	Strabane Court Office	1.50	2.55
	Enniskillen Court Office	1.46	4.52
	Dungannon Court Office	2.11	1.96
	Total	2.09	4.10
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	1.49	3.39
	Banbridge Court Office	2.49	8.53
	Newry Court Office	1.76	3.97
	Total	1.73	4.04
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	1.52	8.27
	Downpatrick Court Office	2.40	10.55
	Bangor Court Office	1.16	7.80
	Total	1.66	8.70
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	.80	12.60
	Lisburn Court Office	.77	12.90
	Total	.78	12.79

**Table 4.3: Average waiting times in the civil magistrates' courts in Northern Ireland**

	Date of issue to first hearing (weeks)	First hearing to disposal (weeks)
Northern Ireland	2.59	6.08

**Table 4.4 Outcome of applications under Family Homes & Domestic Violence Order in the magistrates' court in Northern Ireland**

	Granted	Dismissed or refused	Withdrawn	Vary discharge	Other	Total
Non molestation	737	200	193	81	4	1215
Occupation	5	2	7		1	15
Vary discharge non-mol occupation	4	3	4	8		19
<b>Total</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1249</b>

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